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DO TIBI ME TOTAM.
LATIN WEDDING POETRY IN FINLAND*

RAIJA SARASTI-WILENIUS

When Professor Olaus Wexionius and Catharina Petraea, a bishop's daughter, got married in Turku, the old capital of Finland, in 1654 the occasion was celebrated by two printed collections of poems, the majority of which are in Latin; some are in Swedish and one each in Greek and Finnish.¹ It was customary to bring out such publications in connection with the weddings of noble, and clerical, bourgeois and learned middle-class families. We know of about two hundred wedding publications which include at least one poem in Latin issued by Finnish printing houses during the years 1640-1713.² Thanks to the impact of Humanism, poems and speeches imitating the classical models and making use of classical mythology were composed for various occasions. The popularity of wedding poetry was not diminished by the fact that the Lutheran Church, which was very powerful in seventeenth century Finland, highly appreciated the marital institution.³ In this article I first intend to connect these poems to the tradition of the literary genre of epithalamium, not by surveying the whole history of the genre but pointing out some

* The first draft of this paper was presented at the Ninth International Congress of Neo-Latin Studies (Bari 29.8.-4.9.1994).

¹T. Melander, *Personskifter hänförande sig till Finland 1542-1713*, 1951, (henceforth TM) 337, 338.

²It is most likely that there were more publications from this period - but they were probably lost in the many fires. The originals of many publications dealt with in this paper have survived in Swedish libraries.

³Cf. G. Castrén, *Stormaktstidens diktning*, 1907, 103; B. Olsson, *Bröllops besvärshugkommelse II*, 1970, 18.

observations relevant to the material discussed here.⁴ Secondly, my purpose is to analyze the general features regarding the contents and the form of the poems while at the same time throwing some light upon the literary conventions prevailing in this period. Thirdly, I plan to survey different aspects of the function of these poems in the contemporary society. The verses I have chosen as examples are not necessarily taken from the best writers; they are purely meant to give a good overview of general features in these poems.

The Greek wedding poem was tied to nuptial rites. Ὑμέναιος, referring to Ὑμῆν, the god of wedding, were songs meant to be performed at a wedding feast whereas the term ἐπιθαλάμιος initially was applied to verses sung on the threshold of the marital chamber (θάλαμος). The distinction of the two Greek terms ὕμέναιος and ἐπιθαλάμιος are discussed by Robert Muth who concludes that already from early times both terms were overlapping.⁵ Epithalamium became the most frequent term, used generally in Roman literature as well as during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance for any kind of wedding poem.⁶ In Greek literature the foremost representative of the genre was Sappho, who was the most important model for Catullus' *Carmina* 61 and 62, the best known pieces of Roman wedding poetry. In the first century B.C. epithalamium had already become a literary genre; it was not necessarily bound to any actual rite of the wedding ceremonies nor sung by a choir.⁷ However, as in Catullus' *Carmina* 61 and 62, there are some direct connections to the wedding ceremonies to be found in epithalamia of all periods. As it developed in Latin literature, the epithalamium lost its lyric quality and became a species of rhetorical panegyric constructed according to the rules

⁴For the genre of epithalamium see Maas, s.v. Hymenaios, RE IX, 1916, 130-134; R. Keydell, s.v. Epithalamium, RLAC V, 1962, 927-943. For ancient wedding poetry see E.A. Mangelsdorff, *Das lyrische Hochzeitslied bei den Griechen und Römern*, 1913. For later Latin wedding poetry see C. Morelli, "L'epitalamio nella tarda poesia latina", SIFC 18 (1910) 319-432. For more comprehensive list of the literature discussing epithalamium see E.F. Wilson, "Pastoral and Epithalamium in Latin Literature", *Speculum* 23 (1948) 36 n. 6.

⁵R. Muth, "Hymenaios" und "Epithalamion", *Wiener Studien* 67 (1954) 5-45.

⁶Muth (n.5) passim; Olsson (n.3) 11.

⁷Muth (n.5) 34.

of Dionysios, Menander and Himerios.⁸ Already by the time of Statius, the founder of the later Latin epithalamium, epithalamium had become more like a laudatory poem addressed to the bride and the bridegroom. Statius was important in the development of the genre; his *Epithalamium in Stellam et Violentillam* (silv. 1,2) served more or less as a model to Claudian, Sidonius Apollinaris, Ennodius, Fortunatus, Dracontius and Luxorius.⁹ From the beginning of its history in Greek and Latin literature, epithalamium has been interwoven with pastoral, retaining ever afterwards some of the characteristics of the eclogue.¹⁰ At Roman weddings of the earlier period, obscene songs, so-called *versus fescennini*, were often sung to the bridegroom. Later also these songs were sometimes recorded in writing; for instance Ausonius' *Cento nuptialis* includes a section headed *imminutio*, regarded as indecent.¹¹

In the Middle Ages the secular epithalamium almost disappears. The last known epithalamium was written by Luxorius in the early sixth century. Instead of epithalamia and other occasional poems celebrating individuals, mystical and Christian hymns and allegorical poems were favoured.¹² In the Renaissance the epithalamium as a genre became popular, an essential accompaniment to any upper-class wedding - a sort of status symbol.¹³ The nature of the genre, celebrating a family occasion, seems to have appealed to the strong family sense of the middle classes. Thus it remained very popular for instance in Holland and in Germany among the learned and literary middle classes from the sixteenth century onwards.¹⁴ The writing of epithalamia was not a field only befitting minor

⁸However, in the East epithalamium continued to be written well down into the Byzantine empire in the Sapphic tradition. Wilson (n.4) 37.

⁹Z. Pavlovskis, "Statius and the late Latin Epithalamia", *Classical Philology* 60 (1965) 164-177. Popularity of both the epithalamium and Statius' *Silvae* came to an end at approximately the same time after late antiquity. In the Renaissance *Silvae* was reintroduced by Poggio Bracciolini. See also F.J.E. Raby, *A History of Secular Latin Poetry in the Middle Ages* 1, 1934, 39.

¹⁰Wilson (n.4) 35. For pastoral as a medium for wedding poem in neo-Latin literature see W.L. Grant, *Neo-Latin Literature and the Pastoral*, 1965, 294-305. See also L. Forster, "Conventional Safety Valves. Alba, Pastourelle, and Epithalamium", in: *Lebende Antike. Symposium für Rudolf Sühnel* (hrsg. H. Meller, H.-J. Zimmermann, 1967) 120-138.

¹¹Keydell (n.4) 931.

¹²Forster (n.10) 123; Wilson (n.4) 40-57.

¹³For the epithalamium in the Renaissance see Forster (n.10) 124-129.

¹⁴Forster (n.10) 129.

poets, but also such leading neo-Latin poets as the Italians Giovanni Pontano and Giacompo Sannazaro, the Scots Georg Buchanan and the Dutch Johannes Secundus composed wedding poems which were well-known around Europe including Finland.¹⁵ Large anthologies of neo-Latin poetry published at the beginning of the seventeenth century include also wedding poems by authors well-known in Sweden and Finland, such as Heinsius, Vossius and Grotius.¹⁶ In Sweden after the Reformation learned persons began to celebrate each other's weddings with hand-written poems. The first printed wedding poems in Sweden date from the second half of the sixteenth century. The habit initiated by the learned was then adopted by the nobility and soon after also by the burghers. During the first half of the seventeenth century wedding poems became more and more popular, reaching a peak in the second half of the century.¹⁷

There are altogether nine Latin wedding poems written by Finns before the founding of the Academy of Turku in 1640.¹⁸ After the first Finnish printing-house started to operate in 1642, printed occasional poems constituted a significant part of its production. These poems drew heavily on classical mythology. Although pagan gods were generally used metonymically or as symbols with no religious significance¹⁹, the Lutheran Church seems to have been annoyed at the abundance of pagan references in printed literary works. In most of the European countries, epithalamia were made to order. Students especially availed themselves of an opportunity to earn some extra money by composing Latin and/or vernacular epithalamia. In 1662 the Academic Senate at Turku expressed

¹⁵Olsson (n.3) 18-19.

¹⁶For the list of the anthologies see Olsson (n.3) 19 n.24; see also J. Sparrow, "Renaissance Latin Poetry: Some Sixteenth-Century Italian Anthologies", in: *Cultural Aspects of the Italian Renaissance* (ed. C.H. Clough, 1976) 386-405.

¹⁷The beginnings of epithalamium in Sweden are discussed by E. Noreen, "Den svenska bröllopsdiktens äldsta historia", *Saga och sed. Kungl. Gustav Adolfs Akademiens Årsbok* (1940) 51-54 and by H.-E. Johannesson, "Bröllopsvisa och epithalamium, en genre i förvandling. Om bröllopsdiktningen i Sverige under 1500-talet", in: *Latin & nationalsprog i Norden efter reformationen* (1991) 53-66. See also Castrén (n.3) 100-124; Olsson (n.3) 22-23.

¹⁸For Finnish Latin wedding poems before the year 1640 see T. Pekkanen, "Den latinska poesin i Finland 1500-1600, diktkonst eller versifikation?", in: *Latin & nationalsprog i Norden efter reformationen* (1991) 45-52; T. Pekkanen, "Suomen uuslatinalainen runous ennen Turun akatemian perustamista", in: *Collegium scientiae* (1983) 105-106.

¹⁹See I. Kajanto, *Humanism in Christian Society* 1, 1989, 34-37.

'its dissatisfaction and deep worry about students who against payment composed too many wedding and funeral poems with ostentatious style making wide use of pagan divine names'.²⁰ It was demanded that the flow of poems be brought under some sort of official control and the printing-house of the Academy was warned not to print any wedding or other poems if they were not first approved by the Professor of Poetry.²¹ The effect of the interference of the Academic Senate - if there was any - had obviously more to do with the general quality of the printed poems than with ecclesiastical matters. Classical mythology remained an essential part of the printed neo-Latin poems - at least so far as I have studied the material - to the year 1713.²² The most frequent and in this literary genre the most typical pagan names are Apollo and the Muses with their many appellations, Aphrodite or Venus, Juno, Charites, Cupids, Eros and Hymen or Hymenaeus. If the effect of Lutheran Orthodoxy is not to be seen as an attempt to avoid the use of classical mythology and pagan names in the wedding poems, it is manifested sometimes in direct propaganda against the Pope and Catholicism.²³

When we examine the writers of these poems it seems that in addition to the learned persons, who were the most frequent writers of neo-Latin poems everywhere, also persons who were not directly connected to the Academy of Turku versified more often for weddings than for other occasions. This was not only due to the popularity of wedding poems but also to the appreciation of the marital institution in general. Furthermore, it is conspicuous that especially the brothers of the bridal couple often have felt obliged to versify.²⁴ The frequency of brothers of bridal couples as writers was a consequence of the social expectations which the increasing popularity of occasional literature had created: close friends, relatives, colleagues etc. were supposed to write as an expression of friendship, affinity or respect. Consequently, it was common that writers in some way expressed their relation to the bridal

²⁰Consistorii Academici Aboensis Äldre Protokoller 1, 1884, 362.

²¹I.A. Heikel, *Filologins studium vid Åbo universitet*, 1894, 157.

²²Cf. Kajanto (n.19) 40.

²³E.g. TM 764, A3^v. It was popular to criticize the Pope and Catholicism, particularly in contemporary oratory.

²⁴Cf. C.I. Ståhle, *Vers och språk i Vasatidens och stormaktstidens svenska diktning*, 1975, 293.

couple at the end of the poem. As mentioned above, wedding poems could also be ordered and paid for. In some cases the motive to write in someone's honour might also have arisen from the aspiration for gaining merit or popularity.²⁵

The nuptial publications consist of from one to twenty poems, each poem varying from two to two hundred verses. Usually there are several poems by various authors in Latin and in Swedish, sometimes also in Greek, German and Finnish. In comparison with the other congratulatory, nuptial publications include more poems written in Swedish, which in the eighteenth century surpassed Latin as the language of occasional literature.²⁶ Moreover, vernacular translations or modifications of the Latin poem are sometimes added because the bride was not expected to understand Latin. However, there are several publications written completely in Latin and quite a number of Latin poems addressed directly to the bride with no vernacular translations. The common usage of addressing the bride a Latin poem, which she herself could not understand, was rather a question of style than an intention to address the bride personally: a poem became more coherent when attention was equally focused on both members of the bridal couple. However, I do not want to exclude fully the possibility that some women coming from learned families had some knowledge of Latin, although it is difficult to find any evidence for this.²⁷

The frontispieces of the nuptial publications carry various titles, among which *epithalamium/epithalamia*, *gamelion* (Greek γάμος, γαμήλιον)²⁸, *acclamatio votiva in nuptiis*, *sylvae* are the most frequent. If there are more than one or two contributors - as there were in most cases - the names are not mentioned on the title-pages. Instead, the contributors

²⁵Cf. P. Ridderstad, "Tryckt för tillfället", in: Den svenska boken 500 år (ed. H. Järv, 1983) 239-240.

²⁶P. Lilius, Språkval och ordval i tillfällesdiktningen i Finland 1700-1749, 1994, 85, 91.

²⁷At least one direct allusion can yet be found referring to the daughter to the famous professor and bishop Enevald Svenonius (TM 834, A2^r, a lapidary piece by Sveno Hielmberg): *Est Sponsa, / Qvae vos docta est omni loco venerari / Nata, educata, instituta in vestra schola*. See also Kajanto (n.19) 39 n.75.

²⁸Gamelion is one of the seven forms of epideictic discussed by Dionysius Halicarnassus, who defined it as a speech at a marriage, often discussing the question "Should a man marry?". G. Kennedy, *The Art of Rhetoric in the Roman World 300 B.C.-A.D.300*, 1972, 635.

are described with some common denominators, such as friends, fellow citizens, supporters, students, colleagues, etc. There is no information about the persons by whom the collections were edited; probably it was done by one of the contributors or in some cases by the bridegroom, who had ordered the publication.²⁹ It is probable that sometimes the only editorial work was carried out by the printer who arranged the poems the way he considered best. Ornamentations are usually simple, due to the modest conditions under which the first printing house began to operate in Turku in 1642. Towards the end of the seventeenth century ornamentations increase, becoming at the same time more elaborate. Most publications carry, at least on the title-page, a vignette where inside a laurel wreath, sometimes held by two angels, there are motifs symbolizing love and marital felicity: date palms, flowers, doves and rings. Vignettes are very often accompanied by one of two phrases: *Quod Deus Conjunxit, (Id) Homo Non Separet*³⁰; *Palma velut palmam ceu casta columba columbu(m) sic vero conjux coniuge(m) amore colat.*

During the first decades of the seventeenth century the special features of mannerism began to be seen in the Latin poetry written by Swedish and Finnish writers whose literary influences were usually brought home from their visits to the German universities.³¹ Anagrams were popular. Based on the idea of *nomen est omen* the letters of the names of the bride and bridegroom were combined so that they form a word or phrase which alludes to a certain moral quality characteristic of the owner of the name. Chronograms were frequent, especially on the title-pages: the numerical values of the Latin numbers can be added up providing the indication of the date of the wedding.³² Acrostics were also popular: the names of the bride and bridegroom may be read in words

²⁹There are, for instance, two publications composed for the wedding of Professor Andreas Thronius and Sara Meisner, which took place in Stockholm in 1657. One was composed by colleagues in Turku but it was evidently Thronius who had it printed in Stockholm. The other one was printed in Turku where Thronius' friends, who had also composed the poems, took care of the printing.

³⁰This text was often used in the Middle Ages in wedding addresses or sermons by priests. Cf. Forster (n.10) 123.

³¹K. Johannesson, *I polstjärnans tecken. Studier i svensk barock*, 1968, 15.

³²B. Dupriez, *A Dictionary of Literary Devices*. Translated and adapted by A.W. Halsall, 1991, 97; I. Kajanto, "Latin Verse Inscriptions in Medieval and Renaissance Rome", *Latomus* 52 (1993) 54-55.

formed by the initial letters of each line.³³ Different kinds of literary games were used: verses were written in columns, which can be read also upside-down when they have either exactly the same or a totally different meaning, one being sometimes pious and the other one more frivolous.³⁴ There are also poems - some of them quite long - in which all the words begin with the same initial letter. Moreover, there are some wedding congratulations composed in lapidary style, which was much more popular for funeral publications but, especially in the 1670s, it was employed in epithalamia as well.³⁵

The most common classical metres in wedding poems were the ones that were most frequent in Finnish neo-Latin poetry on the whole: elegiac couplets and dactylic hexameters. Apart from these, Sapphic verses were particularly popular in wedding poems. In addition, hendecasyllables, Horace's lyric metres and Alcaic stanzas were employed.³⁶

Menander Rhetor's elaborate survey of secular forms of praise includes twenty-three basic topics, among them the epithalamium. The types worked out by Menander and other rhetoricians for epideictic speeches became standard topics for poetry.³⁷ Menander's plan for an epithalamium includes the following five points: 1) proemium, 2) passage on god of marriage and encomium of the institution of marriage, 3) encomium of bride and bridegroom, 4) description of the bridal chamber, 5) prayer.³⁸ In the sixteenth century J.C. Scaliger codified the existing practice of composing epithalamia in his work of literary theory, *Poetices*

³³Johannesson (n.31) 15.

³⁴E.g. TM 1886, A3^v; TM 1985, A2^v.

³⁵E.g. TM 567, A3^v-A4^r; TM 624, A2^r; TM 807; TM 834, A2^r. For the style see J. Sparrow, *Visible Words. A Study of Inscriptions in and as Books and Works of Art*, 1969; P.S. Ridderstad, *Konsten att sätta punkt. Anteckningar om stenstilens historia 1400-1765*, 1975; J. IJsewijn, "Morcelli epigrafista tra erudizione umanistica ed arte neoclassica", in: *Atti del Colloquio su Stefano Antonio Morcelli, Milano - Chiara 2-3 ottobre 1987 (1990)* 13-40; R. Sarasti-Wilenius, "Latin Lapidary Style in Finland", *Arctos* 25 (1991) 121-132.

³⁶Cf. W. Ludwig, "The Catullan Style in Neo-Latin Poetry", in: *Latin Poetry and the Classical Tradition. Essays in Medieval and Renaissance Literature* (ed. P. Godman, O. Murray, 1990) 184; Heikel (n.21) 156.

³⁷E.R. Curtius, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, 1973, 158; O.B. Hardison, *The Enduring Monument. A Study of the Idea of Praise in Renaissance Literary History and Practice*, 1962, 32.

³⁸D.A. Russel - N.G. Wilson (eds.), *Menander Rhetor*, 1981, 134-144.

libri septem (1561), well-known all over Europe. He advised to pay attention to the following six constituents: 1) desires of the bridegroom and bride, 2) encomium of the bride and groom, 3) good wishes, 4) reference to *lascivia lusisque* and expressions of mutual affection, 5) good wishes for future offspring, 6) call to sleep for the guests, call for the bridal pair to *ioci petulantiores*.³⁹ A detailed Finnish handbook of rhetoric, *Institutiones oratoriae* (Aboae 1669), by the Professor of Eloquence, Martin Miltopaeus, which was mostly compiled from various ancient and later rhetoricians, gives us perhaps the best idea of the pattern which was followed among the Finnish writers; at any rate, it reveals the authors and the works considered as the best models within this literary genre. Miltopaeus's structure for epithalamium is: 1) *proemium* (joy and solemnity of the wedding), 2) *laudes sponsi et sponsae*, 3) *conjugij commoda*, 4) *gratulationes*, 5) *vota*.⁴⁰ Miltopaeus' model is similar to that of Menander's, it only does not include a description of the bridal chamber and the god of wedding no longer plays such an important role. Unlike Scaliger, Miltopaeus does not allude explicitly to the sexual life of marriage. At the end of the chapter which deals with *orationes nuptiales et epithalamicae* Miltopaeus recommends among the ancient epithalamia, Catullus' number 64, Claudian's poems on the wedding of the Emperor Honorius with Stilicho's daughter Maria⁴¹, Statius' *Epithalamium in Stellam et Violentillam*, Martial's poem on the wedding of Pudens and Claudia and Buchanan's that of France and Mary Stuart. Among his contemporary epithalamists he recommends Heinsius, Grotius, Baudius, and Barlaeus. Finally he advised the reading of Pliny the Younger ep. 6,26.⁴²

It goes without saying that these topics given in the handbooks are not always to be found in all of the poems, the majority of which are often

³⁹Iulius Caesar Scaliger *Poetices libri septem*, Band III, herausgegeben, übersetzt, eingeleitet und erläutert von Luc Deitz, 1995, 62-99.

⁴⁰Miltopaeus 414-416.

⁴¹There are six poems on the wedding of Honorius (Claud. 9-14), in addition to two poems on the wedding of his friend Palladius with Celerina (30,31).

⁴²Miltopaeus 416-417. It is interesting that Miltopaeus includes Buchanan (1506-1582) in the category of *veteres*, whereas Baudius (1561-1613) and Grotius (1583-1645), who also were born in the sixteenth century are called contemporaries. Heinsius refers to Daniel Heinsius' son Nicolaus (1620-81) who worked in the court of Queen Christina and prepared text editions of Ovid and Claudian.

relatively brief. The simplest type of wedding poem is a short prayer or *votum*, the contents of which will be discussed below (p.00). However, usually some other themes were connected and writers had to be content with *vota* only when they were short of time, a topos which is often mentioned at the end of the poem using such formulae as *Debitae gratulationis, honoris et observantiae declarandae ergo ita rudi et nimis festina manu tumultuarie, ex animo tamen, applaudebat N.N. or non ut voluit sed ut potuit festinus scribebat N.N.*

The poems often begin according to Miltopaeus' advice *a laetitia et festivitate nuptiarum*. Menander's suggestion to begin with a narrative is often observed.⁴³ Poems may have their settings in mythological surroundings or occasions, such as the wedding of Dionysus and Ariadne or at the wedding of Peleus and Thetis.⁴⁴ Apollo and the Muses are quite often the prime movers in the poems. In the poem to Professor Anders Thuronius and Sara Meisner by Johannes Schäder (1657), the nine Muses are invited to play different instruments. Muses appear bringing presents for the bride and the bridegroom: Calliope grants long life, Clio love, Euterpe children, Terpsichore health, Erato felicity, Melpomene wealth, Thalia joy, Polyhymnia fame and Urania piety and a happy departure from life.⁴⁵ Venus' power over human beings or the might of love is a frequent topic⁴⁶, affirmed sometimes with Virgil's *Amor vincit omnia et nos cedamus amori* (ecl. 10,69) or with thematically similar verses quoted from other ancient poets.⁴⁷ In some poems Venus, at the request of Cupido, brings the couple together, which is a theme originating with Statius.⁴⁸

Themes connected to the praise of the institution of marriage, such as the use and the origin of the marital institution, are frequently utilized.

⁴³Russel-Wilson (n.38) 136-137.

⁴⁴Cf. Catull. 64; R. Reitzenstein, "Die Hochzeit des Peleus und der Thetis", *Hermes* 35 (1900) 73-105. See Kajanto (n.19) 39.

⁴⁵TM 383. In TM 545, B2^v, Andreas Prytz employed a similar kind of motif: Apollo invites the Muses to play different instruments and to form an orchestra in order to celebrate the wedding.

⁴⁶TM 367, A2^v Venus says: *...Nec superos linqvunt; Agamemnon, Nestor, Achilles/ Tela trisulca meis manibus vibrata tremebant*. Cf. Stat. silv. 1,2,183-186

⁴⁷E.g.in TM 567, A1^v, there is quotation from Prop. 2,1,57-58. Cf. Castrén (n.3) 119-120.

⁴⁸Cf. Castrén (n.3) 113.

It is universally considered that God has ordered the structure of society to rest upon marriage by joining Adam and Eve as man and wife: *Inde potente manu primum Evam junxit Adamo/ Dicens: Esse homini solum non expedit unquam.*⁴⁹ Advantages and blessings of marriage versus disadvantages are an ancient theme sung by two choirs or debated in dialogues. In the seventeenth century it was popular theme in the Latin as well as in the vernacular wedding poetry. Misogynic motifs, which were more frequent in the vernacular poems, are to be found in few cases but even then they are disproved in the course of the poem and authors always reach the conclusion that the woman is worth marrying.⁵⁰ In *Discursus Deliberativus de conjugio* (1653) the author, Ericus Julinus, undertakes to refute the statement that describes a bachelor as always happier than a married man. First a wife is described with a number of unflattering adjectives:

... nam saepe est uxor demens et litigiosa.
est rixosa domi, morosa et adultera saepe,
difficilis, queribunda, procax, inamabilis, audax,
tristis, inepta, loquax, rugosa, pigra atque superba.⁵¹

The author, however, disagrees and instead praises a wife's fidelity to her husband, which was a topos in wedding poems. Moreover, he lists the good deeds which a wife can perform for a man's welfare: she takes care of him, cheers him when he is sad, relieves oppression and pains, counsels, consoles, helps, advises, makes love and last but not least gives birth to man's children. Julinus admits that a bad wife creates hellish circumstances, but assures that God (*Rector Olympi*) does not allow such a misfortune to befall a devout Christians.⁵² The above-listed good deeds of a wife occur repeatedly in the poems. Besides as the mother of a man's children, a wife is regarded as someone who makes a man's life happy and who gives comfort to a man in the adversities and miseries of earthly

⁴⁹TM 930, A2^r.

⁵⁰E.g. Laurentius Ulm-Grehn, *ZHTHΣΙΣ ΓΑΜΙΚΗ An uxor ducenda in utramque partem, Carmine elegiaco disputata atque decisa in honorem nuptiarum Ambrosii Nidelbergs et Catharina Etholaeniae* 1679 (TM 764). Cf. n.28. Cf. Olsson (n.3) 50-51.

⁵¹TM 306, A1^v.

⁵²TM 306, A2^r: ... mulier mala quotidiana Gehenna est/ Nil tamen hinc sequitur, nam talem Rector Olympi/ Non dabit assiduo se pectore mente colenti.

life.⁵³ Moreover, a wife is often considered to be more *fida/fidelis* to her husband than his friends, brothers or even mother.⁵⁴ In the poem addressed to Magister Andreas Indrenius and Elisabeth Teet, daughter of a pastor (1689), Andreas Henricius is not firmly convinced that marriage can bring any good but honour. In the whole corpus of material, Henricius expresses one of the least enthusiastic thoughts about taking a wife by assuring the bridegroom that his liberty is totally lost now.⁵⁵ The theme of man's personal liberty and its loss in marriage recurs particularly in poems addressed to academic persons by their colleagues. Professor Anders Thuronius, who himself had married two years earlier, asks the bridegroom, Magister Claudius Holstius (1659): 'Dear Magister, do you ask why you are taking a wife, who usually increases manifold man's worries? Why do you exchange your liberty with which Nature blessed you for female bonds?' Nevertheless the author continues by giving grave arguments on the advantages of being a married man over being single.⁵⁶ A similar kind of empathy as the regretting of the loss of man's personal liberty is shown to the bride only in few cases. Anders Hestadius addresses a question to Claudius Holstius' bride, Anna Brennera: 'Shall I congratulate or shall I grieve now when you are so early leaving maidenhood?'⁵⁷

In the wedding poems addressed to a person who belonged to the learned circles it is a popular theme to treat the competitive position of personified Wisdom, Sophia, and the actual bride. The poem may be constructed as follows: The bridegroom has chosen earlier to love Sophia or sometimes Sophia is said to have taken the initiative and chosen the man as her own and a problematic situation arises now when the man is taking another wife. The authors state that it is legally forbidden to take two

⁵³E.g. in TM 409, A3^v: "*Sit tibi, quam duxti, virgo decus atque levamen/ Purpureoque malum frangat amore tuum*".

⁵⁴E.g. in TM 394, A2^v: *Fidior est socijs, est fratre fidelior uxor/ et matris vincit candida nupta fidem/ Rara fides socijs, semper fidissima conjunx.*

⁵⁵TM 1156, A1^v-A2^r: *Sic, mihi crede, tibi libertas perdita tota est, / ... Omnis honor onus est, honor uxor namque mariti / Fortiter inde feras, est honor est quoque onus. . Cf. Ov. her. 9,31.*

⁵⁶TM 409, A1^v: *Quaereris? uxorem cur ducas, clare Magister / Quae curas svevit multiplicare Viri? / Cur libertatem qua Te Natura beavit / Vendas foeminea in vincla parata ruens? / Causa Tibi in promptu est. Vacuo nam vivere lecto/ displicet...*

⁵⁷TM 409, A4^r: *Gratulor an doleam? quod tu nunc Anna relinquis/ Tam propere vitae tempora virgineae.*

wives, but the combination of Sophia and a mortal wife can be achieved without any conflicts if the two ladies are taking care of their respective responsibilities. The situation brings a man double pleasure. In the poem composed by Michael Jurvelius to celebrate the wedding of his colleague, Professor Axel Kempe and Agneta Holm, daughter of a pastor (1654), the different positions and the division of the responsibilities and tasks between Sophia and the bride Agneta are clearly shown: `May Sophia cheer you up whenever you want intellectual inspiration, Agneta may cheer up your worldly body. Sophia will be awake with you until nightfall, Agneta will be company for you when you sleep ... So you have company for better for worse, learned virgin out, faithful wife at home'.⁵⁸

The material includes many different kinds of dialogues which was a typical form of a wedding poem. Dialogues between Cupid and Venus were a characteristic of the Roman epithalamium. Also the ancient eclogue, which had much in common with the epithalamium, employed alternately sung dialogues.⁵⁹ The most typical kind of dialogue in the material is a dialogue between bride and bridegroom but also various other types of dialogues can be found.⁶⁰ Those conversing may as well be members of the families of the bridal couple as mythological characters or personified objects. Just to pick out one example representing the last group mentioned, one could choose the idyllic *Dialogus Nuptialis inter Auram flumen et Cupisalem fontem* by Petrus Gyllenius, in which the reader is taken to the surroundings of Turku to listen to how the well of Kupittaa and the river Aura, calling each others sisters, are delightfully chatting about the *Sponsus* and the *Sponsa*, about their families, virtues, etc. The well is asking questions and the river, answering, praises the bridal couple and their families.⁶¹

Many dialogues in my material refer to the moment when a young girl is leaving her parents' house, a motif already familiar from ancient

⁵⁸TM 330, A4^r-A4^v: *Te Sophia oblectat, quotiens vis pascere mentem./ Agneta munditiem corporis usque juvat./ Invigilat tecum Musis, sedet adque lucernam / Illa: Haec te socium, sic ubi dormis, habet./ ... Ergo tibi comes est, jam a dextris jamque sinistris / Docta virago foris, Nupta pudica domi. Cf. TM 338, A4^r: Illa (Sophia) foris praestat doctrinae encomia, famam/ Ista (the bride) domi amplexus, basia blanda, jocos.*

⁵⁹Keydell (n.4) 928; Wilson (n.4) 36-38.

⁶⁰A dialogue between bride and bridegroom was also the most used form in the oldest Swedish wedding poetry. See Castrén (n.3) 104.

⁶¹TM 337, A1^v-A3^v.

epithalamia.⁶² These poems give us a glimpse of the mixed emotions evoked by the occasion which marked a turning point in a girl's life. They are concerned with the social aspect of the wedding: the bride becomes a member of a new family. Dialogues are often set at the bride's home which she must leave now and, like in Catullus (61,81), the bride leaves her parents' home crying. In *Dialogus Neonymphorum* written by Gabriel Hammar to Andreas Heinricius and Catharina Thesleff (1658), the bridegroom asks the bride to say good-bye to her parents and fulfill her duty by following him to his father's house. The bride, fully conscious of her duty, however, cannot move herself for the gnawing grief and for the tears trickling down her cheeks. The bridegroom admits that the parent's love is important but promises to love her and to treat her tenderly, if she behaves well. The bridegroom argues that private homes under a man's dominance promote the well-being of the fatherland, after which the bride - encouraged - is ready to follow him swearing fidelity: *Sum tua teque sequens una tua iussa capesso*.⁶³ This poem affirms the divinely ordered structure of the society, into which the bridal couple enters and moreover, it reflects woman's position in general. According to the laws, all women except widows had to be under a man's guardianship. Marriage meant transition from a father's guardianship to that of a husband's.⁶⁴ The Professor of Ethics and History, Michael Wexionius-Gyldenstolpe, discussed marriage and home life including woman's position in *Oeconomia* (Aboae 1645), a handbook of practical philosophy. According to the *Oeconomia*, a man is the head of the family. He has to treat his wife well, who for her part has to obey, respect and love him. A wife has to be hard-working, humble, helpful, tidy and taciturn. Together they are to be patient, to correct each other's faults and defects and to maintain harmony. The wedding poems reflect very well these ideas and the values presented

⁶²Cf. Catull. 61.

⁶³TM 394, A4^r-A4^v. Cf. Verg. Aen. 1,77.

⁶⁴R. Nilsson, *Kvinnosyn i Sverige. Från drottning Kristina till Anna Maria Lenngren*, 1973, 76.

in Wexionius-Gyldenstolpe's work.⁶⁵

The dialogues between bride and bridegroom repeat the responsibilities of man and wife and mutual promises of love and faithfulness. The most individual and tender expressions can be found in these dialogues. In the chorus of *Blandum Colloquium inter Neonymphos* (1688), an anonymous poem addressed to Jonas Pacchalenius and Catharina Henricia, both of the newly married affirm their love for each other and encourage each other to physical love.⁶⁶ In this poem, as often in dialogues between bride and bridegroom, the bride promises to give herself totally to the bridegroom: *Do tibi me totam, totam me sumque datura/ Spiritus hos artus, dum regit atque fovet.*⁶⁷ The significance of love was, however, in these poems different from what we think of as love between husband and wife today. Love was then considered as a consequence of marriage not a prerequisite for it, and individuals did not play as big part as families when marriages were contracted.⁶⁸

The praise of the bridal couple, one of the primary elements of an epithalamium, is often carried out in dialogues between the bridal couple. In shorter poems the praise may be expressed by naming some single virtues. It is noteworthy that in these shorter poems brides more often than bridegrooms are described with adjectives representing virtues. This reminds us of the fact that all these poems were composed by men and since written in Latin they were also in the first place addressed to other men. Convincing men of women's good qualities would be quite a natural thing in such wedding poems. In the *Blandum Colloquium inter Neonymphos*, quoted above, the bridegroom praises the bride's piety, chastity, modesty and respectability. He considers them to be more

⁶⁵Feminist influences began to be felt in Sweden in the seventeenth century but new attitudes were not to be found in the Latin dissertations concerning marriage before 1680-1730 when ideas of natural law began to spread in Sweden-Finland under the influence of Samuel Pufendorf's work *De jure naturae et gentium*, published in Lund in 1672. In the treatises on marriage written during this period all people are considered equal in nature; man is considered superior in marriage but this right is thought to have originated in the wife's consent. Nilsson (n.64) 139. See also M.J. Heath, "Erasmus and the Laws of Marriage", in: *Acta Conventus Neo-Latini Hafniensis. Proceedings of the Eight International Congress of Neo-Latin Studies* (1994) 477-484.

⁶⁶TM 1102, A1^v-A2^r: *Expetis amplexus? amplectere: basia? fige/ In gremio esse? veni: concubuisse? cuba.*

⁶⁷Cf. Verg. Aen. 4,336.

⁶⁸See Castrén (n.3) 26-27; Nilsson (n.64) 173.

important than her good family using thus the ancient topos in which the significance of a person's *virtus* and *genus* are opposed.⁶⁹ The bride names the cases of Jason and Medea, Demophon and Phyllis, Hippolytus and Phaedra as examples of perilous relationships, whereas Penelope's behaviour sets the bride a good example: she was cautious and thus always beloved. In many poems the bride's virtues are described with simple adjectives, such as *pia*, *pulchra*, *casta*, *pudica*, *proba*. These qualities were universally thought appropriate for women and they not only occurred in epithalamia but also in contemporary funerary poems, orations and treatises.⁷⁰

Going to bed was the last act in the series of legal acts which were necessary for the marriage to be sanctioned.⁷¹ Associated with one of the main purposes of the marriage, the marital bed was a central concept of the whole institution. Consequently, in certain cases the expression 'to have a woman in one's bed' was equal 'to be married'.⁷² In wedding poems the erotic side of this juridical act is widely celebrated. According to Scaliger's prescriptions, allusions to sexual intercourse constituted an essential part of wedding poems (*lascivia lususque, ioci petulantiores*).⁷³ Although Miltopaeus does not explicitly refer to this topic in his *Institutiones oratoriae*, the Latin wedding poems by his contemporary Finns are full of allusions to weddings as an erotic event. Authors often congratulate the bride and bridegroom on the new joys of marital bed (*gratulor ex animo vobis nova gaudia lecti*) and on the pleasures of nighttime, or they encourage them to make love: *Ludite! in amplexu blando quin ora ligate/ suavia captantes basia basiolis*.⁷⁴ Even the brevity of a poem is sometimes excused with the desire not to delay these pleasures of marriage.⁷⁵ These types of wordings are perhaps closest to Scaliger's plan in which at the end

⁶⁹This was a frequent topic in contemporary oratory. Cf. Russell-Wilson (n.38) 140-143.

⁷⁰Cf. Kajanto (n.19) 180.

⁷¹L. Carlsson, " 'Jag giver dig min dotter'. Trolovning och äktenskap i den svenska kvinnans historia 1", Rättshistoriskt bibliotek 8 (1965) 137.

⁷²E.g. in TM 764, A4^r-A4^v: *Inque tuo lecto nunc Etholaenia sit;/ Utere jure tuo casta est, quae ducitur uxor/ nunc potens licito laetus amore frui/ Ut leges canonesque jubent usu cape sponsam/ Conspicuum vera cum pietate decus.*

⁷³See Forster (n.10) 132.

⁷⁴TM 314; TM 1688, A2^v.

⁷⁵E.g. TM 1056, A2^v: *Jungat sic vos verus amor, mutua jungat gratia/ Et nectat bina vestra corpora dulci jugo/ Sed non longum carmine remoretur haec nova gaudia.*

of the poem the guests are called upon to go to sleep whereas the nuptial pair is encouraged to start their night together.

The similarity of bride and bridegroom is a popular theme of the wedding poems. In the classical epithalamium love unites two equals, equally distinguished in birth, age and qualities of mind and body.⁷⁶ In the poem written for the wedding of Magister Johan Liljevan and Catharina Murenia, daughter of a pastor (1656), the author, Professor Eric Justander, plays with the words *par - compar - impar*. His message is: 'if you want marry successfully, marry a woman who is your equal, because a dissimilar couple is not a couple at all and will separate'.⁷⁷ In connection with this topic it was popular to employ the rural metaphor originating in Ovid's *Heroides* 9,29-32, quoted by Wexionius-Gyldenstolpe in his *Oeconomia* (p.26).⁷⁸ In Andreas Mathesius' elegiac poem to his brother Josephus and Maria Thorwöst, the main theme of the whole poem is the similarity in origin, faith, fortune and virtues:

*Vir sociam cupiens Thalami, similem sibi quaerat
Nubat virgo pari, nubere quando volet
Pagina sacra monet, pariter monuere priores
Apte conveniunt, namque pares socij.
Ut monuere pij, frater, sic rite secutus
es, sociam similem ducere dum sat agis...
Ambo pares estis vos religione fideque ...
Ambo pares animae, fortunae, et corporis estis
Dotibus eximijs, sitis et una caro.⁷⁹*

He produces evidence for the similarity of the future man and wife from the advice in the Bible and from earlier generations. The frequency of this topic is probably partly due to the seventeenth century interest in

⁷⁶Himerii sophistae Declamationes integrae XXXIV (emendavit Fr. Dübner, MDCCCXLIX) 41-42; Wilson (n.4) 38, 55.

⁷⁷TM 367, A1^v.

⁷⁸TM 367, A1^v: *Quam male inaequales veniunt ad aratra juvenci/ si qua voles apte nubere, nube pari!* is a word-for-word quotation from Ovid. Cf. TM 369, A2^r-A2^v: *Urat amor caste sed non exurat amantes/ Ambo ut amore pares, ambo et honore pares./ Sic pariles parili veniunt aetate jugales/ Parque jugo compar dulce ferendo pari./ Tam bene conveniunt similes ad aratra jugales/ Intemerata fides, intemeratus amor.*

⁷⁹TM 522, A4^r.

maintaining the class society and preventing social mobility.⁸⁰ Although the classes were not totally closed and some kind of social mobility occurred, the class distinction was observed particularly carefully when it concerned marriage. L. Gustafsson considers that the marriages contracted across the social classes actualized the propaganda against mixed marriages which manifested itself e.g. in the wedding poetry of the time.⁸¹ In the Finnish Latin wedding poems the propagandist function is to be seen but it should not be one-sidedly overestimated. It is also a question of an ancient literary topos of the genre.

Considering all the material, it is the contents of the *Votum* that is perhaps the most homogenous feature in these poems.⁸² This is to be seen also in similar kinds of phrases and expressions employed in *Vota*. A *Votum* is either a separate short poem, independent or annexed to a longer poem, or - as in most cases - consists of the last few verses of a poem asking God to bless the bride and the bridegroom with a long and happy life, with a peaceful marriage without major quarrels, with many children and grandchildren and finally with a happy departure from this life and an eternal life in Heaven.⁸³ Authors almost never neglect to point out that the main purpose of marriage is to perpetuate their line and the sooner they have children and grandchildren the better. Such a wish is fairly standard in this genre, it appears in Himerios' plan for a wedding speech but it already is conspicuous in Catullus.⁸⁴ Having early grandchildren is also a topos typical of the genre.⁸⁵ Although the content of the *Votum* is always Christian, expressions usually derive from classical mythology. God is named Jupiter and particularly often *Altitonans*, an epithet of Jupiter. Also

⁸⁰L. Gustafsson, "Litteratur och miljö", in: Kultur och samhälle i stormaktstidens Sverige (ed. Dahlgren, Ellenius, Gustafsson, Larsson, 1967) 115.

⁸¹Gustafsson (n.79) 115-116.

⁸²Miltopaeus 416, advises to compose a *Votum* as follows: *Deinque vota nuncupabimus ut quae praediximus futura, spe majora eveniant omnia, ut divitijs abundantes, liberis felices, concordia et amicitijs laeti, ab adversis immunes, vitam longam et felicem in terris degant, suorum etiam nuptias liberorum videant et tandem in caelis triumphant.*

⁸³E.g. TM 545, B2^v: *Aspiret vobis semper benedictio caeli:/ Atque animos certo firmet amore fides!/ Sint procul infaustae voces et jurgia saeva! Pectora jungat Eros, turpis et absit Eris!/ Jucundam thalamo sobolem producite vestro!/ Ut fructu grato splendeat ipsa domus./ Felices longam laeti traducite vitam/ Vos tandem capiat regia celsa Dei!*

⁸⁴Himerii sophistae Declamationes 43; Catull. 61,204; Stat. silv. 1,2,266.

⁸⁵Cf. Plin. epist. 6,26.

moderator/rector Olympi refers frequently to God.⁸⁶ It is hoped that the bride and bridegroom live *Nestoreos annos*, *Pylios annos* or *Sibyllinos annos*.⁸⁷ Even Heaven is referred to with pagan expressions, for instance, Olympus or *celestia Tempe*. Zacharias Forbus finishes his elegant poem with the prayer full of ancient references:

*Vestros non visitet furiens Bellona penates
Agmina nec Martis, quae rubuere diu
Sed quot sunt Magni rutilantia sidera Olympi
Tot bona, tot vitae fata secunda precor.*⁸⁸

To conclude it can be stated that the Finnish corpus of Latin wedding poems is composed by writers of different abilities. This article describing the material in such general terms hardly does justice to the poems which deserve to be discussed in greater detail for their literary merits. I hope I am able to return to them in the future. The corpus as such bears witness to educated people's facility to versify in Latin in the seventeenth century, thanks to an education which gave instruction in composing Latin verses from the very beginning. Although the publications are usually multilingual, Latin was still the most used language in occasional writings in seventeenth century Finland. The forms and the topics of the poems derive mostly from ancient epithalamia. However, there are to be found some new topics connected particularly to the learned middle-class, the most prominent group of writers and addressees of these poems. Classical mythology, either as a literary ornament or in Christian use, is an essential feature. Secondly, the corpus of printed poems, devoted to a family occasion, are interesting as a cultural and social phenomenon: they were an integral part of weddings of the well-to-do families, a kind of status symbol. In the poems the newly married are entering the divinely ordered structure of society, in which the wife is under the man's guardianship and together they are to fulfill their duties to God and fatherland with love, joy and pleasure. Thus the poems are celebrating three different aspects of the wedding: as a religious, as a social (or juridical) and as an erotic event.

University of Helsinki

⁸⁶TM 832, A4^v.

⁸⁷TM 1830, A2^v. Cf. Ov. trist. 5,5,62.

⁸⁸TM 1987, A2^v.