JOHN R. CLARK

Love and Learning in the 'Metamorphosis Golye Episcopi'

About the year 1142 an anonymous cleric composed the poem, 'Metamorphosis Golye episcopi', which concludes with a condemnation of the Cistercians as the enemies of philosophy and, in particular, of Peter Abelard[1]. The poet-dreamer had imagined himself as a witness to the celestial wedding party of Mercury and Philology, taken from the pages of Martianus Capella, into which he introduced as guests the leading twelfth-century masters from the schools of Paris and Chartres. Abelard's absence from this learned assembly is noted by the bride in the poem. This unnamed bride had been mistakenly referred to by earlier scholars as Heloise. More recently Winthrop Wetherbee, considering the poem as a whole, has shown that the bride should logically be not Heloise but Philology[2]. Wetherbee's arguments were later supported by John Benton, but unlike Wetherbee, who felt that no reference to a bride and Abelard could fail to suggest Heloise, at least on a secondary level, Benton argued that no reference to Heloise on a primary or secondary level was meant[3]. This argument over the reference to Heloise has led to different conclusions about the overall purpose of the poem. For Wetherbee the ambiguous nature of the poem's references to love brings to mind Abelard's sufferings as both lover and philosopher, while Benton sees Venus in the poem as simply another enemy, like the monks, to the scholar. The conflict between love and learning in the poem would seem to hold the key to its meaning. With a fresh treatment, and supported by new evidence, I

[1] The poem was first edited from the thirteenth-century MS London BL, Harl. 978 by Thomas WRIGHT, The Latin Poems Commonly Attributed to Walter Mapes (London 1841/New York 1968) 21–30. A second edition was prepared by R.B.C. HUYGENS, Mitteilungen aus Handschriften, III: Die Metamorphose des Golias, in: SM III 3 (1962) 764–772, using the Harley MS and the few good readings from an otherwise inferior text in the fourteenth-century MS St. Omer Bibl. munic. 710. Reference to the poem is by stanza and line number to HUYGENS' text. For the date see Reginald L. POOLE, The Masters of the Schools of Paris and Chartres in John of Salisbury's Time, in: English Historical Review 35 (1920) 321–342, here 337–338; and John BENTON, Philology's Search for Abelard in the 'Metamorphosis Goliae' in: Speculum 50 (1975) 199–217, here 216–217.

[2] Winthrop WETHERBEE, Platonism and Poetry in the Twelfth Century. The Literary Influence of the School of Chartres (Princeton 1972) 133–134.

[3] BENTON (note 1) 203–217; followed by Peter VON MOOS, Die Bekehrung Heloises, in: Mlat. Jb. 11 (1976) 120 note 44. WETHERBEE's Philology-Heloise identification is supported by Peter DRONKE, Abelard and Heloise in Medieval Testimonies (W.P. Ker Lecture 26), Glasgow 1976, 18.

Mittellateinisches Jahrbuch, Band 21 (1986)

would like to survey the material one more time, reflecting on the nature of love and learning and their portrayal in the poem.

The poem opens with the typical 'Natureingang' of the twelfth-century love lyric, although here the earth in bloom does not suggest the poet's own stirrings towards love[4]. Rather, it is the springtime 'locus amoenus'[5] in which the poet falls asleep and dreams of entering a cosmic grove (1.1–2.8)[6]:

Sole post Arietem Taurum subintrante,
novo terre faciem flore picturante,
pinu sub florigera nuper pullulante
membra sompno foveram paulo fessus ante.
Nemus michi videor quoddam subintrare
cuius ramus ceperat omnis flosculare,
quod nequivit hyemis algor deturpare
nec a sui decoris statu declinare.

This grove, as the poet is at pains to point out in stanzas 3–8, resounds in perfect harmony (7.27–28):

ut pars summa medie cum inferiore
responderet mutuo concordi tenore,

and this diversity of consonances represents the music of the spheres (8.31–32):

set illa diversitas consonanciarum
prefigurat ordinem septem planetarum.

In the middle of the grove lies a broad flowering plain, with whose fragrant odors the poet seems reborn (9.33–36):

Nemoris in medio campus patet latus,
violis et alio flore purpuratus,
quorum ad fragranciam et ad odoratus
visus michi videor esse bis renatus.

The poet's own rebirth at the sight, sound, and smell of the cosmic grove is not developed as a separate theme. This is, however, as close as the poem will come to the titular 'Metamorphosis' of Bishop Golias[7]. There will be no sudden example of a metamorphosis in the poem, nor is the poem a parody of the 'Metamorphoses' of Ovid or Apuleius in the

[4] Cf. P. G. WALSH (ed.), Thirty Poems from the Carmina Burana (Reading University Medieval and Renaissance Latin Texts), Reading 1976, 5 and 87.

[5] It is the 'locus amoenus' typical of the philosophical epics of the later twelfth century, see Ernst Robert CURTIUS, European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages, transl. by Willard R. TRASK (Bollingen Series 36), Princeton 1973, 198,

[6] That the grove is extraterrestrial will soon become clear. For now though we can remark that the language of the poem suggests a comparison between the sun entering (1.1 *subintrante*) the sign of the Ram and the poet-dreamer who seems to enter (2.5 *subintrare*) the grove.

[7] WETHERBEE (note 2) 128 note 4, is inclined to believe that the title of the poem was inaptly added later. It is also true that the later of the two manuscripts in which the poem is preserved, St. Omer 710, gives no title for the poem; but that is characteristic of the manuscript to omit titles, see Catalogue général des manuscrits des bibl. publiques des départements, III (Paris 1861) 314.

same way that, for example, the 'Apocalypse of Golias', another poem from the goliardic corpus, is a parody of the New Testament Apocalypse. In this regard, Benton suggested that the poem might more properly be entitled the 'De nuptiis Golie', for, as the educated medieval audience would have gathered from the description of the harmonious grove or especially from what is to follow, the poem is in many ways simply an expanded commentary on Martianus Capella's fifth-century allegorical handbook of the seven liberal arts, 'De nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii', especially the first two books which describe the betrothal and wedding of Philology or Wisdom to Mercury, the god of Eloquence[8]. There are a number of verbal parallels between the grove of stanzas 2–9 and the Delian grove in the 'De nuptiis' where Mercury and Virtue go to seek the advice of Apollo on Mercury's future wife. In Martianus Mercury, Virtue, and Apollo then ascend to the palace of Jupiter where they secure his assent to the marriage of Mercury and Philology, and the rest of Books I and II describes the preparations for the wedding and a description of the assembled guests. In the 'Metamorphosis of Bishop Golias', the dreamer comes upon the lavish palace set within the grove itself. Perhaps it is the poet's rebirth which enables him, without a cosmic ascent or metamorphosis, to understand the artistry of Vulcan (11.41–44):

Coniectare ceperam ex visa pictura
quod divina fuerat illa celatura:
hoc Vulcanus fecerat speciali cura,
totum sub involucro, totum sub figura.

I have argued elsewhere for the appositeness of the word *metamorphosis* in the title of our poem precisely because the occasion of the poet's rebirth coincides with the sole use of the word *metamorphosis* in the 'De nuptiis'[9]. When Mercury and Apollo ascend into heaven, they are metamorphosed into their respective planets before approaching Jupiter's palace[10]. The goliardic poet has dreamed himself, rather than ascended, into the heavens. His subsequent rebirth elevates his own stature onto a par with that of his surroundings and provides his figural interpretations with a heightened 'auctoritas'. Peter Dronke, without mention of the 'De nuptiis' passage, suggested[11] that the poet's metamorphosis «is

[8] BENTON (note 1) 205. The verbal and thematic echoes between the two works have been gathered together by Karl STRECKER, Die Metamorphosis Goliae und das Streitgedicht Phyllis und Flora, in: ZfdA 62 (1925) 180; (id.), Kritisches zu mittellateinischen Texten, III: Zur Metamorphosis Goliae, in: ZfdA 63 (1926) 111–115; and most recently by Edward A. SYNAN, A Goliardic Witness: The 'De Nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii' of Martianus Capella in the 'Metamorphosis Golye Episcopi', in: Florilegium 2 (1980) 121–145.

[9] John R. CLARK, Metamorphosis in the Twelfth-century 'Metamorphosis Golye Episcopi', in: Classical Texts and their Traditions. Studies in honor of C.R. Trahman, ed. by David F. BRIGHT/Edwin S. RAMAGE (Chico, California 1984) 7–12.

[10] Martianus Capella, De nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii I 30, ed. Adolf DICK/Jean PRÉAUX (Leipzig 1925/Stuttgart ²1978) 20: *Atque ita metamorphosi supera pulchriores per Geminos proprietate quadam signi familiaris invecti augusto refulsere caelo ac mox Tonantis palatium petiverunt.*

[11] DRONKE (note 3) 18. He took his cue from the conclusion of the poem with its condemnation of the monks and suggested that «Bishop Golias is the subversive mock-bishop of the Feast of Fools, who while the feast lasts can sanction even outrageous criticism of the Church's establishment». Most recently, P.G. WALSH, Golias and Goliardic Poetry, in: Medium Aevum 52 (1983) 1–9, has pursued DRONKE's suggestion and added interesting comments on the association between this Golias and Abelard.

both the way he would like to see the world changed and his own raptness as dreamer – the visionary state in which (so he would have us believe) true insight is possible». Dronke chose to substantiate his suggestion by reference to a Carolingian letter to a genuine bishop which «speaks of his consecration as turning him 'by a certain wondrous metamorphosis *(quadam mirabili metamorphosi)* into another man ... introducing him into the powers of God, the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, cognizant of divinity'». Of more relevance perhaps is a passage from the 'Theologicae Regulae' of Alain de Lille, who speaks of the ecstasy or metamorphosis of a man when he exceeds the proper condition of his human nature. The superior type of excess is called apotheosis, which occurs when man is snatched up to a contemplation of the divine[12]. It seems particularly à propos that the metamorphosis of the goliardic poet, here described as a rebirth, should occur as the dreamer is about to witness the 'De nuptiis' of Martianus Capella[13], «which dramatizes the theme of intellectual pilgrimage from the sensible world to the level of vision and theology».

The poet's purview begins with the outside of the palace where he could see represented the nine Muses, the heavenly spheres, as well as, among other things, the death of Adonis and the chains of Mars and Venus (12.45–48):

Hic sorores pinxerat novem Elyconis
et celestis circulos omnes regionis
et cum hiis et aliis eventum Adonis
et Gradivi vincula et sue Dyonis.

Although he had explicitly said that Vulcan's art was figurative (11.44), the poet does not choose to explain the meaning which these rather troublesome figures suggest. When, however, the vision of the dreamer moves within this «seat of the universe» (13.49) to survey the assembled wedding guests, the significance of each is explained in traditional, medieval glossing fashion[14]. Juno and Jupiter are seen presiding over creation; Jupiter symbolizing the heat infused into creative life and Juno the proper balance of the elements.

---

[12] See Alanus ab Insulis, Regulae Theologicae 99 (MIGNE PL 210, 673 C–D): *Sed aliquando excedit homo istum statum, vel descendendo in vitia, vel ascendendo in coelestium contemplationem: et talis excessus dicitur exstasis, sive metamorphosis, quia per huiusmodi excessum excedit statum propriae mentis, vel formam. Excessus autem superior dicitur apotheosis, quasi deificatio: quae fit, quando homo ad divinorum contemplationem rapitur.* See also WETHERBEE (note 2) 192 note 11, and Robert JAVELET, Image et Ressemblance au douzième siècle de Saint Anselm à Alain de Lille, 1 (Strasbourg 1967) 265.

[13] WETHERBEE (note 2) 90.

[14] The glosses which take up so much of the poem are also among its least original parts. WETHERBEE (note 2) 128–131 compares the readings of the twelfth-century commentary ascribed to Bernardus Silvestris. The text of this commentary is now available in Haijo Jan WESTRA (ed.), The Commentary on Martianus Capella's 'De Nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii' attributed to Bernardus Silvestris (Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, Studies and Texts 80), Toronto 1986. BENTON (note 1) 205 compares the comments of John Scot Eriugena, Annotationes in Marcianum, ed. Cora E. LUTZ, Cambride, Mass. 1939. I have also found echoes of Martin of Laon, Dunchad: Glossae in Martianum, ed. Cora E. LUTZ (American Philological Association, Phil. Monographs 12), Lancaster, Pennsylvania 1944; and Remigius of Auxerre, Commentum in Martianum Capellam, ed. Cora E. LUTZ, Leiden 1962–1965.

The virgin Pallas, the *Mens Altissimi* (19.73), ordains the laws and destinies of nature. Next, we see the groom and the bride: Mercury is glossed as eloquence and the *nupta* or Philology, though never mentioned by name, as wisdom. The two must be joined together, for «unless eloquence be joined to wisdom, it is vagrant, dissolute, and weak» (23.89–92):

Nisi sapientie sermo copuletur
vagus, dissolutus est, infirmus habetur,
et cum parum proficit, parum promeretur,
eget ut remigio eius gubernetur.

As in Martianus Capella, Phronesis then presents her daughter Philology with a bridal wreath, the appearance of Sol is described, the four Urns which represent the four seasons, the nine Muses, and the three Graces, each with an edifying gloss.

Into this harmonious setting of the marriage of wisdom and eloquence now intrude the jarring notes of Silenus and the drunken satyrs, heralding the approach of Venus and Cupid. Cupid is described as naked, blind, a boy, and winged (37.145–148)[15]:

Nudus, nam propositum nequid sepelire,
cecus, quia racio nequid hunc lenire,
puer, nam plus puero solet lascivire,
alatur, dum facile solet preterire.

«Naked, for he cannot conceal his design, blind because reason cannot soften him, a boy for he is accustomed to sport even more than a child, winged since he is accustomed to overtake one easily.»

His weapon is unavoidable, and whoever is struck by Cupid's shaft ceases to be celibate (38.152: *nam qui hoc percutitur, pellit celibatum*). The goddess Pallas Athena, as the champion of *pudicicia* or modesty, steps forward to oppose Venus. She is described by the poet, in not very flattering terms, as playing the role of a step-mother, *novercatur*, a subjective description which colors the poet's neutral stance (39.153–156):

Sola soli Veneri Pallas adversatur
et pro totis viribus usque novercatur,
nam quod placet Veneri, Pallas aspernatur,
Venus pudiciciam raro comitatur.

Their various supporters do battle but the outcome is left in doubt (40.160: *adhuc est sub pendulo, adhuc est sub lite*). There then follow four examples from mythology of the power of love (41.161–164)[16]:

Nexibus Cupidinis Syche detinetur,
Mars Nerine coniugis ignibus torretur,
Ianus ab Argyone disiungi veretur,
Sol a prole Pronoes diligi meretur.

---

[15] For this traditional description see Isidore of Seville, Etymologiae VIII 11,80, and Remigius (note 14) 81, although these accounts do not speak of his blindness. According to Erwin PANOFSKY, Studies in Iconology (New York ²1962) 105, the traditional depiction of Cupid did not include blindness until the thirteenth century, after the time of the third Vatican mythographer.

[16] The reading *Sol a* in 41.164 is an emendation for the manuscript reading *sola*, first suggested by STRECKER, Die Metamorphosis (note 8) 180, on the basis of a similar reading in Martianus Capella I 6 (note 10) 7 and accepted by later scholars, although HUYGENS' (note 1) text reads *sola*.

«Psyche is held down by the bonds of Cupid, Mars is burned with passion for his wife Nereia, Janus fears being separated from Argyone, the Sun deserves to be loved by the daughter of Forethought» (who is Mantike or Divination).

The four exempla are then glossed (42.165–168)[17]:

Syche per illecebras carnis captivatur,
sors in Marte fluctuat, Nereus vagatur,
opifex in opere suo gloriatur,
quid fiat in posterum deo scire datur.

«Psyche [or the soul] is captivated by enticements of the flesh; the tides of war and the sea ebb and flow; the maker takes pride in his creation; what happens in the future is given to the god to know.»

These four mythological allusions to the power of Venus suggest an ambiguity in the poem which is never explicitly resolved – much as in an earlier stanza (12.47–48) the poet had mentioned the images of the death of Adonis and the binding of Mars and Venus on the outside walls of the palace without pausing to explain their significance. What do the discordant details owed to Venus signify? Is Venus or love a disruptive force to the marriage of wisdom and eloquence? Must the literary man shun the enticements of love in order to pursue this marriage of wisdom and eloquence in his own life? The evidence of our text so far seems to me to be ambiguous. But here, without attempting to resolve the conflict between Venus and Pallas, which the poet himself has raised, he proceeds with an introduction of the ancient philosophers who were also present. Poets too are there, the major Roman love poets and others, joined together with their beloveds, singing in various metres, but all eloquently done.

The poem's major innovation to Martianus' wedding assembly (classical philosophers and poets had been present in the 'De nuptiis') is its inclusion of the major twelfth-century masters at the schools of Chartres and Paris among the participants[18]. The celebrated doctor of Chartres is Thierry; the man of Poitiers is Gilbert de la Porrée, champion of Mercury and Philology (48.189–192)[19]:

Ibi doctor cernitur ille Carnotensis,
cuius lingua vehemens truncat velud ensis,
et hic presul presulum stat Pictaviensis,
proprius nubencium miles et castrensis.

[17] See WETHERBEE (note 2) 131 note 15, for a comparable gloss on Janus and Argyone from the commentary of Bernardus Silvestris, in which Janus is identified as the world archetype and Argyone as the sensible sphere.

[18] For detailed discussion of the identification of these masters, see Barthélemy HAURÉAU, Mémoire sur quelques maîtres du XII[e] siècle, in: Mémoires de l'Institut National de France, Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres 28, 2 (1876) 223–238; POOLE (note 1) 321–342; R. B. C. HUYGENS, Guillaume de Tyr étudiant: Un chapitre (XIX 12) de son 'Histoire' retrouvé, in: Latomus 21 (1962) 811–829; Nikolas HÄRING, Chartres and Paris Revisited, in: Essays in Honor of Anton Charles Pegis, ed. J. Reginald O'DONNELL (Toronto 1974) 268–329; and BENTON (note 1) 206–211.

[19] When BENTON (note 1) 206–207 argues for the identification of Gilbert de la Porrée, he chooses to read *prius et* for *proprius* in 48.192, which is the reading of the Harley MS, but not that which HUYGENS prefers on the basis of the St. Omer MS. BENTON's reading unnecessarily restricts Gilbert's championing of eloquence and wisdom to his teaching days at Chartres and Paris before he became bishop of Poitiers in 1142.

There then follow Adam of the Petit Pont, Peter Lombard, Ivo, Peter Helias, and Bernard de Moëlan, most of whom followed the teaching of Peter Abelard (50.200: *et professi plurimi sunt Abaielardum*). A contentious monk named Reginaldus is censured for suspending «our Porphyry» (probably Abelard) in a noose[20]. Following him, with more favorable introduction, are further notable twelfth-century masters, until the *nupta* interrupts to ask after her *Palatinus* (54.213–216):

Nupta querit ubi sit suus Palatinus,
cuius totus extitit spiritus divinus,
querit cur se subtrahat quasi peregrinus,
quem ad sua ubera foverat et sinus.

Why has he of the divine spirit, whom she had cherished at her bosom, taken himself away like a stranger? The word *palatinus*, with a lower-case *p*, would mean her «courtier»; with an upper-case *P*, *Palatinus* was an epithet applied to Abelard by John of Salisbury (Metalogicon II 10) and a pun on his birthplace, Le Pallet, in Britanny. The next stanza, which explains the *Palatinus'* absence from the wedding party in terms which suggest Abelard's condemnation at the Council of Sens in 1140 under the leadership of Bernard of Clairvaux, helps to confirm the identification of Abelard as the *Palatinus* (55.217–220):

Clamant a philosopho plures educati:
«cucullatus populi Primas cucullati
et ut cepe tunicis tribus tunicati,
imponi silencium fecit tanto vati.»

«The many who had been taught by the philosopher shout that the hooded Primate of a people hooded and wrapped like onions in three cloaks had caused silence to be imposed on the great poet.»

Scathing abuse is then heaped upon this hooded tribe of hypocrites, but even here the poet cannot resist a literary allusion to Abelard's 'Sic et Non', whose dialectical methods were so odious to the monks (57.225–226):

«istos ergo fugias et istos devita
et hiis ne respondeas: 'non est sic vel ita'.»

«Keep away from them. Have nothing to do with them. Don't even reply to them 'Yes' or 'No'.»

The gods gathered at the wedding assembly join in this judgment and decree that the monks should not hear the secrets of philosophy, but be confined instead to the dungheap of the mechanical arts. The poem concludes with the poet's own fervent wish that the interdiction levied by this *curia* (59.233) – presumably in contrast to that imposed by the *curia* at Sens – never be overturned and that the monks be expelled from the schools of philosophy.

This conclusion of the poem is perhaps the easiest to understand. With the introduction in stanza 48 of contemporary twelfth-century teachers, the poet-dreamer seems to have been swept away, goaded by the absence of Abelard from this paradise of intellectuals, into a bitter denunciation of the Cistercians. The primary question in dealing with the

[20] For Abelard and Porphyry, see SYNAN (note 8) 127 and BENTON (note 1) 211. The identification of this Reginaldus with the contentious Cornificius of John of Salisbury's 'Metalogicon' is no longer considered valid; see BENTON (note 1) 209.

'Metamorphosis of Golias' is whether the two parts of the poem can be integrally connected: the commentary on Martianus Capella, with its Pallas-vs.-Venus conflict, and the denunciation of the monks. Benton has suggested[21] that «from beginning to end the poem is focused on the proper education of a philosopher; Venus appears as one block to such an education, the monks as another». But there is also a secondary question which goes begging in Benton's solution, and that has to do with how the unresolved conflict between Pallas and Venus relates to the poet's treatment of the marriage of Mercury and Philology.

The union of eloquence and wisdom, as symbolic of the educational ideal, has a rich tradition, especially in the twelfth century[22]. It is often portrayed in sexual language as a fruitful love union. Thierry of Chartres in the preface to his 'Heptateuchon' speaks of the marriage of Philology, representing the quadrivium, to Mercury, the trivium, as leading to the birth of a noble race of philosophers[23]. John of Salisbury in his 'Metalogicon' describes those who would separate the learning of eloquence from the study of philosophy as envying Mercury his Philology and tearing him away from her embrace[24]. There is also the epitaph of Thierry of Chartres in which he and Philosophy are said to have wed and produced noble children[25]. Our goliardic poet has chosen instead to introduce into his eyewitness account of this mythic marital union a conflict between the goddesses of love and chastity. Both the goddess of love and the virginal goddess of learning would seem to have a rightful claim to a place at this marriage. Their conflict is unresolved, and the poet's vision proceeds to his climatic condemnation of the monks. We must return then to the primary question of how the Pallas-Venus conflict relates to the expulsion of the monks from the schools of philosophy.

An early view of the poem, expounded by Hennig Brinkmann and F.J.E. Raby, saw the conflict between the goddesses and the denunciation of the monks in terms of the debate over clerical marriages current at the time[26]. Since these critics took little account of the influence of Martianus Capella in the poem, their interpretation seems to have been the result of a backward glance from stanza 54 where they accepted the identification of the bride in search of Abelard as Heloise. If this *nupta* could be isolated from the *nupta* of Mercury in stanza 22.85, there was nothing to prevent Brinkmann from also misconstruing the word *nubencium* used in the description of the Bishop of Poitiers (48.192: *proprius nubencium miles et castrensis*) and maintaining that the bishop was someone who resisted

---

[21] BENTON (note 1) 214.

[22] See Marie-Thérèse D'ALVERNY, La Sagesse et ses sept filles, in: Mélanges Félix GRAT, I (Paris 1946) 245–278; and Gabriel NUCHELMANS, Philologia et son mariage avec Mercure jusqu'à la fin du XII[e] siècle, in: Latomus 16 (1957) 84–107.

[23] The Latin text is edited by Édouard JEAUNEAU, Note sur l'école de Chartres, in: SM III 5 (1964) 854, reprinted in: (id.), Lectio Philosophorum. Recherches sur l'école de Chartres (Amsterdam 1973) 90.

[24] John of Salisbury, Metalogicon I 1, ed. Clemens C.I. WEBB (Oxford 1929) 7.

[25] André VERNET, Une épitaphe inédite de Thierry de Chartres, in: Recueil de Travaux offert à M. Clovis BRUNEL, II (Paris 1955) 670. For a translation of the relevant lines 29–34 of Thierry's epitaph, as well as the relevant section from Thierry's prologue to his 'Heptateuchon', see WETHERBEE (note 2) 29 and 26–27 respectively.

[26] Hennig BRINKMANN, Die Metamorphosis Goliae und das Streitgedicht Phyllis und Flora, in: ZfdA 62 (1925) 27–36; F.J.E. RABY, A History of Secular Latin Poetry in the Middle Ages, II (Oxford [2]1957) 220.

papal reforms and supported the married clergy[27]. It was Winthrop Wetherbee who restored the balance in the poem and identified the *nupta* as Philology, the bride of Mercury. Wetherbee, however, believes that the twelfth-century reader would also inevitably think of Heloise as the bride forsaken by Abelard[28]. It is my intention to show that this inevitability is a proper response to the arrangement of the argument throughout the poem.

Since roughly four-fifths of the poem functions as an extended commentary on the first two books of Martianus Capella, if the poem is to form a poetic whole, it is here that we must look for clues to the end of the poem. We must concentrate in particular upon those places where our goliardic poet has departed from the 'De nuptiis', and especially where the role of love is concerned. The first is in the engravings by Vulcan on the palace of Jupiter where, in addition to the Muses and the heavenly spheres, are portrayed the death of Adonis and the chains of Mars and Venus. There are no engravings by Vulcan on the palace of Jupiter in Martianus. Indeed this is one place in the poem where the influence of Ovid's 'Metamorphoses' can be seen. The palace here is similar to the palace of Phoebus Apollo at the beginning of Book II of Ovid[29], where on the doors of the palace Vulcan «had carved in relief the waters that enfold the central earth, the circles of the lands, and the sky that overhangs the lands». Within the sea can be seen Triton and other sea gods, and on the land are nameless men and rural deities, but no Adonis or Mars and Venus. Their representation here, two mythical exempla of disastrous love affairs in tandem with the cosmology of the Muses and the spheres, do serve as signposts to the reader of the inherent ambiguity in seeking any philosophical unity in secular mythology. I cannot agree with Wetherbee[30], however, in seeing in the love of Venus and Adonis «a lost ideal, a primordially pure union sundered by violence and death». Vulcan was well-known for forging the golden chains which he used to catch his adulterous wife and Mars *in flagrante delicto*. Our goliardic poet did not have to know the variant versions of the legend of Adonis' death, in which Vulcan or Mars had sent the killer-boar, in order to realize that Vulcan's association with Venus' young love Adonis would be unlikely to be a positive one[31]. It is after all the end of Adonis, his death, which Vulcan chose to portray, together with the binding of Venus and Mars. The *vincula* or chains which are mentioned are shackles forged by Vulcan, not the bonds of love fashioned by Cupid. These two examples serve as warnings against the ruin and folly to which extra-marital, indiscriminate love affairs may lead and seem appropriate enough as premonitory background for the more positive significance of the marriage of Mercury and Philology.

The 'De nuptiis', on the other hand, begins with a poem to the *copula sacra deum* or «the sacred principle of unity among the gods», personified as Hymenaeus, the god of

---

[27] BRINKMANN (note 26) 31–32. See also above, note 19, for a textual note on 48.192.

[28] WETHERBEE (note 2) 134.

[29] Ovid, Met. II 5–7, transl. by Frank J. MILLER (²1921/Cambridge, Mass. 1971) 61. See STRECKER, Kritisches (note 8) 113 for verbal parallels.

[30] WETHERBEE (note 2) 132.

[31] For the Adonis legend, see Wahib ATALLAH, Adonis dans la littérature et l'art grecs (Paris 1966) 56 for the role of Vulcan, 72–73 for Mars.

marriage[32]. Aside from being an apt figure in light of the subject matter of the work, Hymenaeus here has an explicitly allegorical role. He is the cosmic power of love which binds the warring elements or seeds of the world and encourages the union of opposites by his sacred embrace[33]. The theme of the cosmic unity of love finds expression in a philosophical myth. It is a myth concerned with the *sacra coniugia* of the gods. The picture that Martianus paints shows Jupiter and Juno living in perfect bliss. This is precisely the image to which the 'Metamorphosis' poet adverts when he describes the king and queen jointly presiding over creation and the wife clinging to her husband's side (16.63: *et ipsius lateri coniugem herentem*). Pallas Athena is subsequently introduced as coming forth from the head of the king, but rather than springing forth in her traditional guise as fully armed, her rather jarring epithet is «unwed» (18.69: *innuba*). It is jarring because the emphasis on her maidenhood seems inapropos for a wedding celebration. Pallas too is joined, but it is to the king who immediately draws her to his side by a strong bond (18.70: *quam sibi collaterans firmo nexu nexit*). King, queen, and virgin daughter form a close-knit but incomprehensible trinity (19.74–75)[34]. This same threesome had, however, given different opinions as to the marriage of Mercury and Philology in the 'De nuptiis'. Juno was quick to assent, Jupiter was hesitant, and Pallas refused to give her approval lest in any way she might seem to be condoning mating and procreation[35]. The chaste Pallas abstains, although not before suggesting a meeting of the married gods and elder goddesses to decide the issue. In the 'Metamorphosis of Golias' the union of Mercury and Philology, eloquence and wisdom, is beyond question, and the poet proceeds directly from the maiden goddess to a description of the bride and groom.

Matters proceed harmoniously until the intrusion caused by the tipsy Silenus and his band of satyrs (35.137–140). This interruption is taken from Book VIII of the 'De nuptiis', where the drunken satyr gives forth a mighty belch and elicits a burst of laughter among the gods[36]. There, the attendants of Venus, Cupid and *Voluptas,* join in the

---

[32] Martianus Capella, De nuptiis I 1. The Marriage of Philology and Mercury, transl. William STAHL/ Richard JOHNSON/E. L. BURGE (Martianus Capella and the Seven Liberal Arts 2), New York 1977, 3.

[33] Fanny LEMOINE, Martianus Capella. A Literary Re-evaluation (Münchener Beiträge zur Mediävistik und Renaissance-Forschung 10), München 1972, 25 note 10, aptly compares Boethius, De consolatione Philosophiae II 8, on which see Peter DRONKE, L'amor che move il sole e l'altre stelle, in: SM III 6 (1965) 399–406.

[34] Cf. Martin of Laon (note 14) 13 on Pallas as the figure of the highest, incomprehensible wisdom: *Pallas in significatione summae sapientiae quae incorruptibilis et incomprehensibilis est ponitur.*

[35] Mart. Capella, De nuptiis I 34–40. The medieval commentators explain Pallas' refusal by identifying Philology as reason or intelligence which is joined to eloquence, while Pallas is a type of the highest knowledge which is beyond eloquence; see Remigius (note 14) 113, Martin of Laon (note 14) 13, and Herbert BACKES, Die Hochzeit Merkurs und der Philologie. Studien zu Notkers Martian-Übersetzung (Sigmaringen 1982) 157–158.

[36] Mart. Capella, De nuptiis VIII 804–805. The twelfth century is the period from which the greatest number of manuscripts are extant which contain only the first two books of Martianus, as well as a number of manuscripts which contain the account from Book VIII of Martianus, the exposition of Astronomy on the composition of the universe; see W. H. STAHL, The Quadrivium of Martianus Capella. Latin Traditions in the Mathematical Sciences, 50 B.C.–A.D. 1250, with a study of the allegory and verbal disciplines by R. JOHNSON with E. L. BURGE (Martianus Capella and the Seven Liberal Arts 1), New York 1971, 73; and Claudio LEONARDI, I codici di Marziano Capella, in: Aevum 33 (1959) 433–489; 34 (1960) 1–99, 411–524.

merriment, but such nonsense is said to be alien to Pallas (VIII 806). The conflict between Venus and Pallas which the 'Metamorphosis' poet develops is treated in a much more haphazard and insignificant fashion in the 'De nuptiis'. In order to relieve the tedium of seven consecutive expositions on the part of each of the liberal arts in Books III–IX, Martianus Capella introduces a bit of comic relief at the beginning and end of the books. Usually boredom or impatience on the part of one of the gods causes an individual discourse to be ended. Venus herself is frequently described as bored by the learned proceedings (VI 704; IX 888). Twice, she or her agent *Voluptas* urges Mercury to end this serious discourse and enjoy the fruits of his marriage bed (VII 725; IX 888). According to *Voluptas,* Pallas is usurping a rite that belongs to Venus (VII 725).

In the 'Metamorphosis' the disruption of Silenus leads to an extended description of Cupid and his powers, followed by a more direct, one-on-one confrontation between Pallas and Venus. It would be difficult, even contradictory, for the poet in a poem celebrating the harmonious marriage of Mercury and Philology to grant superiority to the unwed virgin Pallas. What the poet chooses to do instead is to emphasize the power of love, while largely ignoring Pallas. When he does call attention to Pallas, the maiden is rather incongruously and unflatteringly playing the part of a step-mother (39.154: *novercatur*). The role played by Venus and Cupid in the marriage seems especially disruptive at first, but even here there are ambiguities. The phrase used to conclude the description of Cupid's awesome power, «He who is struck by Cupid's shaft ceases to be celibate» (38.152: *nam qui hoc percutitur, pellit celibatum*), also echoes the phrase used by Mercury in the 'De nuptiis' when he decides to join in the cosmic unity of the *sacra coniugia* of the gods (I 5)[37]: *rationabili igitur proposito constituit pellere caelibatum.* Then too, when the poet says that Venus rarely – rather than never – accompanies modesty (39.156: *Venus pudiciciam raro comitatur*), he may have in mind De nuptiis I 85 with its reference to the Platonic notion of the two Venuses, the mother of all love and pleasure and the patroness of modesty[38].

The same double-edged significance applies to the four mythical examples of love in stanzas 41–42. Two of these examples were taken from De nuptiis I 4 where many of the gods and demigods were choosing their spouses, including Mars and Nereia, Janus and Argyone. When the goliardic poet glossed these two pairs, his interpretations seem innocuous enough: the warlike Mars and his sea-wife fittingly share a shifting tide, Janus as creator takes pride in his creation – Argyone[39]. The next two pairs of lovers, Cupid-Psyche, Sol-Divination, are introduced in De nuptiis I 6–7, after Mercury, inspired by this universal celebration of love and marriage, decides that he too will get married. His first three choices for a bride: Sophia, Divination, and Psyche, are eliminated. The virginal Sophia refuses to be separated from Pallas, Divination had been joined in love to Apollo,

---

[37] The sixth-century author Fulgentius, Expositio Sermonum Antiquorum 45 (Opera, ed. Rudolf HELM [Leipzig 1898] 123), quotes this passage of Martianus Capella for its use of the word *celibatum,* but by a curious mistake says it was Pallas Minerva who decided to cease to be celibate: *placuit Minervae pellere celibatum.*

[38] See the remarks by the commentators: Johannes Eriugena (note 14) 67; Remigius (note 14) 69, 135–136 and 180. See also DRONKE, L'amor (note 33) 398–408.

[39] Mars and Nereia are also depicted as a happily married couple in the second-century writer Aulus Gellius, Noct. Att. XIII 23.13–14.

and Psyche bound by Cupid. The goliardic poet had, of course, completely ignored the instance of the chaste Sophia. He was not interested within the confines of his poem to pursue the advantages of chastity vs. marriage, but rather to illustrate the power of love. His gloss on the example of Cupid and Psyche as the soul captivated by the enticements of the flesh is the traditional negative one, but Apollo and Divination are seen in a positive light[40]. In sum, the four examples of divine love as listed by our poet as if in evidence of the ongoing conflict between Pallas and Venus are ambiguously presented. The poet is illustrating why indeed the conflict between Pallas and Venus remains unresolved.

The wedding assembly does not dissolve, however, at the realization that love is at work among the gods. The poet's vision descends now out of mythology to the classical 'auctores' who were present at the wedding (43.169–44.176):

Aderant philosophi, Tales udus stabat,
Crisippus cum numeris, Zeno ponderabat,
ardebat Eraclius, Perdix circinabat,
totum ille Samius proporcionabat.
Implicabat Cicero, explicabat Plato,
hinc dissuadet Apius, hinc persuadet Cato,
vacuus Archelias tenuit pro rato
esse quod inceperat undique locato.

Of the philosophers mentioned, Thales, Zeno, Heraclitus, Pythagoras, Plato, and Archesilas were present in Martianus Capella, but only two are given with similar verb or adjective forms, as in our 'Metamorphosis' poem[41]. A major source for this passage is in the 'Epistles' of the fifth-century bishop, Sidonius Apollinaris. In Epist. IV 3, Sidonius is complimenting a friend that his learning is worthy, among other things[42]:

tenere ... cum Perdice circinum ... investigare ... cum Thalete tempora ... cum Zeto pondera, cum Chrysippo numeros ... <et> sentit ut Pythagoras, dividit ut Socrates, explicat ut Platon, implicat ut Aristoteles ... suadet ut Cato, dissuadet ut Appius, persuadet ut Tullius.

Here we have four authors not mentioned by Martianus: Perdix, Cato, Appius, and Cicero, who do appear in our poem; and the words with which the first three are associated are very close to those of the 'Metamorphosis' poem[43]. Even two of the philosophers

[40] The positive significance of the union of *Sol* and *Divinatio* is also stressed by the commentators Johannes Eriugena (note 14) 10 and Remigius of Auxerre (note 14) 76.

[41] Cf. Mart. Capella, De nuptiis II 212–213: *ardebat Heraclitus, udus Thales,* with Met. Golie 43.169 and 171: *Tales udus ... ardebat Eraclius.*

[42] Sidonius, Epist. IV 3,5–6, transl. by W.B. ANDERSON, II (Cambridge, Mass. 1965) 72–74: «to hold the compass with Perdix ..., to investigate times with Thales ..., weights with Zethus, numbers with Chrysippus ..., <and> he makes judgements like Pythagoras, distinguishes like Socrates, unfolds like Plato, enfolds like Aristotle ..., advises like Cato, dissuades like Appius, and persuades like Tullius.»

[43] Cf. Sidonius: *cum Perdice circinum,* and Met. Golie: *Perdix circinabat;* also *suadet ut Cato – persuadet Cato; dissuadet ut Appius – dissuadet Apius.* As for the figure of Cicero who *implicabat* in the 'Metamorphosis', but *persuadet* in Sidonius, perhaps we should choose the alternate reading of *Socrates* from the later French manuscript of the goliardic poem. There is a Socrates in Sidonius *(dividit ut Socrates)* and by choosing the alternate reading we can keep Cicero from appearing in the assembly twice, once as a philosopher (44.173) and again as a poet (45.179).

mentioned by Martianus Capella, Chrysippus and Zeno, on the basis of the vocabulary used, seem to derive rather from Sidonius[44].

Of the eleven philosophers mentioned six were present in Martianus Capella. There is a world of difference, however, between the poets present in Martianus (Linus, Orpheus, Homer, and Vergil) and the major Roman love poets and other authors, with their women, in our poem (45.177–46.184)[45]:

Secum suam duxerat Getam Naso pullus,
Cynthiam Propercius, Delyam Tibullus,
Tullius Terenciam, Lesbiam Catullus,
vates huc convenerant, sine sua nullus.
Queque suo suus est ardor et favilla,
Plinium Calpurnie succendit scintilla,
urit Apuleium sua Pudentilla,
hunc et hunc amplexibus tenet hec et illa.

There are no women for the poets in Martianus, while here the sexual attraction is explicit in the vocabulary of stanza 46: *ardor, favilla, succendit, scintilla, urit, amplexibus.* What has influenced our poet to bring about this change? Current scholarly opinion holds that our poet is indebted for this section to the second-century 'Apologia' of Apuleius, wherein Catullus and Lesbia, Propertius and Cynthia, and Tibullus and Delia are mentioned[46]. Apuleius, however, mentions only these three out of the seven mentioned by our poet, and is solely concerned with revealing the real names of the women hiding behind the pseudonyms. The true source, indeed, for this catalogue is not Apuleius, but once again the fifth-century bishop, Sidonius Apollinaris[47]. In his Epistle II 10, Sidonius mentions not only the Roman love poets with their women, but also Tullius and Terentia, Pliny and Calpurnia, Apuleius and Pudentilla. The text of Sidonius accounts for the inclusion of

---

[44] Cf. Met. Golie: *Crisippus cum numeris,* and Sidonius: *cum Chrysippo numeros;* also *Zeno ponderabat – cum Zeto pondera.* The reference to Chrysippus in Mart. Capella, De nuptiis IV 327 occurs out of context, and the verb with Zeno is *ducebat* (II 213). The reading of *Zeno* at Met. Golie 43.170 should be emended to *Zeto* or *Zetus,* referring to the little-known mathematician rather than the more well-known Stoic philosopher Zeno, who has nothing to do with *pondera* or weights. In a similar list of 'auctores', also based on this Sidonius passage, in Alain de Lille, Anticlaud. III 343–362, ed. R. BOUSSUAT (Paris 1955) 82–83, there is both a Zeno (III 346: *ut Zeno colligit*) and a Zetus (III 349: *ut Zetus pondera librat*), but it is Zetus who is associated with *pondera.*

[45] I have accepted, as have most scholars. the emendation *Getam Naso pullus* at 45.177 for the manuscript reading, *Cetam Ysopullus,* suggested by S.T. COLLINS, Who was Ysopullus?, in: Speculum 23 (1948) 112. I would be more comfortable, if only there were some tradition among the many medieval sources on Ovid of a 'Gothic' or, rather, Getic woman among his paramours, but there is not. I have also corrected the spelling of Apuleius's wife from *Prudentilla* to *Pudentilla* (46.183).

[46] Apuleius, Apologia X 4–9, ed. by H.E. BUTLER/A.S. OWEN, Oxford 1914/Hildesheim 1967.

[47] I was surprised to find that Max MANITIUS, Zu römischen Schriftstellern im Mittelalter, in: Philologus 61 (1902) 455–472, here 459, had first identified Sidonius as the source for this passage, but had changed his mind in his Geschichte der lat. Literatur des Mittelalters III (München 1931) 269, swayed by the arguments of STRECKER, Kritisches (note 8) 115.

these three other authors among the *vates* or poets of our catalogue. More significantly, the context in which these 'auctores' are mentioned is an 'apologia' for marriage. It is important enough to quote the relevant passage in full[48]:

«You must not allow the thought that you will soon be happily married to turn you from this determination [to read constantly and carefully], ever remembering that in the old times of Marcia and Hortensius, Terentia and Tullius, Calpurnia and Pliny, Pudentilla and Apuleius, Rusticiana and Symmachus, the wives held candles and candlesticks for their husbands while they read or composed. If you lament that in addition to your oratorical skill your poetical capacity and the keen edge of your tongue, which has been sharpened on the whetstone of industrious study, are blunted by the society of ladies, remember that Corinna often helped her Naso to complete a verse, and so it was with Lesbia and Catullus, Caesennia and Gaetulicus, Argentaria and Lucan, Cynthia and Propertius, Delia and Tibullus. So it is clear as daylight that literary workers find in marriage an opportunity for study and idlers an excuse for shirking it.»

This is a fascinating passage. There are very few places in medieval literature where marriage is condoned, much less praised in terms such as these[49]. It seems reasonable to suppose that our poet could have expected his audience to know this passage. There is abundant evidence that the works of Sidonius were taught in the schools. There are a number of eleventh and twelfth-century manuscripts of his works[50]. He is cited by authors such as Abelard and John of Salisbury, ranked as a model author for the new poetics of the twelfth century, and mentioned in various twelfth and thirteenth-century curriculum lists[51]. It is fairly typical of the school poetry of this period to contain thinly veiled allusions, evident mainly to other members of the learned community. In the Pallas-vs.-Venus conflict, our poet has moved his field of vision from the mythography of the

---

[48] Sidonius, Epist. II 10,5–6 (note 42) I 466–469: *neque patiaris ut te ab hoc proposito propediem coniunx domum feliciter ducenda deflectat, sisque oppido meminens quod olim Marcia Hortensio, Terentia Tullio, Calpurnia Plinio, Pudentilla Apuleio, Rusticiana Symmacho legentibus meditantibusque candelas et candelabra tenuerunt. certe si praeter oratoriam contubernio feminarum poeticum ingenium et oris tui limam frequentium studiorum cotibus expolitam quereris obtundi, reminiscere quod saepe versum Corinna cum suo Nasone complevit, Lesbia cum Catullo, Caesennia cum Gaetulico, Argentaria cum Lucano, Cynthia cum Propertio, Delia cum Tibullo. proinde liquido claret studentibus discendi per nuptias occasionem tribui, desidibus excusationem.* Note that Ovid *(Naso)* is mentioned, but with Corinna, not a Getic love.

[49] See the discussion in Philippe DELHAYE, Le dossier anti-matrimonial de l'"Adversus Jovinianum" et son influence sur quelques écrits latins du XII[e] siècle, in: Mediaeval Studies 13 (1951) 65–86; or more generally John C. MOORE, Love in Twelfth-century France, Philadelphia 1972; and Henry A. KELLY, Love and Marriage in the Age of Chaucer, Ithaca, N.Y. 1975. The Sidonius passage is even more interesting in light of the clerical debates over celibacy in the twelfth century; see Christopher BROOKE, Gregorian Reform in Action. Clerical Marriage in England, 1050–1200, in: (id.), Medieval Church and Society. Collected Essays (London 1971) 69–99; and Anne L. BARSTOW, Married Priests and the Reforming Papacy. The Eleventh-Century Debates (Texts and Studies in Religion 12), New York 1982, esp. 105–155.

[50] See Max MANITIUS, Handschriften antiker Autoren in mittelalterlichen Bibliothekskatalogen (Leipzig 1935) 259–260, and Apollinaris Sidonii Epistulae et Carmina, ed. Christian LUETJOHANN (MGH Auct. ant. VIII), Berlin 1887/1961, VI–XXII.

[51] See Sidonius Apollinaris in the Index of MANITIUS (note 47) III 1149; also CURTIUS (note 5) 50–51.

marriage of Philology and Mercury, wisdom and eloquence, to a more personal level of human love. The classical *vates* have their all-too-human loves, yet they take part in this cosmic wedding assembly. The claim of human love, under the influence of Venus, should not necessarily therefore be a deterrent to the pursuit of literary study[52]. Indeed what the poet has done is to suggest that the harmonious joining of the classical authors and their beloveds is a natural reflection of the marriage between Mercury and Philology. Both should lead to learning.

It is in his own time that the cleric sees the union of love and learning in jeopardy. In Martianus Capella's paradise of intellectuals the voices of his Greek philosophers *(palliatorum populus)* were discordant but overwhelmed by the harmony of the Muses (II 213). The goliardic poet places this discordancy in his introduction of the twelfth-century masters, whose presence reflects their relationship towards, and support of, the union of wisdom and eloquence. The monk Reginaldus and later the hooded tribe of monks (55.218: *populi ... cucullati*) in particular cause the disruption by their opposition to Abelard. Abelard is prominent in the list of masters even before his appearance, or rather non-appearance, in the poem. Certainly the *nupta* of stanza 54.213, who is searching for her Abelard, is Philology. Abelard, with his divine spirit, has become for the moment her Mercury. She and Abelard have a special relationship, which is emphasized by the sensuous language of 54.216: *quem ad sua ubera foverat et sinus*. The aformentioned union of Philology and Mercury had not been spoken of in such terms, but this language does recall the sensual vocabulary used to describe the married human lovers, Pliny-Calpurnia and Apuleius-Pudentilla, in stanza 46.181–184[53]. Another link is also made between Abelard and the classical *vates* (45.180) when, in the only other reference to a *vates* or poet in the poem, Abelard is described as the great poet who had been silenced (55.220). When the goliardic poet links Abelard with the bride of the poem, he also associates Abelard with the classical lovers and their mortal women. What makes this association so rich and significant is that Abelard had indeed been both a lover of wisdom and a lover of Heloise. But while in the earlier examples, love and learning flourished and supported one another, in the case of Abelard he had suffered for both. It does seem inevitable that the reader would also be reminded in this context of Abelard's mortal bride Heloise. It would indeed be difficult for any reference to a love-union and a bride missing Abelard not to evoke in the reader an echo of Heloise, especially since «the public, dramatic, and eventually calamitous love affair of Abelard and Heloise must have had a powerful effect on their contemporaries» and «in one form or another the story was known far and wide»[54]. Moreover, our poet had recently extended his viewpoint from heavenly to earthly love,

---

[52] The goliardic poet, although elsewhere a follower of Abelard, has chosen opposite exempla from those put in the mouth of Heloise in Historia Calamitatum, ed. J. MONFRIN (Paris ²1962) 76–79, or MIGNE PL 178, 130–132, when speaking of the incompatibility of marriage and learning; or those used by Abelard lauding continence and learning in his Theologia Christiana (MIGNE PL 178, 1195–1202).

[53] The two married authors are featured in a separate stanza of their own. Both writers had indeed singled out their wives for praise in their own writings. Pliny, Ep. IV 19 spoke highly of his wife's love and her learning and the way the two supported one another. Apuleius in his 'Apologia' had defended the fact that he, a philosopher, had chosen his wife out of love.

[54] BENTON (note 1) 199–200.

and the link established between Abelard and these mortal lovers enables the reader to shift naturally from a consideration of the heavenly Philology to the earthly Heloise[55].

The poem from beginning to end has been a catalogue of joinings, whether it be the joining together of harmonious sounds, the chains joining Mars and Venus, or the binding of Pallas to Jupiter, Psyche to Cupid, and the rest. These unions are related in various ways to the primary theme, the marriage of Mercury and Philology, eloquence and wisdom. Within the wedding assembly is depicted an ongoing struggle between Pallas and Venus, chastity and love. It is Pallas, however, and not Venus, who shows herself to be more of a stumbling block to the marriage. Pallas is portrayed as *pudicicia,* not as learning, within the poem, and as the patroness of modesty and a virgin she can hardly champion a marriage[56]. But rather than focus on the ambiguous relationship of the virgin goddess to the wedding, the poet chooses instead to illustrate the power of Venus. While the divine exempla of the power of love are also ambiguously presented, on a human level, with the classical *vates* and their beloveds, love and learning are harmoniously united. Their human love is a reflection of the divine love-union of Mercury and Philology, and both are represented in the special relationship depicted between Abelard and the *nupta.*

For Abelard, however, the harmonious love-union has been severed. Pallas has reappeared to oppose Venus, but this time in the guise of the monks. It is as if now we have evidence of the followers of Pallas, whereas earlier only the powers of Venus were displayed. In a satirical vein the virgin Pallas, in her stepmotherly role, seems to have given birth to her supporters, the evil race of monks. The monks are followers of Pallas only as the goddess of chastity, not of learning, for they show themselves to be the enemies not only of Venus but also of the union of Mercury and Philology. The symbol of their hostility towards both love and learning is their silencing of Abelard, the philosopher and poet. The figure of Abelard unites the poem because in his love-union with the bride he has suffered both for his love of Heloise and for his love of Philology or wisdom. The responsibility for the failure of Abelard to be a twelfth-century example of the harmonious union of love and learning is laid at the feet of the monks. The actions of the monks here are the more severe because of the knowledge that Abelard had already suffered before because of Venus, and this elicits the savage attack on the part of the poet. Just as Abelard had withdrawn (54.215: *subtrahat*) from the divine assembly because of the monks, so the gods were to remove (58.230: *subtrahant*) the monks from their assembly because of their treatment of Abelard. The monks are to be disjoined and expelled from the schools where philosophers, the lovers of wisdom, dwell.

---

[55] Heloise's own renown for learning would enhance this identification.

[56] Even earlier in the poem when Pallas is described as the *Mens Altissimi* (19.73), *innuba* or «unwed» is the operative word, and as part of the divine trinity with Jupiter and Juno, she is incomprehensible or beyond any practical attainment.