Durham E-Theses

The decline of the neo-classical pastoral 1680-1730: a study in theocritean and virgilian influence.

Nigel Paul Wood

How to cite:

Wood, Nigel Paul (1983) The decline of the neo-classical pastoral 1680-1730: a study in theocritean and virgilian influence. Doctoral thesis, Durham University.

Use policy

The full-text may be used and/or reproduced, and given to third parties in any format or medium, without prior permission or charge, for personal research or study, educational, or not-for-profit purposes provided that:

- a full bibliographic reference is made to the original source
- a https://etheses.durham.ac.uk/id/eprint/7193/ is made to the metadata record in Durham E-Theses
- the full-text is not changed in any way

The full-text must not be sold in any format or medium without the formal permission of the copyright holders.

Please consult the full Durham E-Theses policy for further details.

Academic Support Office, The Palatine Centre, Durham University, Stockton Road, Durham, DH1 3LE
e-mail: e-theses.admin@durham.ac.uk Tel: +44 0191 334 6107
https://etheses.durham.ac.uk

ABSTRACT of THESIS

The Decline of the Neo-Classical Pastoral, 1680-1730:

A Study in Theocritean and Virgilian Influence

The classical pastoral was an accredited genre in antiquity usually associated with a series of contrasts between the country and the city or between the supposedly natural and artificial worlds. With the decline in allegorical writing, however, the Restoration's neo-classical translators, especially Thomas Creech (Theocritus, 1684) and John Dryden (1697), offered a pastoral with most of the potentially ironic commentaries on contemporary life either softened or erased altogether. Creech's Theocritus is free of the Doric alternations between the Heroic (*Idyll* I) and Rustic (*Idylls* 4 and 5). Dryden's *Eclogues* pay homage to a transcendent classicism calculated to contrast with post-Revolution beliefs in limited traditions of authority. These two images of the classical pastoral provide one facet unacceptable to neo-classicism (Theocritean rusticity) and one which casts doubt on its bucolic status altogether (Virgilian artifice).

This dualism in the classical legacy is seen as rooted in opposed definitions of "simplicity", one a lyrical and affective quality, the other paying testimony to the classical past by imitating what was taken to be its bolder and enduring melodies. The foundation of the Modern variety, as exemplified by Ambrose Philips (1709), lies in its depiction of indigenous shepherds and their freedom from the classical, but not the rustic (Spenser and Theocritus). Alexander Pope's *Pastorals* (1709),on the contrary, demonstrate an Ancient preoccupation with a current culture's indebtedness to its traditional sources of inspiration. His Strephons or Alexises wander amongst Windsor/Mantuan groves.

The disappearance of much fresh neo-classical pastoral writing is then studied, especially in the mock-forms of the years 1710-16, particularly John Gay's *The Shepherd's Week* (1714). Within the Ancient pastoral Gay discovers sentiments incommensurate with contemporary rural poverty and so obviously redundant mimetically, but also an "unofficial" gusto in Theocritus and less imitated material that points forward to the particularity of the georgic. In short, Gay's mock-pastoral work, in the service of the prevailing Landed Interest, not only uncovers urban corruption but also the deceptions of the Ancient mode. In Purney's Theocritean pastorals (1717) and Ramsay's Scots Doric (1723-28), it is the Theocritean example which survives, not the more celebrated *Eclogues* of Virgil.

THE DECLINE OF THE NEO-CLASSICAL PASTORAL 1680-1730:
A Study in Theocritean and Virgilian Influence.

by

Nigel Paul Wood

The copyright of this thesis rests with the author.
No quotation from it should be published without
his prior written consent and information derived
from it should be acknowledged.

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy, in the Department of English Studies,
Durham University

1983

27 APR 1984

CONTENTS

Page

PREFACE i

Abbreviations used in text iii

INTRODUCTION 1

CHAPTER 1 : THEOCRITUS AND THE REQUIREMENTS OF PASTORAL 15

The Augustan Theocritus (18) -- The Translators' Theocritus (51) -- Idylls 1 and 7 (60) : (a) Idyll 1 (61), (b) Idyll 7 (71) -- Idylls 4, 5 and 10 (80): (a) Idyll 4 (82), (b) Idyll 5 (88), (c) Idyll 10 (93) -- Conclusion (102)

CHAPTER 2 : DRYDEN'S TRANSLATION OF VIRGIL'S *ECLOGUES* 110

Virgilian Lyricism and Allegory (122) -- Dryden and Chetwood on the Pastoral (135) -- Eclogues 1 and 9 (158): (a) Eclogue 1 (162), (b) Eclogue 9 (173) -- Eclogue 4 (184) -- Eclogues 3 and 5 (203) -- Conclusion (239)

CHAPTER 3 : THE TASTE FOR SIMPLICITY AND ITS EFFECT ON PASTORAL POETRY, 1680-1730 246

The Simplicity of the *Shepheardes Calendar* (249) -- The Origins of Passionate Simplicity (260) -- Stylistic Simplicity and the Portrayal of the Countryman (285) -- Conclusion (318)

CHAPTER 4 : THE PASTORALS OF AMBROSE PHILIPS AND THE "MODERN" BUCOLIC 327

Ambrose Philips's Pastoral Simplicity (336) -- The Tender Pastorals of Ambrose Philips (352) -- The Ancient Objection to Philips's Pastorals (376) -- Conclusion (386)

CHAPTER 5 : THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE CLASSICAL IMITATION AND POPE'S PASTORALS 393

Pope's Pastoral Theory (408) -- Pope's Artifice in his Pastorals (416) -- Conclusion (452)

CHAPTER 6 : JOHN GAY, COUNTRY IDEOLOGY AND THE MOCK PASTORAL 453

The Validity of the Distinction Between Tory and Whig (1680-1714) (454): (a) Tory Ideologies of Order and Providence (454), (b) Whig Ideologies of Contract (464)-- Gay's *The Shepherd's Week* (1714) and the Landed Interest (470): (a) Gay's Contact with the Landed Interest (471), (b) Gay's Poetry, 1713-14 (479) -- *The Shepherd's Week* as a Mock-Pastoral (490) -- Conclusion (515)

CONCLUSION 518

BIBLIOGRAPHY 529

VOLUME ONE

Chapters 1-3

Pp. 1-326

PREFACE

I should like to acknowledge my debt to the following people, without whose advice and support this study could never have been completed: Dr. Raman Selden of the University of Durham whose careful supervision helped clarify and particularize my original ideas; Dr. Helen Cooper of University College, Oxford who suggested several medieval and Renaissance influences; Mr. Duncan Cloud and Dr. Norman Postlethwaite of the Department of Classics, Leicester University for their interest and sound advice; Dr. Martin Stannard of the Department of English, Leicester University for his help in editing a troublesome chapter, and Dr. Alison Yarrington for her long-suffering patience and invaluable help over a long period.

I am also grateful for the practical help and advice from the librarians of the Bodleian, Durham and Leicester bibliographical departments; two Research Board grants from Leicester University which helped me gain access to a number of classical texts and Dr. Michael Rudd who gave me generous leave-of-absence when at Evansville, Indiana.

Great thanks is also due to Mrs. Doreen Butler for her care and attention during the typing of much of the thesis, and to those who completed it: Clare Russell, Lesley Woodbridge, Sue Osmond and Sylvia Garfield: all efficient and uncomplaining. Finally, I would like to thank my parents and brother, Christopher, for moral support and reassurance. I only regret that limited space does not permit me a mention of the many others who have contributed to the writing of this study.

This thesis is the result of my own work and includes no material previously submitted for a degree in this or any other university or which is the result of joint research.

ABBREVIATIONS USED IN TEXT AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

PMLA = Publications of the Modern Language Association of America

TE = Twickenham Edition of the Poems of Pope (1939-69)

First reference in footnotes to works cited in Bibliography
is given in full; thereafter abbreviation
is by title alone if primary source,
by author if secondary.

Introduction

It is not often recognized that certain forms of literature can die. In two recent studies of genre classification, it is assumed that new works need to promote some strong recognition of their traditional influences in order to be intelligible, either as parody or allusion.[1] This radical traditionalism is voiced most succinctly by T.S. Eliot when he claims that this coercive force is a 'historical sense' where the writer is not only imbued with a contemporary spirit 'in his bones' but also 'with a feeling that the whole of the literature of Europe from Homer and within it the whole of the literature of his own country has a simultaneous existence and composes a simultaneous order'. The 'timeless' and the 'temporal' fuse to form tradition and the new writer must be a representative of that tradition: 'You cannot value him alone; you must set him, for contrast and comparison, among the dead.'[1] This concept of genre envisages pastoral, epic or lyric on a gradual evolutionary model, the "new" work both appropriates and is appropriated by tradition. The basic units of literature reappear and, although the surface details enter differently each time, there is some sustaining foundation or essence which, if open to change, mutates both slowly and orderly.

---

[1] Both Jonathan Culler and E.D. Hirsch, Jnr., in their various ways, have provided explanations for generic change that occlude historical particularity. Culler defines a genre as 'a set of literary norms to which texts may be related and by virtue of which they become meaningful and coherent' (*Structuralist Poetics: Structuralism, Linguistics and the Study of Literature* (London, 1975) p. 145). This coherence is ensured by a "Naturalization", an assimilation that brings a text 'within the modes of order which culture makes available ' (p. 137). Possible subversions of generic definition still prove its existence 'as surely as the failure to keep a promise is made possible by the institution of promising ' (p. 116). In agreeing that such definitions aid orderly critical writing, it is also necessary to point to the conservative nature of the "Literary Competence" that ordains them, and *which* culture "naturalizes" the text. Hirsch's concept of "intrinsic genre" often takes on the role of an invariant touchstone. For example, it is differentiated from 'meaning', a distinction that lays the foundation for its 'precise and stable definition' (*Validity in Interpretation* (New Haven, 1967) pp.78-89 (p. 82)). This view has been adopted by Paul Hernadi (*Beyond Genre: New Directions in Literary Classification* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1972)) whose procedural survey of about sixty genre systems owes more to *Gestalt* psychology than literary history. See his claim that the "representational modes" are 'best applied in the study of what may be called the "molecular structure" of discourse' (p. 14). For a valuable refutation of such positivism, see Alastair Fowler's work in "The Life and Death of Literary Forms", *New Directions in Literary History*, edited by Ralph Cohen (London, 1974), pp. 77-94 (especially pp. 83-88) and *Kinds of Literature: An Introduction to the Theory of Genres and Modes* (Oxford, 1982), pp. 235-55.

The classical pastoral had, however, by 1680, so declined that it had become irrelevant both mimetically and expressively. Although the bucolic was still written, its survival was increasingly nominal and by the 1730s had all but vanished. Notwithstanding this, neighbouring "kinds" such as the Odes on Solitude, the general topos of Retirement, and Descriptive poetry flourished. However much the twentieth century may associate the pastoral with these forms, the original Idylls and Eclogues were distinct from them, dramatizing the wistful longing of urban life in collision with an ineluctable reality created by those same forces. Both Ralph Cohen and John Barrell have recently commented on the growth of interest in the georgic as an alternative to the eclogue. Cohen, in observing this shift, distinguishes between 'innovation' and 'variation' in literary history by noting 'new relations of poetic features to poetic ends: the speaker assumes a new role, or the rhetorical devices are given new functions, new subjects are introduced ...'[2] This is in the face of repeated translations and editions of both Theocritus and Virgil,

---

1. "Tradition and the Individual Talent" (1919), Selected Prose of T.S. Eliot, edited by Frank Kermode (London, 1975), p. 38.

2. "Innovation and Variation: Literary Change and Georgic Poetry", in Literature and History: Papers read at a Clark Library Seminar, March 3, 1973 (plus Murray Krieger) (Los Angeles, Ca., 1974), pp. 4-5. Cohen sees some significant "role changes" between pastoral and georgic from Denham onwards (pp. 24-34).

where, it might be assumed, the reading public were kept informed of classical norms. These role changes were instituted by a new desire to introduce imagery that yoked the perception of nature with more rationalistic and commercial concerns. No longer was the countryside so convenient a backdrop for the embodiment or perpetuation of specifically "literary" perspectives. John Barrell finds in the renewed interest in the georgic a 'way of admitting into the Pastoral exactly those everyday concerns of work, organisation and management, that are hidden in the landscapes imported from Italy and in Virgilian eclogue.' This "realism" must however be heavily qualified as, whilst the form allowed the depiction of rural labour, it also softened its harsh appearance enough to provide an image of Britain's aristocrats as 'leisured consumers' and 'interested patrons of her agricultural and mercantile expansion'.[1]

It must also be emphasized, though, that the variety of classical pastoral is not accurately represented by a picture of a shepherd 'lentus in umbra' during an Arcadian evening. In Theocritus's Idylls, and, indeed in some of the particulars of the Eclogues themselves, Cos or Arcadia invite artifice and contradiction. In Idyll 10, Bucaeus and Milon are reapers through whom Theocritus dramatizes the contradictions of what was to become in the Restoration and afterwards a pleasing bourgeois image. Bucaeus's simple sentiments are upbraided and "placed" by Milon, the worker.[2] Similarly in Idyll 3, the goatherd's pathos is undermined by the sophisticated adoption of an urban form for his rustic lament.[3] In the Eclogues, there are many non-

---

1. The Dark Side of the Landscape: the Rural Poor in English Painting, 1730-1840 (Cambridge, 1980), p. 12.

2. See pp. 93-102.

3. See pp. 52-59.

"Arcadian" details.[1] In the translations of the period, such importunate details were softened or blurred to achieve a coherent blend. Imperceptibly, the classical norms that should have survived through translation or imitation were altered and the bucolic signified more of an Arcadian ideal and less of the self-questioning original.

In the first two chapters of this study, therefore, I attempt to establish three things: firstly, that classical pastoral carried traces of forms that later ages sought to separate from it; secondly, that the simplified models of "classical" bucolic promoted by translation were very much nearer to lyric than their sources, and lastly, that the Modern apologies for literature, stressing the respectability of new non-classical models, found their own lyrical and yet indigenous bucolic model in Theocritus and Spenser. One does not have to turn to the georgic as a classical counterbalance to Virgilian pastoral; the suggestion of a labouring countryman exists in much classical pastoral.

It is possible, thus, to find in the neo-classical pastoral several loosely associated models: the heroic hubris of Dryden's translations of Virgil (1697), Ambrose Philips's sweet rusticity (1704-9), Pope's classical ideal (1709), Thomas Purney's enervated Doric (1717) and Allan Ramsay's dialectal Doric (1721-28). This variety, although all comprehended by the one term: "Pastoral", is diverse enough to cast doubt on such generalization. Indeed, I favour the terms often used in the contemporary debate to differentiate opposed literary practices: that of Ancient, to signify theories where all innovation was more or less imitative, and Modern, for theories where it was not. Furthermore, central distinctions still need to be made in studies of the period. Recent work, Howard Weinbrot's in particular, has stressed the divided aims of the period, all indiscriminately described as "Augustan".[1] I retain the term as historical shorthand, but must stress that its extension into matters of a common style or complexion for the period of study: a Zeitgeist, in short, is both misleading and too apt to take critical abstractions on trust.[2]

---

[1] See pp.153-58.

One of these consensus qualities believed to reside in the writing of the age was a classical "Simplicity". In chapter 3, I argue that its frequent use when describing the pastoral at this time often conflated norms of stylistic perspicuity, the uncivilized naïvete of the rustic figure and a fabricated "artistic" plainness associated with the bold sublime of Homer and taken from "Longinus". "Simplicity" like "Pastoral", if unqualified, suggests, where it appears, the continuity of the traditional canon of taste, yet it also camouflages a profound divergence of opinion, one indeed Classical ("Augustan"), the other Sentimental ("Pre-Romantic"). The seeds of the flourishing distrust of an imitative Simplicity are sown here, much earlier than texts such as Edward Young's Conjectures on Original Composition (1759).

---

1. Augustus Caesar in Augustan England. The Decline of a Classical Norm (Princeton, N.J., 1978). Weinbrot throughout proposes that the early eighteenth century did not conceive Augustus as an ideal at all. A valuable distinction between literary and historical Augustanism is made by James William Johnson (The Formation of English Neo-Classical Thought (Princeton, N.J., 1967), pp. 17-30). See also Stewart Crehan, "The Roman Analogy", Literature and History, 6 (1980), 19-42; Howard Erskine-Hill, "Augustans on Augustanism: England 1655-1759", Renaissance and Modern Studies, 11 (1967), 55-83; Rachel Trickett, "The Difficulties of Defining and Categorizing in the Augustan Period", New Literary History, 1 (1970), 163-79, and P.D. Tripathi, "Literary 'Augustanism' in the Eighteenth Century: Questions and Hypotheses", Literature and History, 8 (1982), 170-81.

2. This has proved particularly tenacious. See Francis Venables's edition and annotation of The Early Augustans (London, 1972): 'All the Augustans would acclaim with Addison "that beautiful simplicity which we so much admire in the compositions of the Ancients "' (p. xiv). Venables's edition was an "A" level set text for the Joint Matriculation Board (1974-77).

The obvious fictiveness of the pastoral topoi became increasingly exposed and consequently rejected, both by the Ancients, who desired something better than the depiction of swains, and the Moderns, who favoured more indigenous models and who, under the guise of a pastoral, wrote lyrics anyway. Chapters 4 and 5, by focussing on the bucolics of Philips and Pope, illustrate the Modern and Ancient forms.

Chapter 6 takes as its central text, Gay's The Shepherd's Week (1714), for two reasons. Primarily, it is an instructive example of a "counter-genre" in Tynyanov's phrase, an indication that the generic features of a form are open to, and perhaps undergoing, radical re-appraisal. Rather than enjoying a smooth and gradual evolution, a transference of typical features from pastoral to georgic, the change is more one of disruption. As Tynyanov puts it, 'Any literary succession is first of all a struggle, a destruction of old values and a reconstruction of old elements'.[1] This nervousness about the suitability of such artificial rural description is, however, not just a Formalist's universal, a tendency observable in the life of any literary form, but peculiarly applicable to the pastoral in these years. Gay's parody is of both Philips and the Arcadian type, and, it is argued, particularly structured by current ideologies using country life as its raw material.[2] The georgic is just one practice arising therefrom.

---

1. Quoted by Boris Eichenbaum, "The Theory of the Formal Method", Russian Formalist Criticism: Four Essays, translated by Lee T. Lemon and Marion J. Reis (Lincoln, Neb., 1965), p. 134. For a Formalist explanation of how this change could affect other genres, see Roman Jakobson, "The Dominant", Readings in Russian Poetics, ed. by Ladislav Matejka and Krystina Pomorska (Cambridge, Mass., 1971): 'The hierarchy of artistic devices changes within the framework of a given poetic genre; the change, moreover, affects the hierarchy of poetic genres, and, simultaneously, the distribution of artistic devices among the individual genres' (p. 85). For a more thoroughgoing organicist conception of genre-systems, see Claudio Guillen, Literature as System (Princeton, N.J., 1971).

2. See pp.471-503.

Genre-studies usually invite formalist explanations of formal developments. The most influential in the case of pastoral has been William Empson's, whose attempt at a sociological explanation for its continuance ropes together works as diverse as The Beggar's Opera and Alice in Wonderland.[1] Essentially, the pastoral is always seen to occur wherever there is a 'process of putting the complex into the simple' (p. 22). This emblematic pastoral has 'simple people express strong feelings (felt as the most universal subject, something fundamentally true about everybody) in learned and fashionable language ...' (p. 11). The "shepherd", for Empson, manages, in a successful pastoral, to symbolize his whole society through the basic passions he believes are common to everyone, if stripped of their accidental social *mores*. Here are several assumptions which compromise any truly historical enterprise. All too often, Empson seems to equate the distinction between complexity and simplicity with that between the temporal and eternal or spiritual.[2] Frank Kermode, in a similar study, boils the form down to similar ingredients: Nature versus Art.[3] This area of pastoral criticism I would resist on two counts. One is that, through the allegorical tradition, such work from the classical models to the early years of the seventeenth century stressed contemporary terms of reference, avoiding any notion of shared perspectives between "shepherds", however fundamental, and the second is that the full significance of

---

1. *Some Versions of Pastoral* (London, 1950). For an alternative view, see Valerie Edden, "Pastoral and the Literature of Rural Retreat", *Durham University Journal*, 41 (1979-80), 17-21.

2. This is especially true of his reading of *The Beggar's Opera* (pp. 195-250).

3. "Introduction", *The Tempest*, Arden edition, 6th ed. (London, 1958), especially pp. xxxiv-lix. *The Tempest* is seen to concern itself with the opposition of Nature and Art, 'as serious pastoral poetry always is' (p. xxiv). See also Kermode's introduction to his edition of *English Pastoral Poetry from the Beginnings to Marvell* (London, 1952).

those 'strong feelings' and the 'learned and fashionable language' in which they are produced will only be fully comprehensible when the likely readership is considered. Such considerations are more properly historical ones than many of the strong remarks that Empson lets fall.

Some Versions of Pastoral, however, does provoke some fruitful discussion, especially challenging when stressing the methods by which the pastoral genre constantly displaces real dilemmas or contradictions. From 1680 to 1730 the form could never be said to represent reality directly. This does not mean, on the other hand, that historical change was ineffective in the decline of the neo-classical pastoral. Convention the pastoral may be but that does not render it redundant historically. As one of the few classically-ordained forms that touched on depictions of rural life (even if merely as a textual fiction), the pastoral "shepherd" and his immediate concerns were not only a site of projected urban desires for escape but also a reminder that even in Arcadia, there were limitations regarded as perennial. The very fact that the "shepherd" lost his mythic power and was replaced by either "happy husbandmen" or poet-observers is still of historical importance, even if not directly relevant to changes in the material conditions of rural labourers themselves.

It has been suggested very recently that discussions about the genre inevitably suppose a choice between a "mimetic" and a "semiotic" approach: 'A choice is posed: either we attribute "realism" to the text which reflects the "real" with the greatest degree of fidelity, or we regard "realistic" texts as fraudulent ...'. The semiotic critic would emphasize the conventional freedom of pastoral where 'the "real" never enters the process, but is merely an effect of sign-making'. On the "mimetic" side of the debate are ranged Erich Auerbach, Georg Lukács and Raymond Williams, where "reflection" 'is understood as an elaborate cognitive process, a dialectical interplay between the particular and the general, and between the individual and society.'[1] For the semiotic critic (Empson), pastoral has only a 'semiotic potentiality' where a 'formal pattern' recurs intermittently and the 'signifiers slide beneath the signifieds untroubled by the demands of denotation' (p. 40). The latter view would hold more water if it were concluded that genre-descriptions were merely a way of mapping the niceties of "taste". If, however, it is admitted that the various gradations of that "taste" are not wholly an aesthetic matter insulated from socio-economic considerations, then the way is open to theorize an elaboration of the "mimetic" approach that might be less reductive. Poetic conventions and the varied ideologies that might be extrapolated from them may testify unwittingly to facts about urban attitudes to the rural poor, especially when the traditional insulation promised by Arcadian descriptions of "shepherd"-life is increasingly criticized.

On the other hand, it would be naive to conflate pastoral writing with contemporary historical events. The necessity of discovering just how a poetic convention about rural life may be considered distinct from twentieth-century historiographical conclusions about contingent events is crucial. In this I have found two works most helpful. Confronted with similar considerations in a study of topographical poetry from 1630 to 1660, James Turner identifies the problem as a matter of determining

> the social meaning of literature without losing sight of its specificity, to combine the insights of formalism and historicism, without falling into either error. Literature is not 'pure' form, but

---

[1] Raman Selden, "Realism and Country People", Peasants and Countrymen in Literature : A Symposium organised by the English Department of the Roehampton Institute in February, 1981, edited by Kathleen Parkinson and Martin Priestman (London, 1982), pp. 39-58 (p. 39).

> neither is it pure evidence in a documentary study of public opinion .... Any poem, any sentence in literature, can be uttered either as a statement or as a specimen of aesthetic gesture, as content or as form.[1]

Indeed, the most valuable enquiries are inaugurated when "content" is seen to be structured by the "forms" available for its expression. The "forms" themselves are part of a dialectic with the social events that may be said to determine them more or less closely. With Turner, I felt that a return to a Marxist analysis of ideology was needed, and this involved a consideration of the early writings of both Marx and Engels. In the Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844, Marx points out that, however material the 'ideological reflexes and echoes' (those 'phantoms formed in the human brain') may be in their effect, they are still, 'necessarily', sublimates of 'real, active men' and their 'material life-process', in short, consequent on material events themselves.[2] Literature is both product and process. In The German Ideology (1846), Marx and Engels identify not only the hegemony of relations of ownership, but also the ideological power of the superstructures they perpetuate: 'The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas. [These] are nothing more than the ideal expression of the dominant material relationships' (p. 176). It is no surprise, therefore, that the real rural poor are not heard in a genre that stigmatizes them as leisured songsters.

The second work which elaborates valuably the "mimetic" position was Raymond Williams's "Base and Superstructure in Marxist Cultural Theory", an account of the dynamic relationship conceived to exist between economic forces and their relatively autonomous superstructural

---

1. The Politics of Landscape : Rural Scenery and Society in English Poetry, 1630-1660 (Oxford, 1979), p. 187.

2. Karl Marx : Selected Works, edited by David McLellan (London, 1977), p. 164.

practices. For "ideology", Williams is more inclined to read Gramsci's emphasis on "hegemony", which is so dominant that it 'constitutes a sense of reality for most people in the society, a sense of absolute because experienced reality beyond which it is very difficult for most members of the society to move ...'[1] This hegemonic perspective is the sensus communis of the social formation, and art cannot claim privileged exemption; indeed, the generic differentiae that make up "literature" as an institution are frequently outcrops of such hegemonic material, a means by which pastoral "shepherds" fall in line with other literary "shepherds" from the past and are not compared with contemporary equivalents. This distinction between a text as an object of critical activity and as an active critical activity itself leads Williams to disown the orthodox generic categorizations as idealist archaisms:

> ... the irreducibly individual projects that particular works are, may come in experience and in analysis to show resemblances which allow us to group them into collective modes. These are by no means always genres. They may exist as resemblances within and across genres. They may be the practice of a group in a period, rather than the practice of a phase in a genre. But as we discover the nature of a particular practice, and the nature of the relation between an individual project and a collective mode, we find that we are analysing, as two forms of the same process, both its active composition and its conditions of composition, and in either direction this is a complex of extending active relationships. [p. 16]

In the period under review the pastoral genre does not quite square with what Williams terms a truly 'collective mode'. Not even critical consensus is found as to what classical models should be chosen as representatives.

---

1. New Left Review, no. 82 (1973), 3-16 (p.9). Gramsci acknowledges Lenin as the originator of the concept (Selections from the Prison Notebooks, translated by Q. Hoare (London, 1971), p. 357). See Stuart Hall, Bob Lumley and Gregor McLennan, "Politics and Ideology : Gramsci", On Ideology, Working Papers in Cultural Studies, No. 10, Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (Birmingham, 1977), pp. 45-76 (especially pp. 48-50) and Jorge Larrain, The Concept of Ideology (London, 1979), pp. 80-83.

The temptation certainly exists to reduce literature to ideology. Williams himself has shown the inadvisability of this course.[1] The "Marx" of The German Ideology pointed out that in a class society it is often the case that real economic relationships are idealized as pure ideas and eternal essences, unchangeable because "natural" (pp. 164-68). Just as it is the task of any new 'individual project' to distance itself from (and yet also modify) the 'collective mode' of which it seems to form part, it inescapably interrogates the very generic conditions of its "literary" intelligibility. In such a way does it also stand apart from the received definitions or norms that constitute the genre. Just as ideology is never to be encapsulated in just one text, a full genre cannot be articulated by one model. In this way is it possible to claim that "pastoral" literary activity will always stand as distinct from the traditional literary presuppositions that seek to idealize it by reducing it to its similarities to other texts and thus to an ideal pastoral "poem". This is why so much of this study is given over to questioning the very validity of "pastoral" as a valid generalization to cover the immense variety of writing it seeks to define: to expose its conservative bias and to deconstruct it as a "natural" category.

It is precisely this social appropriation of the pastoral form, whether discovered in the Idylls or Eclogues, that is ideological.[2]

---

[1] Marxism and Literature (Oxford, 1977), pp. 52-53.

[2] I favour here the readings of the Marxist definitions of "Ideology" that stress its effect as negative and distorting. See Larrain's reading of Marx, pp. 35-67, 172-211, plus his summary in "On the Character of Ideology : Marx and the Present Debate in Britain", Theory, Culture and Society, 1 (1982), pp. 5-22. The ideological appropriation of literary genres has been examined by both Terry Eagleton in Criticism and Ideology : A Study in Marxist Literary Theory (London, 1976), especially in his definition of "Aesthetic Ideology" (p. 60), and Pierre Macherey, A Theory of Literary Production (1966), translated by Geoffrey Wall (London, 1978), pp. 136-56. Genre as a social codification has been called a "sociolect" by Rosalind Coward and John Ellis, Language and Materialism : Developments in Semiology and the Theory of the Subject (London, 1977), p. 38.

Hegemonic cultural activity groups and organizes the very categories of comparison and contrast that are dubbed the genres or "kinds" of literature, and thereby it implicitly suggests prescribed and approved modes of writing that conform to them. What it represents as static and immutable is in practice active and variable. "Parnassus" and "Grub Street" are socially constructed, not eternal essences.[1]

Consequently, the neo-classical pastoral for all its Virgilian authority went into a decline unannounced by what are now taken to be the foremost cultural spokesmen of the time. Marx, in his account of The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte (1852), accounted for the fact that revolutionary bourgeois fervour had masked itself in the disguises and language of the past, in this case 'Caesarism', by noting that its ideals, art forms and 'classically austere traditions' had provided indispensable 'self-deceptions that they needed in order to conceal from themselves the bourgeois limitations of the content of their struggles and to keep their enthusiasm on the high plane of the great historical tragedy' (p. 301). Whilst never so radical in political effect, English neo-classicism was similar. In a comprehensive inversion of the emphases in T.S. Eliot's account of the orderly transmission of European culture and the obedience of the individual talent, Marx highlights the presence of the past as far less liberating: 'Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly encountered, given, and transmitted from the past. The tradition of all the dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brain of the living'(p.300).

---

1. On the critical construction of "Grub Street", see Pat Rogers, Grub Street : Studies in a Subculture (London, 1972), pp. 18-93, and Kathy MacDermott, "Literature and the Grub Street Myth", Literature and History, 8 (1982), 159-69.

Genres exist as critical aids to intelligibility, without which, as indeed is the case with ideology, certain forms of art, as life, would be quite literally unthinkable. The precise effect of this "intelligibility" is, however, motivated and its units constructed for various ends not confined to aesthetic paradigms. It is with a view to discovering both how pastoral criticism functioned as a practice and what conditions favoured or retarded the form's neo-classic status that this study is attempted.

CHAPTER 1

Theocritus and the Requirements of Pastoral

The earliest classical criticism of the pastoral is an incidental remark by Quintilian. 'Theocritus,' he says, 'is admirable in his peculiar style, but his rustic and pastoral muse shrinks not only from appearing in the forum, but even from approaching the city.'[1] Theocritus, it would seem, has, from the first, presented problems for the critic of ancient pastoral poetry. This rustic muse has frequently signified an alien culture free of the disciplines and checks of the Attic style. The Doric dialect could, however, help in constructing an image of directness and, therefore, honesty. In the very first account of the allegorical eclogue, Theocritus proves to be an exception. Boccaccio explicitly states why he and his master Petrarch chose Virgil rather than Theocritus for a model by claiming that all of the _Idylls_' meaning is explicit and therefore resists the bifocal perspective necessary in allegory.[2] In both Vida's _De Arte Poetica_ (1527) and Scaliger's _Ars Poetica_ (1561), it is Virgil rather than Theocritus that provides the touchstone of pastoral excellence. The virtues of polish, elegance, and art are all necessary in creating a second nature that will vie with Nature itself. According to Scaliger, Virgil does 'not seem to have been taught by nature, but to have vied with it, or even better to have given it laws ...'. To the critical tastes of the humanistic

---

1. _The Institutio Oratoria of Quintilian_, 10.1.55, translated by H.E. Butler, 4 vols (London, 1922), 4:32: 'Admirabilis in suo genere Theocritus, sed musa illa rustica et pastoralis non forum modo, verum ipsam etiam urbem reformidat.'

2. _Lettere di Giovanni Boccaccio_, edited by Francesco Corrazzini (Florence, 1877), p. 267.

Renaissance pastoral, Virgil is equated with Art, Theocritus with the untutored irregularity of Nature.[1]

This reading of the ancient examplars of pastoral poetry can render the form vulnerable to two kinds of criticism. Firstly, Virgil's Art marries uneasily with its apparent subject matter: the leisure-hours of a mere shepherd. If decorum were strictly observed, then some of the rough wildness of "real" shepherds would have to be represented. Secondly, however, Theocritean dialect can sometimes be too rude and forthright for a "literary" occasion. This is probably why Sidney felt that pastoral was the most vulnerable form of poetry. In his An Apologie for Poetrie (written c. 1583, published 1595), pastoral as usual appears at the bottom of his list of genres. Those antagonistic to the poetic act itself would 'soonest leap over' where 'the hedge is the lowest'. However, the 'poor pipe' should not be 'disdained', because 'sometimes, under the pretty tales of wolves and sheep,' the poet may implicitly consider the whole range of 'wrong-doing and patience;'.[2] It is obvious that the particular 'nature' that Theocritus was supposed to have captured in the Idylls was of little service to those who sought hidden significances to sanction the very act of poetic creation itself. Minus this extra dimension, Puttenham, in his Arte of English Poesie (1589), contemplates only 'the meanest sort of men, as shepheards, heywards, and such like' making up the focus of interest, providing a style both 'base and humble' and in 1591, Sir John Harrington lumped the pastoral together

---

1. Select Translations from Scaliger's Poetics, edited by Frederick Morgan Padelford (New York, 1905), p. 52; see also Vida's partiality for Virgil, whom he advises the poet 'ante alias animo venerare', The Art of Poetry, translated by Christopher Pitt; edited by A.S. Cook (New York, 1926), p. 53.

2. An Apology for Poetry, edited by Geoffrey Shepherd (Manchester, 1973), p. 116.

with the sonnet and epigram and admitted that often they 'savour of wantonnes and love and toying, and now and then breaking the rules of Poetry, go into plaine scurrilite.'[1] This distrust of Theocritus would seem to relegate the Idylls to a marginal status in considerations of the Augustan pastoral.

The precise nature of the problem that Theocritus posed for traditional classicism is, alternatively, most significant. Aristotelian coherence and a chaste interpretation of Horatian decorum were theories instrumental in recasting more usual definitions of "simplicity" and "nature" in the interests of a complex yet mellifluous style where the "literary" occasion evinced graceful craftsmanship. On the other hand, the naïveté of Theocritus's assortment of goatherds, reapers and shepherds and his attempt to mirror this lack of pretension in the Doric mode, leads the reader to consider the very nature of such rural figures rather than admire the art that transforms them. Herein lies the danger to more fundamentalist classical tastes in literature and yet also their peculiar charm.

Much recent criticism has discovered a far less "innocent" work: one that is dynamically interrelated and deliberately varied. Gianfranco Fabiano has analysed the style of the Idylls as constantly fluctuating between epic and realistic, literary and colloquial. This sharp discontinuity of style is seen as a conscious effect as it seems not to follow lines of chronological poetic development: 'What seems chiefly to characterize Theocritus' poetic language is the instability of the system at every level.'[2] Efforts to combat the levelling,

---

1. Elizabethan Critical Essays, edited by G.G. Smith, 2 vols (Oxford, 1904), 2: 27; 2: 209.

2. "Fluctuation in Theocritus' Style", Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies, 12 (1971), 517-537 (528).

generic approach to the poems are found in the work of John Van Sickle and Charles Segal.[1] Far from being a constant, the Doric style emerges as extraordinarily flexible and refractory to easy generalization. Even on the level of verse, graceful lilt and melodious resonance can change suddenly to harsher and more abrupt rhythms and the songs of Pan, the Muses and Daphnis mingle with the "realistic" glimpses of butting goats and nibbled olive shoots.[2]

The Augustan Theocritus

It was not until Thomas Creech's translation of the *Idylliums of Theocritus, with Rapin's discourse of Pastorals, done into English* (1684) that the first full translation of the Doric Greek original became available. Indeed, a reliable text would have been especially difficult to obtain until Bishop Fell's edition in 1676.[3] The result of this belated discovery of Theocritus was that there were two versions of his *Idylls* - the Theocritus that was produced out of hearsay and tradition alongside the more accurate opinion deduced directly from the Greek that only became available eight years before

---

1. "Epic and Bucolic (Theocritus, Id. VII; Virgil, Ecl. 1)", *Quaderni Urbinati di Cultura Classica*, 19 (1975), 45-72; "Thematic Coherence in Theocritus' Bucolic *Idylls*", *Wiener Studien*, N.F. (1977), 35-68.

2. For sudden changes in rhythm, see *Idyll* 4. 38-57, 5. 31-62, 45-53. The mingling of myth with rustic particularity has best been studied by Segal with special reference to *Idyll* 7: 'Lycidas may smell of goats and rennet, but when he descends from his mountains to meet the city-dwellers on the plain, he brings with him not only the divine epiphanies of Homeric epic, but also the mythic world of a shepherd singer ...' "Landscape into Myth : Theocritus' Bucolic Poetry", *Ramus*, 4 (1975), 115-139 (139).

3. Fell's edition was largely based on the Ambrosian MSS. 390 and 104. For a fuller account see *Theocritus*, edited by W.S.F. Gow, 2 vols (Cambridge, 1950), 1: xxx-xxxi. Creech, however, did have the full canon from which to work, even if his knowledge of the Doric dialect was inevitably rudimentary.

the Creech translation. A partial edition, containing material that by 1676 had been declared spurious, was published anonymously at Oxford in 1588 called Sixe Idillia,[1] but it is fair to assume that Theocritus was then more known by reputation than by study. This did not prevent Alexander Barclay including him in a roll-call of great pastoral poets in 1513-14 in the Prologe to his own Eclogues, as did "E.K." in his Epistle to Spenser's Shepheardes Calendar (1579).[2] Sir Philip Sidney, in commending the Calendar, was, on the other hand, unhappy about the 'framing of his style to an old rustic language' seeing that Theocritus as well as Virgil and Sannazaro did not provide a precedent for it, whereas William Webbe was concerned with the pastoral poet's motive and linked Theocritus with Virgil, Calpurnius and Mantuan:

> Although the matter they take in hand seemeth commonly in appearance rude and homely, as the usual talk of simple clowns, yet do they indeed utter in the same much pleasant and profitable delight. For under these persons, as it were in a cloak of simplicity, they would either set forth the praises of their friends, without the note of flattery, or inveigh grievously against abuses, without any token of bitterness.[3]

In Webbe's opinion, the rugged naturalism of the Doric is a device to disarm the unwary reader and act as a decoy while more pertinent matters than 'the usual talk of simple clowns' are in fact signified. Sidney, however, differentiates a Spenserian Doric (an 'old rustic language') from what is presumably a more current patois imitated by

---

1. Full title was: Sixe Idillia that is, sixe small, or petty Poems, or Æglogues, chosen out of the right famous Sicilian Poet Theocritus, and translated into English verse.

2. The Eclogues of Alexander Barclay, edited by Beatrice White, Early English Texts Society, O.S. 175 (London, 1928), p. 76; Spenser : Poetical Works, edited by J.C. Smith and E. de Selincourt (Oxford, 1970), p. 418.

3. An Apology, p. 133; "A Discourse of English Poetrie" (1586), in Elizabethan Critical Essays, 1: 262.

Theocritus. Webbe on the one hand excuses the Doric for its function in a wider moral framework whereas Sidney prefers to consider the style as less alien to accepted "literary" standards.

In Rene Rapin's Dissertatio de Carmine Pastorali (1659), translated by Thomas Creech as "A Treatise de Carmine Pastorali" (1684), this humanistic apology for pastoral poetry is significantly absent. There is no hint of moral instruction or satire left. Consequently, the shepherd metaphor must provide: 'a perfect image of the State of Innocence, of that golden Age, that blessed time, when Sincerity and Innocence, Peace, Ease, and Plenty inhabited the Plains ...'[1] To use that image to serve a greater purpose would be to deflect the reader's emotional attention from the image itself. In Rapin's opinion, one should not look through and beyond the image but find it, in itself, exemplary. This has consequences for the pastoral form which extend beyond its subject matter; Rapin emphasises the dulce more than the utile: 'Therefore let Pastoral never venture upon a lofty subject, let it not recede one jot from its proper matter, but be employ'd about Rustick affairs: such as are mean and humble in themselves ...' (pp. 24-25). Without examining Rapin's terms any further, it is evident that the perfect imitation of the Classical Golden Age could hardly co-exist with true Rusticity: 'the humble and mean'. Throughout Rapin's treatise there is this dialectic between the transcendent image and the contemporary reality of a shepherd's life with its "non-literary" meanness. It is this thin line between rusticity and simplicity that a successful pastoral will uphold. In accordance with this fine discrimination, Rapin finds the pastoral next-of-kin to the epic, which comprises two kinds of imitation, namely the Heroic and the Rustic, (p.19) an ambivalence that is quietly perpetuated in his definition of the Pastoral action: 'It is the imitation of the Action of a Sheaperd, or of one taken under that character ...' (pp. 33-34). Two totally distinct traditions of pastoral poetry or drama are weakly linked here as alternatives. That there might be a world of difference between the realism of choosing to write directly of a shepherd's life and the potential allegory endemic in the masquerades of Le Petit Hameau or Sidney's Arcadia seems not to be central to Rapin's theory. Neither of these alternatives are chosen on the grounds that, in the Golden Age, even the most noble followed the shepherd's calling (p.24). Hence Rapin is most particular in claiming that pastoral poems only imitate a shepherd's life. The reapers of Idyll 10 or the hunting and ploughing of the Georgics are foreign to it. Logically, when Virgil includes the Golden Age or the Epicurean theory of Creation as themes in Eclogues 4 and 6 he also transgresses against pastoral decorum.

---

[1] "A Treatise de Carmine Pastorali", in Idylliums of Theocritus, translated by Thomas Creech (Oxford, 1684), p. 5.

To reflect this balance between the epic and the "low" pastoral, Creech would have to be carefully neutral in his style. Usually, decorum demanded a style that would adequately clothe the subject. As the subject is a shepherd, 'or of one taken under that character', it is not easy to realise just what this constitutes. Just as the style could be too polite or too elegant it could also be too clownish. The shepherd becomes an ideal and must consequently be portrayed in an exemplary way. He escapes the vices of the Court by being transplanted into country soil but as his lineage is noble, blood demands that he be free of his environment. As the Golden Age was seen as a time of milk and honey,[1] work would not tire or debase; his education would be born of spontaneous communion with Nature, expressed in song. When Rapin describes a style suitable to this poetic fiction, he can only approximate: 'Let the Expression be plain and easy, but elegant and neat, and the purest which the language will afford' (p. 35). Later, in Part III of the treatise, "Rules for Writing Pastorals", this quality of plainness and elegance proves unmimetic: 'For since the matter must be low, to avoid being abject, and despicable, you must borrow some light from the Expression' (p. 57). Far from being either a picture of rural life or offering useful instruction, the pastoral emerges as a testimony ultimately to the transforming power of Art and its victory over Nature. Although 'Nature is chiefly to be lookt upon', it is also not quite enough '(for nothing that is disagreeable to Nature can please) yet that will hardly prevail naked, by it self, and without the polishing of art ...' (p. 44). The qualifications are most significant here. 'Nature' is only 'chiefly' the focus of attention and the parenthesis claiming that pleasure derives only from the portrayal of the 'naturally' agreeable or fitting marks a thought that is indeed parenthetical to the main argument, but also necessary in advancing the hypothesis that the 'nakedness' of Nature as experienced is insufficient - not that it fails to render a true image of life but that it is unpleasant and so will not please. Consequently, it is not Rapin's view that the virtues of pastoral representation are mimetic ones. In strictly Aristotelian terms, the "life" that the pastoral represents does not exist. If the object of pastoral descriptions is "real" then it endures purely as a relationship between a poet and his readers or audience, where what will pass as a pleasurable image answers a permanent desire to find in the countryside a world where all the disagreeable stresses of the city and its social obligations evaporate or resolve themselves. The exact character of that desire may alter with the times, but the psychological need of Theocritus's Alexandrians, Virgil's Augustan Romans and Creech's Londoners remains. However, it must also be allowed, if the pastoral poem is primarily affective, that styles and diction may also alter. Rapin's own directions for pastoral style are based on a reinforcement of the notion that its excellence lies in the tracing of an exact yet abstract "literary" quality. As with any Utopia or Arcadia, its particular contours are mental and its map will be a psychological one. This position is defiantly an idealist one: 'For since Eclogue is but weak, it seems not capable of those Commotions which belong to the Theater, and Pulpit; they must be soft, and gentle, and all its Passion must seem to flow only, and not break out ...' (p. 62). In view of the amoebaean structure of many Idylls and Eclogues, to claim that the main interest of the pastoral does not lie in its drama is implicitly to deny the singing-contests of Corydon and Battus (Idyll 4) or Comatas and Lacon (Idyll 5) or Meliboeus and Tityrus (Eclogue 1) to be conflicts or even competitions. The plainness of the style would forfeit elegance and neatness and its purity be compromised if disquiet were admitted. To be both seamless and polished, its brilliance must be obvious and be appreciated as a compact, well-defined area of experience. It is necessary, therefore, that Creech's style should be an "innocent" idiom, free from the neighbouring alternatives of the Heroic and the Clownish.

---

[1] The principal sources for the myth are: Hesiod, Works and Days, 109-20; Virgil, Eclogue 4: 4-7, 37-45; Ovid, Metamorphoses, 1: 89-103.

Creech's translation was reprinted in 1713 and 1721, but was not as popular as his much-praised translation of Lucretius's De Rerum Natura (1682). Both works were regarded as definitive. Pope even regarded his rather pedestrian translations of Horace (1684) favourably, opening his Imitation of Horace, Book I, Epistle 6 (1738) with an (inexact) quotation from his translation:

> 'Not to Admire, is all the Art I know,
> 'To make men happy, and to keep them so.'
> [Plain Truth, dear MURRAY, needs no flow'rs of speech,
> So take it in the very words of Creech.][1]

A more direct commendation was to come from Thomas Purney in his A Full Enquiry into the True Nature of Pastoral (1717). When describing a pastoral 'thought' as being not only agreeable or beautiful but also possessing simplicity, he finds the rendering of the latter best exemplified by Creech's translation of Theocritus 'whose Language (next to some of Spencer's) is vastly the best we have, for Pastoral'.[2] Rapin, however, cast some doubt as to whether all of Theocritus's Idylls were pastoral as they were not all about shepherds (p.20). Indeed, this simplicity did seem strange when compared with the necessary heightening needed to match the elevated subject matter of Idylls 13 (the story of Hylas from the Argonautica), 15 (the Adonis song), 16 (the request for patronage addressed to Hieron I of Syracuse) or 18 (Helen's Epithalamion). On the other hand, Rapin finds him deficient in the depiction of the manners of the Golden Age which would mean that shepherds 'must be candid, simple, and ingenuous; lovers of Goodness, and Justice, affable, and kind; strangers to all fraud, contrivance, and deceit; in their love modest, and chast, not one suspitious word, no loose expression to be allowed' (p. 67). It

---

1. Imitations of Horace, edited by John Butt, Twickenham edition of the Poetry of Alexander Pope, 6 vols (London, 1939), 4: 237.

2. A Full Enquiry into the True Nature of Pastoral, edited by Earl Wasserman, Augustan Reprint Society, Series Two, No. 4 (Ann Arbor, 1948), pp. 46-47. This style might have recommended itself to Purney for its 'tenderness'. See p.67.

is perhaps not surprising that Theocritus is found wanting; Rapin taxes him with allowing his shepherds to be 'too sharp, and abusive to one another'. Indeed the railing between Comatas and Lacon seems as 'bitter as Billingsgate' and thus not suitable to those 'sedate times of the Happy Age' (p. 67).

Rapin's Golden Age functions as a filtering device. This ideal needs no allegorical power for it enforces the reader to recognise his desire for a better life and yet it implicitly removes this abstraction out of the realm of human action and history. Only the poets deliver a golden world; therefore, the shepherds are the creation of a selective literary tradition not the objects of perception. The English reception of this myth may be initially dated from Samuel Daniel's Queenes Arcadia (1605). Whilst not actually using the phrase, the prologue, "To the Queenes most Excellent Majestie," defines the experience of the play as most suitable for

> ... a claustrall exercise,
> Where men shut out retyr'd, and sequestered
> From publike fashion, seeme to sympathize
> With innocent, and plaine simplicity.[1]

The "otherness" of this Arcadia is its virtue.

Drama, indeed, could provide many opportunities for confronting convention with sordid reality. Daniel's Arcadia had been a Queenes Arcadia. In As You Like It (c. 1598) and The Winter's Tale (c. 1609), the Forest of Arden and Bohemia are topographical and yet also conventional. The aristocratic Arcadians of Spenser and Sidney here encounter representatives of a native tradition often directly inimical to them. Such a recovery of the folk traditions of peasant songs or pastoral ballads was only possible when the more medieval dramaturgies

---

1. The Complete Works in Verse and Prose of Samuel Daniel, edited by Alexander B. Grosart, 5 vols (New York, 1963), 3: 213, ll. 14-17.

or the influence of the French pastourelle survived.[1] Shakespeare, therefore, can mix together Corin and Audrey, the earthy rustics, at one remove from the anonymous Sir Clyomon and Clamydes (written 1570-90, published 1599), with both the refined Silvius and Phebe (approximating to the delicacy of Sidney's Arcadia (1590)) and the obviously courtly runaways: Rosalind, Celia and Touchstone. The exiled Duke and his followers 'like foresters' may enjoy their holiday from the court and feel not 'the penalty of Adam,' and 'The seasons' difference', yet the company of Jaques serves to remind the audience that even in Arcadia there is, if not death, then melancholic reactions to the unaccommodated truth of Man's "natural" condition and where deer have to be killed for food 'In their assign'd and native dwelling-place' (II, 1, 5-6, 63).[2] In Bohemia, Prince Florizel has no difficulty in recognising Perdita's noble qualities through her 'unusual weeds', and, in dialogue with Camillo and Polixenes, she argues against the marriage of high and low, court and country (IV, 4, 79-108).[3] However the Bohemian simplicities do have an improving effect on the court-life of Sicily. Shakespeare's emphasis on the positive qualities of a more naturalistically realised pastoral culture has no authority from his main source, Greene's Pandosto (1588).[4] This dialectic between

---

1. For the fullest account of both traditions concerning the pastoral form, see Helen Cooper, Pastoral : Medieval into Renaissance (Ipswich, 1977), pp. 24-46, 50-70.

2. As You Like It, edited by Agnes Latham, Arden edition, second edition (London, 1975), pp. 29-30, 33.

3. The Winter's Tale, edited by J.H.P. Pafford, Arden edition, fourth edition (London, 1963), pp. 93-95.

4. For example, Autolycus and the Clown are additions to Greene's plot. There is also an attempt to provide a greater value for the pastoral culture by giving the old shepherd more altruistic motivation. In Shakespeare, he thinks instinctively of caring for Perdita on finding her before discovering the accompanying treasure, whereas in Greene the baby and wealth are discovered simultaneously and covetousness is the prime instigation of the action of the shepherd and his wife.

what the reader or auditor may know to be actuality and what he or she will accept as "literary" is only implicit in Rapin. The Golden Age, as interpreted by French neo-classicism, is a manifest fiction. The resistance to accents as 'bitter as Billingsgate' is an attempt to enforce a greater unity on the poetry: all the more reason to qualify the variety of Theocritus's Doric and its dramatic contrasts.

This same puzzlement over Theocritus's recalcitrance troubled Basil Kennet who prefaced Creech's second edition in 1713 with a Life of Theocritus. The only poems in the Idylls that he can definitely claim to be true pastorals are 1, which is a popular choice, 9 (now generally regarded as spurious) and 11. Theocritus's Idyll 1 concerns the death of Daphnis for reasons not fully explained but are generally associated with blighted love. Idyll 9 is the Song of the Cyclops for a hopeless love and Polyphemus appears again in similar guise in 11. The link between the three poems seems only to be their preoccupation with the pathetic and the melancholy ambience which they evoke. Kennet seems more concerned however to discover how shepherds may be portrayed in pastoral. Unrealistic over-refinement seems as much a vice as clownish rusticity. Logically, he claims that the Doric dialect the poems were composed in was invented for the occasion. 'The Old Dorian Phrase seems to have been introduc'd on purpose for these Compositions: Or one would think this was the plain language of the Golden Age;' (p. 56).[1] The roughness and dialectal edge to 'the old Dorian Phrase' is only analogous to the speech of Sicilian herdsmen, not an attempt to reproduce it. However indecorous Doric promises to be, its rugged texture is, in

---

1. Kennet's Life was a reprint of the relevant section of his The Lives and Characters of the Ancient Grecian Poets (1697). He is also responsible for an authoritative translation of Vida's De Arte Poetica (1701).

Kennet's opinion, a contrivance derived from only literary sources.

To judge from the above quotation it is difficult to identify the exact significance of his 'Golden Age'. It could be a primeval, yet noble, state from which we have fallen into civilized corruption, or, as it is distinguished from a specifically "literary" intention, it could be real - something which exists in fact rather than just in literature - or, lastly, it could be a vague term of approval, which avoids such ontological problems. This ambivalence appears deliberate from what follows almost immediately. Kennet wonders whether the Doric may not have rather betrayed Theocritus into 'ill-breeding' as opposed to 'simplicity', and has to admit that the 'Country Air and Tone' seem 'a little uncouth', 'at least, ... they appear so to the elegancy and the niceness of Modern Times'. So uncertain is he on this issue that he then argues as if the 'plainness' of shepherd-talk, far from betokening a Golden Age, needs defending on realistic grounds, that 'unless the Shepherds are allow'd some ruder Liberties in their Words and Carriage, they will seem to be abridg'd of the Privileges of their Nature and their Condition ...', that is, if it is accepted that they are no princes/aristocrats in masquerade. Indeed, he feels that 'it would be a safer Error to let them smell rank of the Field, than to deck them with the least spruceness of the City' (p. 56). On the other hand, the Theocritean shepherds are Sicilians and, in translating the original, it would seem wrong to "English" them and allow them a more familiar and realistic status.

Both Rapin and Kennet are troubled by the rusticity of Theocritus. Rapin finds that it contradicts the seamless purity that he would expect of the pastoral and so the pleasure of a release from urban trouble is qualified. Kennet cannot reconcile the deliberate artistry of Theocritus with the desire to use that skill for the indecorous portrayal of country workers. However, it is better to err on that side than to create an obvious falsehood: a shepherd displaying the advantages of education. Both are agreed on the suitability of the pastoral for the portrayal of tenderness and sentiment. Creech's translation was even celebrated for its amorous fire. In Daphnis (1700) Creech is the subject of a pastoral lament akin, as the title suggests, to Idyll 1. Just as Daphnis dies a death of renunciation, Creech, in committing suicide, is similarly seen as sacrificing his art for the love of Lalage. The anonymous poet is under no illusions that Creech spoke the language of the passions. He is honoured as a poet

> whose verse could move
> A Rock to Pity, or a Stone to Love.
> Who could, like Ovid, tendrest Thoughts instill
> Should fall a Victim to a Woman's Will? [ll. 21-24]

His achievement in pastoral is that he 'Discover'd Grecian loves, to British Swains' (43). The concluding lines of the poem represent quite fairly the intensity of the emotionalism. Daphnis, who in Theocritus's version, is restrained and certain of his renunciation of love, becomes love-lorn in the 1700 elegy and complains: 'I rave, I rage, I burn, oh! let me fly / To some dark desert Place, and there I'll dye' (223-24). The portrayal of shepherds does not have such complexities if they are primarily represented as lovers. A shepherd's work would be particular to him; if, however, he is a lover, then he becomes more general and more abstract: the embodiment of simple, artless passion, which lends itself to two alternative perspectives. Firstly, the passion suffered or expressed by the human representative dissolves his or her individuality until the emotion becomes typical. Examples of this would be Idyll 6, a singing-match between Daphnis and Damoetas on the hopelessness of Polyphemus's desire for Galatea, or *Idyll* 11 where the Cyclops is allowed his own song of unrequited love. On the other hand, this pathos of impossible desire could be transformed to cruel grotesquerie where the human figure is belittled by his inordinate and unreasonable desire. The reader is invited to take up a more detached and critical attitude towards Simaetha of *Idyll* 2 and the unnamed goatherd of *Idyll* 3. Simaetha's spell and incantation, the characterizing reference to her unmarried state, her seduction by the wrestler Delphis and the urban details are more akin to Old Comic dramatic monologues than the bucolic *Idylls*.[1] The singer of *Idyll* 3 serenades Amaryllis in a form κῶμος that is familiar as an urban form, usually a sequel to a συμπόσιον. Its transference to a rustic setting is clearly incongruous and serves to isolate the singer from the reader's empathy.[2] The countryside is seen from an urban perspective.

Creech's volume of the translated *Idylls* is, however, introduced and presented as a collection of lyrical poems. This is hardly surprising, as both Rapin and Kennet expect the pastoral form to portray innocence, Simaetha notwithstanding. If this requirement were strictly enforced, the pastoral canon would be considerably reduced. Only *Idylls* 1, 6, 7, and 11 could then be considered examples of perfect respectability. William Walsh, in his *Letters*

---

[1] See especially *Theocritus : Select Poems*, edited by K.J. Dover (London, 1971), pp. xxxviii - xlii. Corroboration is difficult due to the small number of Old Comic texts. Theocritus seems to have been most influenced by two fellow Syracusans: Epicharmus, who wrote verse-comedies in the first quarter of the fifth century B.C., and Sophron, who wrote prose mimes in the fifth century. Their work exists only in fragments, although they are frequently cited by contemporaries.

[2] The sentimental goatherd cites several inappropriate myths to contrast with both his bucolic tasks and his speech-pattern. The best account is in Charles Segal, "Adonis and Aphrodite: Theocritus, *Idyll* III, 48" from *L'Antiquité Classique*, 37 (1969) 82-88. Support can be found in Gilbert Lawall, *Theocritus's Coan Pastorals* (Cambridge, Mass., 1967), p. 40, and Gow, 2: 74.

and Poems Amorous and Gallant (1692) (by misreading) even bars *Idyll* 1 from that number:

> The Design ought to be the representing the Life of a Shepherd, not only by talking of Sheep and Fields, but by showing us the Truth, Sincerity, and Innocence that accompanies that sort of Life, For though I know our Masters, *Theocritus* and *Virgil*, have not always conform'd in this Point of Innocence; *Theocritus*, in his *Daphnis*, having made his love too wanton ...

Indeed, Walsh confesses that he would be better pleased with the poem 'if he had made his shepherds more modest'.[1] This view of what the pastoral should aim to create is repeated by Thomas Tickell in his *Guardian* papers on pastoral poetry (1713), especially 28, where he commends Theocritus in particular for this quality even above Virgil: '... there is ... more innocence, simplicity, and whatever else hath been laid down as the distinguishing marks of pastoral, in the Greek than the Roman ...'[2]. On this same topic, Dryden had, in 1699, written to Elizabeth Thomas, advising her 'not to trust too much to Virgil's Pastorals; for as excellent as they are, yet, Theocritus is far before him, both in Softness of Thought, and Simplicity of Expression'.[3] Dryden had expanded on this opinion in his "Preface" to *Sylvae* (1685), emphasising the fact that Theocritus seemed most supreme in this 'softness' and 'simplicity':

> That which distinguishes Theocritus from all other poets, both Greek and Latin, and which raises him even above Virgil in his *Eclogues*, is the inimitable tenderness of his passions, and the natural expression of them in words so becoming of a pastoral. A simplicity shines through all he writes: he shows his art and learning, by disguising both.

---

1. "Preface", p. 4.

2. *The Guardian*, 2 vols (London, 1767), 1: 113.

3. *The Letters of John Dryden*, edited by Charles E. Ward (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1942), Letter 69, p. 127.

Later, he compares Theocritus with Ovid, giving victory in 'tenderness' to the former.

> he is softer than Ovid; he touches the passions more delicately, and performs all this out of his own fond, without diving into the arts and sciences for a supply. Even his Doric dialect has an incomparable sweetness in its clownishness, like a fair shepherdess in her country russet, talking in a Yorkshire tone ...[1]

This rusticity works, in Dryden's view, because Theocritus wrote for Sicilians who spoke the dialect, and therefore its contrivance would not have been apparent.

In emphasising the affective in Theocritus's poetry, a lyrical pastoral is expected. Both allegory and the epic manner are suspect. Innocent love and its artless expression supplant the symbol or the hero as the proper subject-matter of a pastoral. The attempt to marry such simplicity with Theocritus's rusticity proved difficult. Some would find the Idylls guilty of indecorum. Rapin and Pope (in his Discourse on Pastoral Poetry (1717)) could find them defective in observing 'manners'.[2] This is a possible sub-text to Gay's references to Theocritus in his "Proeme" to The Shepherd's Week (1714). Although the whole poem is elusive in its irony, part of its interest lies in the many alternative readings which it could elicit. Certainly the dissonance between rustic ill-breeding and innocent simplicity forms part of Gay's main attraction. The claim that he was writing the poems on a Theocritean model is ambiguous in a positive way:

---

[1] "Preface" to Sylvae : or the Second Part of Poetical Miscellanies, from Essays of John Dryden, edited by W.P. Ker, 2 vols (Oxford, 1900), 1: 265.

[2] Rapin distrusts the Doric dialect and any attempt to represent rural life with any verisimilitude. Theocritus sins against such standards of purity, for the bucolics are full of a 'broad way of pronunciation', which is 'exactly fit for a Clown's discourse' (p. 36). The 'manners' are therefore apt to be 'faulty' (p. 67). Pope finds that Theocritus 'is not so exact in his persons [as Virgil], having introduced Reapers and fishermen', employments with little opportunity for transfiguring literary associations, TE , 1: 29 .

> Great Marvell hath it been, (and that not unworthily) to diverse worthy Wits, that in this our Island of Britain, in all rare Sciences so greatly abounding, more especially in all kinds of Poesie highly flourishing, no Poet (though otherways of notable Cunning in Roundelays) hath hit on the right simple Eclogue after the true ancient guise of Theocritus, before this mine Attempt.[1]

The sentence announces itself as ironic by the unnecessary complications of archaisms, superfluous qualifying clauses before the main verb and the proliferation of parentheses. Its verbosity is a Modern's fault of pride. The insularity of nationalistic pride is suggested by the phrase 'our Island of Britain' and of pride in contemporary achievement by the mention of an abundance of scientific research. The *persona* Gay assumes also exudes facile confidence in the multiplicity of *kinds* of poetry being written, not in the excellence achieved in any one of them. Indeed, the paratactic diffuseness of the whole "Proeme" should destroy confidence in its author's stylistic judgement. The question that is left unresolved despite this is whether the reader can conclude that it is Theocritus's 'true ancient' style of downright simplicity that is discredited or the Proeme-writer's pretensions to achieving it. That it might be the former is suggested by the comments on *Idyll* 5. Eschewing 'idle trumpery (only fit for Schools and Schoolboys)', Theocritus is thus commended as 'rightly' having: 'his louts give foul language, and behold their Goats at Rut in all Simplicity' (1: 90). As throughout the Proeme, the remarks in parentheses have an important role to play. By dismissing the 'idle trumpery' that Theocritus ignores as only suitable for scholastic endeavour, the "Proeme-writer", unawares, floats the implicit suggestion that such simplicity is unlettered and thus uncivilised. Dryden was more favourably disposed towards the Doric and the subject of the Idylls. In his "Preface" to the Sylvae he commends the fact that Theocritus's shepherds 'never rise above their country education in their complaints of love' unlike Virgil's, who dabble in 'the philosophy of Epicurus and of Plato'. All of Theocritus's images are taken from the country because all of his shepherds are transcribed from 'cottages and plains' (1: 265). Dryden does not clarify this last statement but it could be taken to mean that Theocritus is more realistic than Virgil in that he maintains the probability that country life is harsh. Gay certainly finds the 'foul language' of Idyll 5 too real to give pleasure. Both readings produce a Theocritus who, quite apart from the tenderness in amorous courtship discovered in other quarters, creates an atmosphere of boorish truth that provokes as much tolerant amusement as an encounter with a rustic would produce in real life.

---

[1] *John Gay : Poetry and Prose*, edited by Vinton A. Dearing with the assistance of Charles E. Beckwith, 2 vols (Oxford, 1974), 1 : 90.

This "realism" attracted attention from commentators or translators because it was a departure from the large appearances and grandeur of generalization that was essential to idealism. Deprived of the taste for allegory, the period read pastoral poetry as symphonic and transcendent rather than satirical and corporeal. It was understandable, therefore, that the pastoral came to be regarded as lyric. As soon as that is granted, it is easier to acknowledge that love is a central preoccupation. William Temple in his essay "Of Poetry" (1690) connects the two unequivocally:

> The Lyrick Poetry has been chiefly Conversant about Love, tho' turned often upon Praise too; and the

> Vein of Pastorals and Eclogues has run the same course,
> as may be observed in Theocrytus, Virgil, and Horace...[1]

This expressive theory of pastoral poetry demands a coherence of mood. It requires not an Aristotelian plot but a unity of sentiment and stylistic register so as to be emotionally convincing. Theocritus proves to be only partially true to this rule. Bernard le Bovier de Fontenelle, who wrote his Discours sur la Nature de l'Églogue (1688) to challenge Rapin's Golden Age preoccupations, takes over, however, his distaste for Theocritus's clownishness. P. A. Motteux's translation appeared with le Bossu's 'Treatise of the Epick Poem" and Dacier's "An Essay upon Satyr" in 1695 and was, with Rapin, a seminal influence on Pope's Discourse. It commences with a clear objection to Theocritus's clownishness as it leads to an inconsistency of atmosphere and takes as its two main defective texts Idylls 4 and 5: 'May not these Discourses be thought too Clownish, and fitter to be spoken by real Country Fellows than by such Shepherds as are introduc'd in Eclogues?'[2]. Fontenelle's choice of the Eclogue as the obvious pattern for pastoral writers to follow is probably a deliberate reference to Virgil's work. Theocritus appears as an embarrassing black sheep in the family. In order to discount his influence Fontenelle would have the eclogue defiantly non-mimetic on the grounds not of decorum or unity of plot but emotional consistency: 'I therefore am of Opinion, that Pastoral Poetry cannot be very charming if it is as low and clownish as shepherds naturally are; or if it precisely runs upon nothing but rural Matters' (p. 281). It is crucial, considering this conclusion, that the pastoral's

---

1. Critical Essays of the Seventeenth Century, edited by J.E. Spingarn, 3 vols (Oxford, 1908), 3 : 89.

2. "Of Pastorals", "Englished by Mr. Motteux" and published with Rene le Bossu, 'Treatise of the Epick Poem" (1695), p. 280.

subject-matter be highly selective: 'The Business is not purely to describe, we must describe such Objects as are delightful' (p. 285). Horatian decorum had demanded a style that was suitable to the subject-matter of a poem. Here there is a deliberate mystification of the central characters and their locale: instead of being shepherds, they become an affective synthesis charged with the task of providing illusion instead of truth.

This idealism is only one way of interpreting the Idylls. Gay and Dryden had found Theocritus too realistic. Lady Mary Wortley Montagu found to her surprise that he directly rendered the details of the Sicilian landscape of his childhood:

> I no longer look upon Theocritus as a Romantic Writer; he has only given a plain image of the Way of Life amongst the Peasants of his Country, which before oppresion had reduc'd them to want, were I suppose all employ'd as the better sort of 'em are now. I don't doubt had he been born a Briton his Idylliums had been fill'd with Descriptions of Thrashing and Churning, both which are unknown here [Turkey].[1]

For Purney, too, Theocritean detail serves a mimetic purpose in the sense that our recognition of the original is a pleasure. He, like Fontenelle, finds Theocritus an irritatingly successful pastoral poet - irritating because influential, Purney himself composing his own Pastorals. After the simple manner of Theocritus in 1717. Purney's Theocritus, however, is carefully re-modelled. In the opening paragraphs of A Full Enquiry (1717), he proposes three alternative courses for a pastoral poet in describing the landscape: Rapin's ('as 'tis suppos'd to have been in the Golden Age'), Fontenelle's ('his own COUNTRY but touching only what is agreeable in it') or a third option, that he 'may depaint the life of Swains exactly as it is, their Fatigues and Pleasures being equally blended together. And this, last Kind most Writers have given into; for Theocritus's rude unmanner'd Muse (as many Criticks have stiled it, not much amiss) naturally led him into this Method' (p. 5). Purney found Theocritus's example needed reinterpreting. He returns to this theme in Chapter II, section 1. Here he laments the derivativeness of modern pastorals, assuming certain material details that are not immediately familiar now:

---

[1] The Complete Letters of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, edited by Robert Halsband, 3 vols (Oxford, 1965), 1: 332.

> We always see 'em sweating with a Sicle in their Hands; beating their Cows from the Corn; or else at Scolding. Yet doubtless a kind of Pastorals of this Nature might be made extreamly delightful, if the Writer would dare to write himself, and not be lead so much by Theocritus and Virgil [p. 24].

This 'delightfulness', derived from habitual courses of life and homely daily tasks, is only so by its power to provide an alternative for the town-dweller. The shepherd or cowherd is "other" than 'ourselves', and, if shown to indulge in dissensions or to be beset by privation, the reader's imagination would not be enticed to embrace such simplicity. On the contrary,

> We love the Country for its' Soft Retirements, its' Silence, and its' Shades, and can we love a Description of it that sets none of these before us? ...
>
> If the Toils of the Country-Folk took my Observance, 'twould only be for Variety ... [p. 26]

not for information. This 'variety' embeds these pastoral figures in a plausible working community without which the "higher" pleasure of enjoying their 'retired' existence would seem too ideal and gratuitous. In short, it does not suggest the Georgics at all where the depiction of labour is pervasive. Lady Mary Wortley Montagu wondered whether, if a British Theocritus were alive today, he might not portray such tasks as threshing or churning. This poetry would be far from Golden Age portraiture in that it would anchor this ideal in one spot and at one particular stage of agrarian industry. In such a way did Theocritus come to symbolize a rough-hewn "realism" and sanction, united with Spenser's example, a vernacular pastoral that introduced into it native elements and perhaps dialectal forms. Thomas Tickell's last Guardian paper on pastoral poetry (32) is set in the form of an allegory where certain poets present themselves characteristically as suitors before Amaryllis. Theocritus comes 'Clothed in a garment of rough goatskins, his hair was matted, his beard neglected; in his person uncouth, and aukward in his gait'. He is not successful as the sound on his pipe is 'harsh and jarring' (1 : 130). This home-spun rusticity could be accepted as a positive virtue. In The Battle of the Authors Lately Fought in Covent Garden (1720), which Edward and Lillian Bloom attribute to John Dennis, the two principal antagonists are Horatius Truewit and Sir John Edgar. Theocritus fights on Horatius's side[1] under the banner of Ambrosius who is

> clad all in Green, except a Tragick Mantle, which hung down behind him, with a Shepherd's Crook in one hand, and a Scrip by his side, with the Rural Pipe hanging before him; there was good Nature and calmness in his Face, with a glimpse of Majesty which in a proper Place his Performances have discover'd ...[2]

Ambrosius is a significant figure to choose to represent pastoral poetry. As leader of the Britons in the fifth century he checked the advance of Saxon invaders, but he was also of Roman birth, a descendant of Constantine. As such he typifies the native pastoral; although bearing marks of its descent from classical origins, it is now fully naturalized.

This did not necessarily produce, on the other hand, quite the

---

[1] Therefore in opposition to Virgil.

[2] Addison and Steele : The Critical Heritage, edited by Edward A. and Lillian D. Bloom (London, 1980), p. 152.

'harsh and jarring' melodies that Purney feared. In his hands, the Doric was softened quite deliberately. In his "Advertisement concerning the Language", pastoral poetry is best sampled by reading Theocritus, Spenser, and 'the incomparable Pastorals of Mr. Phillips'. Phillips is praised for his talent in imitating Spenser's 'manner', 'of changing the vulgar dress ... of his words, yet leaving the Main Body so as to be known'. This ingredient in pastoral language is due to the 'simple and tender' characters that shepherds are taken to be. This apology is often near to being a manifesto on behalf of this 'native' tradition: 'no one but Theocritus, Spenser, and our present British Swains, durst ever venture themselves in this Pastoral Path, being affraid and unwilling to forgo that Honour which either a refin'd language or a sublime one procured'.[1] Purney's Doric is not even Spenser's variety with its 'vulgar dress', for it is not the roughness of the idiom that is significant so much as its tenderness.

In "Paplet : or, Love and Innocence", Purney's first pastoral, the verse is set in an identifiable landscape:

> The time, in this PIECE, is from Noon to Night; The Season Summer; and the Scene on the Banks of the Brook Eden [really Iddon]; which runs out of the Medway, some Miles West of TUNBRIDGE in Kent [p. 8].

The poem itself eludes such definition. It opens with a prime example of Purney's tender Muse:

> A Gentle Swain *yfed in Kentish Mead,
> The gentlest Swain that ever Flock did feed.
> Soft he beside the Stream of EDEN lay,
> And graz'd abie the Banks of fair MEDWAY ... [ll. 1-4][2]

Purney's note to the asterisked 'yfed' runs 'YFED, a, and y ... before Words ... are for softness of sound'. When introducing the two lovers, Purney's dainty lyricism renders them with porcelain care.

---

1. Works, edited by H.O. White (Oxford, 1933), p. 4.

2. The full text is found at pp. 8-20.

> *Soflin* and *Paplet* they; (ah dainty THEY!)
> That ripe as Rose, this a soft-aged MEY*.
> Both lith as *Youngling Roe*, all-tender too
> As *Ladybird* that lives on twinkling Dew [ll. 43-46]

'MEY' to mean Maid is a substitution Purney claims to have transferred from Chaucer 'as it has not the vulgarness of Maid, and is of a sound particularly sweet and simple'. Such equable agreement between sound and subject domesticates the rural figures and hardly fits Purney's image of Theocritus in *A Full Enquiry* with his portrayal of 'the Life of Swains exactly as it is' to say nothing of Tickell's satyr of *Guardian* 32 or the follower of Ambrosius.

Perhaps Theocritus's most successful follower in the period was Allan Ramsay, whose own Scots Doric could demonstrate a continuity with an oral tradition and yet also suggest some of the more conventional aspects of a "literary" shepherd. Ramsay furnished his collected *Poems* of 1721 and 1728 with simple glossaries, thus advertizing both the origins of the dialect and its strangeness. Principally, however, the Scots element is part of a concerted effort to produce an alternative to the English received standards of the time. This is obvious from Ramsay's association with the Easy Club, tapping the strong Scottish nationalism and perhaps Jacobitism that flourished in Edinburgh in the years after the Union of Parliaments of 1707. His first collection of 1715 contains about eighty poems, of which about half were in English, half in various shades of obtrusively Scots idiom. By 1724, the English element, that is, the "poetic" London style, is all but absent. In that year, Ramsay issued the first of five volumes of *The Tea-Table Miscellany*, a collection of songs in which Scots songs intended to be sung to traditional tunes were given prominence. Later in the year, he resurrected several medieval Scots lyrics in *The Ever Green*. In the

"Preface", Ramsay defended 'that natural Strength of Thought and Simplicity of Stile, our Forefathers practised ...'. 'Simplicity' to Ramsay was annexed to notions of bold strength and a certain "unliterary" realism: 'Their Images are native, and their Landskips domestick; copied from those Fields and Meadows we every Day behold'.[1] This vigorous native idiom survives almost without check in his pastoral works, notably in his pastoral play, The Gentle Shepherd (1725). A ballad-opera version followed in 1729 when some of the songs from The Tea-Table Miscellany and The Ever Green were incorporated. That this was a self-conscious stand is evident from several sources. In the "Preface" to his first collection (1721), for example, he claims that 'The Scotticisms, which perhaps may offend some over-nice Ear, give new Life and Grace to the Poetry, and become their Place as well as the Doric Dialect of Theocritus, so much admired by the best judges'.[2] There is little doubt that the example of the Idylls provided Ramsay with an excuse to develop an answer to the vogue for enervated diction and mellifluous simplicity exploited by Purney.

The Gentle Shepherd, A Pastoral Comedy has its weaknesses. The need to incorporate a patrician element in Sir William Worthy's speeches stretches the credibility of his disguise as a shepherd. When his true nature is revealed, he all but drops the Doric speech-patterns and vocabulary. The rustic swains Patie and Roger together with Peggy the milkmaid, all of whom prove to be of higher lineage than they at first know, cast off much of their racy Scots as they gain in social status. The Doric is very much a possession of less

---

1. The Works of Allan Ramsay, 6 vols, Vols 1-3 edited by Burns Martin and John W. Oliver, Vols 4-6 edited by Alexander Kinghorn and Alexander Law (Edinburgh, 1951-72), Scottish Text Society, 4: 236.

2. Quoted from "Dr. Sewel", Works 1: xix.

problematic rustics such as Jenny, Bauldy and Mause. Indeed, the comic element of the play stems from the direct, unvarnished description that Ramsay's Doric allows. In Act I, Scene 2, 'twa barefoot Beauties', Peggy and Jenny discuss their suitors. Jenny's distrust of Roger is comic in its command of a wealth of superficial particulars:

> He kaims his Hair indeed, and gaes right snug,
> With Ribbon-knots at his blew Bonnet-lug;
> Whilk pensily he wears a thought a-jee,
> And spreads his Garters diced beneath his Knee [ll. 37-40][1]

Act I, Scene 1, which originally appeared as "Patie and Roger" (1721), demonstrates a capacity of the style to embellish more serious sentiments with a roughness often reminiscent of Spenser's own Doric:

> Rog. I'm born, O Patie! to a thrawart Fate;
> I'm born to strive with Hardships sad and great.
> Tempest may cease to jaw the rowan Flood
> Corbies and Tods to grein for Lambkins Blood;
> But I, opprest with never-ending Grief,
> Maun ay despair of lighting on Relief [ll. 15-20]

Here the diction is itself poetic in its synthesis of a variety of speech-patterns which are sufficiently divorced from the established correct usage to interest the reader and yet particularized enough to lend a naturalistic flavouring. This can be illustrated on a small scale with reference to the scene-settings before each dialogue. Act I, Scene 1 opens

> Beneath the South side of a Craigy Beild,
> Where Crystal Springs the halesome Waters yield,
> Twa youthful Shepherds on the Gowans lay,
> Tenting their Flocks ae bonny Morn of May [ll. 1-4]

Peggy and Jenny are located at the start of Act I, Scene 2 on a 'flowrie Howm between twa verdant Braes,/Where Lasses use to wash and spread their Claiths'(1-2). The Gentle Shepherd is hardly localized more than in Scotland and amongst the labouring classes. The Doric only suggests a location as definite as in Purney's Theocritean pastorals but in fact the play is generalized enough to afford Ramsay the opportunity to achieve a more

---

1. The full text is found at Works, 2: 205-77.

elevated register when required. He can only accomplish this, though, by indicating that the events of the play are of provincial significance. For Ramsay, this was of positive value. In the 'Preface' to The Ever Green, there is a powerful alliance of nostalgia and nationalism: 'When these good old Bards wrote, we had not yet made Use of imported Trimming upon our Cloaths, nor of Foreign Embroidery in our Writings. Their Poetry is the Product of their own Country, not pilfered and spoiled in the Transportation from abroad: ...' (1: 236). Ramsay's Doric pretends to a descriptive plainness sanctioned by a prelapsarian spontaneity of expression.

This option would not be open to Creech for two reasons. Firstly, as a translator, he would have to make over Theocritus in as neutral a medium as possible. To indulge in a dialect analogous to the Greek Doric would be to limit some of the more universal aspects of the original style. Secondly, in selecting Rapin and then Kennet to preface the translation, Creech obviously shared with them a taste for an artificial pastoral more acceptable to an urban culture. In any case, Theocritus is hardly straightforward. The rusticity that is suggested, if not directly enacted, in the Doric challenged a decorum that strove to exclude the ugly and unpleasant from serious, problematic representation. There were three separate means by which this problem was resolved. Firstly, there is the ultimately unsatisfactory position of Rapin and to a lesser degree Kennet, which attempts to account for rusticity by arguing from its function, that is, it is an acceptable breach of literary good manners because the subject-matter is humble. However, engrafted onto this is Rapin's desire to transmute such subjects by idealizing their historical location as a Golden Age. Consequently the plain and elegant exist uneasily and to pass off the plain truth of rural life as elegant needs a sleight-of-hand that is defiantly unmimetic. Secondly, it was possible to represent Theocritus by a highly exclusive principle of selection so that his "simplicity" was derived from those Idylls that included expressions of elegiac or amorous sentiment. When Purney commends Creech's translation for its language, he cites several passages[1] to characterize such "simplicity" and in each of them Theocritus is at his most lyrical and least dramatic. Finally, there is the growing suspicion that the Doric dialect might have been a realistic attempt to record actual usage and a particular locale. By analogy, it was possible to develop a native Doric to the same end. However, unlike Theocritus, this would be a literary convention not a direct transcription.

The challenge that Theocritus represented to the necessary idealism of English neo-classical aesthetics is not minimized if the conventions of Hellenistic literature are considered. Surprisingly, considering frequent dialogue in the Idylls, the poems are not composed in the iambic metre common to the drama and mime but in the dactylic hexameter common in the epic, hymn or in didactic poetry - all "higher" genres. Amongst the contemporary works written in this form are Apollonius's Argonautica, Callimachus's Hymns and Aratus's Phaenomena. That Theocritus was aware of this line of influence is obvious from the subject-matter of some of the Idylls. Idyll 22 is in the form of a cult-hymn and 13, 24, 25 are short narrative episodes on subjects from heroic mythology.[2] There is little doubt that the metre would associate the Bucolica with forms that represented exemplary and usually ideal subjects and persons.

---

1. A Full Enquiry, p. 47 and p. 67.

2. Idyll 25 is now generally regarded as spurious. See Gow, 2: 439-40.

Quintillian certainly supported this view and placed Theocritus among the epic and didactic poets[1] and in the anonymous Lament for Bion pastoral themes rival those of traditional epic in importance.[2] K.J. Dover has also pointed out how pervasive epic phraseology is in the Idylls,[3] and how conspicuous it is on the lips of herdsmen. This has led to two alternative conclusions concerning how pastoral figures appear in Theocritus. It is undeniable that their concerns and utterances seem shot through with reminiscences of the epic, but it is still debateable whether this indicates that they are themselves epic figures or conversely inappropriate subject-matter. Bruno Snell voices much of this fascination:

> Theocritus takes some pains to present a realistic picture of the life led by Sicilian shepherds. But in one respect they are anything rather than country folk: their mood is a literary one ...; the dissonance between the bucolic simplicity of the pasture and the literary refinement of the city is never completely resolved, nor was it ever intended to be, for the whole point of Theocritus' humour lies in this dissonance.[4]

---

[1] Institutio Oratoria, 10.1.55. Quintilian does, however, describe the 'musa rustica et pastoralis' as a special type of epic. Longinus had compared Homer favourably with both Apollonius and Theocritus:

> ἐπείτοιγε καὶ ἄπτωτος ὁ Ἀπολλώνιος ἐν τοῖς Ἀργοναύταις
> ποιητὴς κἀν τοῖς βουκολικοῖς πλὴν ὀλίγων τῶν ἔξωθεν
> ὁ Θεόκριτος ἐπιτυχέστατος, ἆρ' οὖν Ὅμηρος ἂν μᾶλλον
> ἢ Ἀπολλώνιος ἐθέλοις γενέσθαι.

(Granted that Apollonius in his Argonautica shows himself a poet who does not trip, and that in his pastorals Theocritus is, except in a few externals, most happy, would you not, for all that, choose to be Homer rather than Apollonius?) (Longinus on the Sublime, 33, edited by D. A. Russell (Oxford, 1964), p. 41). There seems no difference between the Bucolica and the Argonautica.

[2] See especially ll. 71-84, The Greek Bucolic Poets, edited by J.M. Edmonds (London, 1923), p. 450.

[3] pp. li-lii. This epic style can often provide a basis for a certain bucolic licence, for example 3. 40 ff. and 7. 148 ff.

[4] "Arcadia : The Discovery of a Spiritual Landscape", in The Discovery of the Mind, translated by T.G. Rosenmeyer (Cambridge, Mass., 1953), pp. 285-86.

However, Adam Parry in reference exclusively to *Idyll* 1, can find the poem an 'heroic song'[1] where just such a dichotomy as Snell observes would be highly undesirable.

To some extent Theocritus invites re-consideration of pastoral categories, and, if some attempt were made to assimilate all of the *Idylls* to one model, then it would have to be so elastic as to be virtually worthless. It has already been noted that not all the *Idylls* were pastorals[2] in that they described an alternative ideal existence or sought to assuage the strife of urban and social life by a musical tenderness of diction and sentiment. To call Theocritus a pastoralist is to fit his work into a category that has only a subsequent existence. The Greek *βουκολῖκα* is derived from *βουκολεῖν* meaning 'herd cattle' which may allow some focus: that on herding and the domestication of nature. However, the nearest Greek word to describe such herders: *βουκόλος*, is itself far from endorsing such an origin. It has been proposed that such 'herders' were members of a club of poets in Cos who were ritual celebrants of Dionysus,[3] poets masquerading as herdsmen. Theocritus's own term for his poems: *βουκολιάζεσθαι* (roughly translated as a 'pastoral contest'), refers to their *flyting* and competitions. Once again where critical attention attempts to render the *Idylls* as transparently just one type or form of poetry, the poems are simplified.

---

[1] "Landscape in Greek Poetry", in *Yale Classical Studies*, 15 (1957), 11. Gilbert Lawall draws certain parallels with the choruses of Attic drama, pp. 19-21. See also T.G. Rosenmeyer, *The Green Cabinet : Theocritus and the European Pastoral Lyric* (Berkeley, 1969), pp. 152-53: 'Pastoral has the extroverted dimension, the public character, that we associate with a staged performance ... Virgil's speech does not show the variety, the differentiation between talk and piping and song, between grave lamenting and zestful serenade, that is the norm in Theocritus ...'.

[2] See pp. 31,35.

[3] Richard Reitzenstein, *Epigramm und Skolion* (Giessen, 1893), Ch. 4; Erika Simon, "Ein Anthesterienskyphos des Polygnotos", *Alte Kunst*, 6 (1963), 11, n. 36 and T.B.L. Webster, *Hellenistic Poetry and Art* (New York, 1964), p. 196, n. 4.

It is therefore more accurate to attend to the root meaning of *Idyll*, derived from *εἰδύλλιον* 'a little scene', 'a miniature form [of poetry]'. It is not until the latter years of the eighteenth century that this root meaning is given an emotional flavour. Herder's discussion of the term in the second volume of *Adrastea* (1801) finds nothing but 'der sinnlichste Ausdruck der höchst verschönerten Leidenschaften und Empfindungen solcher Menschen, die in kleineren Gesellschaften zusammen leben'.[1] Before, it is a technical term for a brief poem of any style or subject as *εἰδύλλιον* literally interpreted means 'little picture', etymologically related to the Greek *εἰδεα*.

What is more ascertainable is how Augustans interpreted the term of *Idyll*. Matthew Prior's 'The Lady's Looking-Glass. In Imitation of a Greek Idyllium"(1703) is a short narrative of the poet's walk with Celia to the sea-coast and is an elaborate analogy between the calms and sudden tempests of such a scene and the similar moods of the lady concerned.[2] The lines illustrate a simple analogy between Man and Nature concluding in a witty compliment. Its main characteristics seem to be the sentimental subject-matter, the narrative form and, finally, the poem's brevity. Prior's *Idyll* derives very little from the influence of Theocritus. It is the brevity of the form that is imitated not its bucolic character. Purney was to emphasise this trait, asking

---

1. 'the most delicate expression of the most highly refined passions and perceptions of those men who live together in smaller groups', *Sämtliche Werke*, edited by Bernhard Suphen, 32 vols (Hildesheim, 1967), 23 : 302.

2. *The Literary Works of Matthew Prior*, edited by H. Bunker Wright and Monroe K. Spears, 2 vols (Oxford, 1959), 1: 198.

> Whether the Pastorals of *Theocritus* and *Virgil* are not rather to be stiled Sketches or Draughts, of the Nature of Epigrams and Madrigals, than regular and perfect Poems? Since by such, we mean the Imitation of one entire poetical Action, having a moral Result.[1]

Pastoral poetry is thus denied any 'moral result' largely on account of its length and its lack of grand generalization. There is little doubt, too, that Purney, as did Prior, took an *Idyll* to describe a brief 'sketch' rather than a serious and extended narrative.

There still remains the possibility that the *Idyll* could have been taken to indicate a particular episode from a longer narrative or a detail from a larger framework. The question as to whether it thereby suggests realistic detail or a literary mood is still not resolved. Whether the *βουκόλοι* are real herdsmen or disguised poets, or whether the *Idyll* is barred automatically from providing a realistically detailed as opposed to "idyllic" image, depends on how the reader reacts to Theocritean Doric. If the dactylic hexameter reminds the reader of the heroic, the Doric invites him or her to feel indulgently superior. Theocritus's frequent use of the dialect confirms the proposition that, however varied the topics dealt with in the *Idylls*, they may well have been conceived of as a certain type of poetry. Nowhere else does Theocritus use the dialect nor does it appear that it was common amongst contemporary poets although Aristophanes caricatures Doric-speakers frequently. Dover concludes that 'it might seem that the language of Theokritos is essentially that of Syracuse or Kos in the early third century B.C., flavoured with epic forms whenever these were metrically useful' (p.xl).[2] It is defiantly not the standard Attic speech and thus announces itself as "other". However

---

1. 'Preface" to "The Bashful Swain" (1717), in *Works*, p. 57.

2. See also pp. xxxviii-xxxix.

A.S.F. Gow gives a fuller account than in Dover's edition and introduces two significant qualifications. Firstly, Doric was no local dialect, but 'one of the two broad divisions of the Greek language and spoken with pronounced local variations from one end of the Greek world to the other'.[1] Although not standard, it was comprehensible and would have needed no glossary. Secondly, Theocritean Doric is not pure Doric. Just as Burns's Ayrshire dialect was adulterated by other Scottish and expressly literary words, Theocritean Doric is both recognizably the Doric of living speech and a literary extension of it. If any source for the language of the *Idylls* can be found, R. Coleman and Gow both decide on the literary Doric found in choral lyric poetry from Alcman and Stesichorus onwards:[2] a lyric form but with certain strong conventional structures. For Dryden, in the 'Dedication" to his own translation of Virgil's pastorals, this apparently calculated artifice did not appear stiff or rehearsed: '... the boorish dialect of Theocritus has a secret Charm in it which the Roman language cannot imitate'.[3] Therefore, whilst the style suggests the real, it is not ultimately a transcription of it but an elegantly-handled adaptation with elements of heightening. On the other hand, it does signal the simplicity of provincialism and is not the vehicle of Socrates or Aristophanes. Far from its range being attenuated by its own self-consciousness, Theocritean Doric can modulate from describing the near-mythical status of Daphnis in *Idyll* 1 to the rustic obscenities

---

1. Gow, 1 : lxxiii.

2. *Vergil : Eclogues*, edited by Robert Coleman (Cambridge, 1977), p.3, Gow, 1 : lxxii ff. Such "lyricism" is of a "public" nature, not emotion that is overheard. Both Moschus (*Europa*) and Bion (*Adonis*) describe mythological subjects in the Doric style.

3. *John Dryden : Selected Criticism*, edited by James Kinsley and George Parfitt (Oxford, 1970), p. 281.

of Idylls 4 and 5.[1] Such flexibility is not easy but its effects connote simplicity.

The fascination of Theocritus's style and choice of form lies in its occasional power to amalgamate the tragic with the comic, the artificial with the realistic and the boorish with the polite. The dissonance that produces humour in Snell's account is an end result, not an imperfection to be explained or smoothed away. Even if this is now granted, however, it does not alter the fact that there is, on record, a strong view that the Augustan reader could find the effect of this style indecorous at times and so realistic.

There still remains to consider the strong traditional conviction that Theocritus chose to set his Idylls in a "real" landscape. Virgil in Eclogue 4 invokes the Sicelides Musae (1) and begins 6:

> Prima Syracosis dignata est ludere versu
> nostra nec erubuit silvas habitare Thalia [ll. 1-2][2]

in both cases identifying Theocritus with Sicily. There is some biographical evidence to suppose that he had left Syracuse before writing the major bucolic Idylls.[3] This would lead to the identification of Sicilian and southern Italian details as nostalgic, especially as the area in the third century B.C. was often disrupted by war. From the vantage-point of Cos or Alexandria, such realism is a carefully cultivated stance - a set of circumstances frozen in time, apart from the civil unrest of the age and, crucially, apart from the daily

---

1. It must however be pointed out that the rustic context of the singers and their private dialogues are invariably Doric.

2. Eclogues, pp. 52, 57.

3. Gow, 1: xviii ff.

experience of his expected readership. The details of a way of farming and husbandry not Coan or Alexandrian are as much a device to express provincialism as the Doric dialect. Indeed, the court of Hiero II at Alexandria might have found home farming methods as foreign as those of Sicily. Without the specific mention of Sicilian landscapes, however, the Idylls would not convey as fragile a sense of otium, of peace enjoyed in the memory where the movement of troops and rural devastation do not exist.

There are thus several important discriminations for Creech and the other occasional translators of Theocritus to make in order to render this blend of real and ideal accurately. Fundamentally the "realism" of the Idylls is highly formalistic, for the Doric dialect and Sicilian landscapes are rhetorical strategies by which pleasing provincialism and nostalgic detail,not knowledge, may be projected. As Creech chose to translate Theocritean Doric into 'pure' and 'elegant' English (according to Rapin), not an English Doric, he would have to decide whether to retain the rusticity of the language or the heroic potential in the metric form.

The Translators's Theocritus

Thomas Creech was not alone in showing a translator's interest in the Idylls. In Dryden's First Miscellany (1684), he includes his own "Amaryllis, or the third Idyllium of Theocritus, paraphras'd," alongside "Pharmaceutra, out of Theocritus" [Idyll 2] by William Bowles and "The Cyclop, the eleventh Idyllium of Theocritus, English'd by Mr. [Richard] Duke". One year later, Sylvae contained several more. Dryden translated Idylls 18, 23 and 27, William Bowles supplied Idylls 10 and 20 and Idylls 1, 12 and 19 were translated anonymously. By no means all of these poems are pastoral. Idyll 2 is based on the urban mime tradition, in which Simaetha employs magic to win her absent lover: Delphis. There are references to the gymnasium, the baths and the wrestling-school and none to the keeping of sheep. Idyll 18 is an epithalamion for the marriage of Helen and Menelaus, and 19 is an epigram on a honey-thief. The common factor in the other Idylls chosen for translation is thwarted love and its pathetic effect. It is quite probable that this choice from the Theocritean canon supports the reading of the Idylls as love-lyrics with an elegiac colouring.

Dryden's Idyll 23, however, is an example of how much the original could eventually provide a non-lyrical translation. The poem describes the suicide of a spurned lover at the door of a cruel youth. Gow, whilst including the Idyll in his edition, admits that the poem is 'plainly' not by Theocritus and is 'the least attractive of the whole Theocritean corpus'.[1] K.J. Dover's more recent edition omits it altogether. Dryden censors the homosexual element, entitling the poem: "The Despairing Lover": 'With inauspicious love, a wretched Swain / Persu'd the fairest Nimph of all the Plain;' (1-2)[2]. However, there is no evasion about the hanging which is transformed into an heroic coup de theatre:

> Ὣδ' εἰπὼν λίθον εἶλεν ἐρεισάμενος δ' ἐπὶ τοίχω
> ἄχρι μέσων ὀόδων , φορερὸν λίθον, ἅπτετ' ἀπ' αὐτῶ
> τὰν λεπτὰν σχοινῖδα, βρόχον δ' ἐπίαλλε τραχήλῳ,
> τᾶν ἕδραν δ' ἐκύλισεν ὑπὲκ ποδός, ἢδ' ἐκρεμάσθη
> νεκρός. ὃ δ' αὖτ' ὤιξε θύρας καὶ τὸν νεκρὸν εἶδεν
> αὐλείας ἰδίας ἀρταμένον.
>
> [ll. 49-54][3]

---

[1] Gow, 2: 408.

[2] The Poems of John Dryden, edited by James Kinsley (Oxford, 1958) 4 vols, 1: 424. The full text can be found at 1: 424-27.

[3] 'This said, he took a stone and set it in the middle of the doorway. Then he tied his slender cord to it and cast the noose about his neck; kicked the support from beneath his foot and hung there dead.'

> Thus having said, and furious with his Love;
> He heav'd with more than humane force, to move
> A weighty Stone, (the labour of a Team,) ...
> The bounce burst ope the door; the Scornful Fair
> Relentless lookt, and saw him beat his quivering feet in Air.
> [ll. 88-90, 96-97]

The death is grotesque in its energy; the lover uses 'more than humane force' to move the stone, fuelled by the fury of love. The deadpan description in the original stands in stark contrast to this. A similar drama is imported in the description of the scornful 'nimph's' death. When passing the statue of Eros in the baths, Theocritus, or his imitator, has the statue leap on the cruel youth, a blow that kills him. The account merely mentions the water reddened with his blood (61). Dryden emphasizes the violence (and anti-female insult) by transferring the death to the bath-side: 'Her gushing Blood the Pavement all besmear'd;' (108). Although removing the homosexual element, Dryden has sensationalized the violence and the surprise of the narrative.

Dryden's enthusiasm for Theocritus here is inconsistent with the praise of his tenderness in the "Preface" to the collection. What the translation is adept in portraying is the vestiges of heroic associations in the dactylic hexameter. This reading of Theocritus survives in his translation of Idyll 3, one of the "bucolic" poems. Composed of quite antithetical perspectives, the Idyll makes great use of both Doric modes: the rough provincial and the boldly heroic. An unnamed goatherd commits his flock to the care of Tityrus and then serenades Amaryllis who inhabits a cave. When unsuccessful, the singer announces

---

1. The goatherd most noticeably assumes an heroic pose during his citation of legendary *exempla* (40-51).

his intention of lying down to die at the entrance. As T.G. Rosenmeyer points out, about declarations of love in the *Idylls*,

> A Polyphemus and a Satyriskos display a passion and a devotion which beg not to be taken seriously. Their claims are undercut either through the agency of an incredulous bystander or by a note of disbelief sounded in the songs or speeches themselves ... we are made to sense their naivete more directly than their sufferings. There is a disproportion between the note of frustration or pain uttered and the innocence radiated by their persons. [p. 79]

This disproportion is emphasised by the parody in the goatherd's pleading of the urban (and bawdy) *κῶμος* or *παρακλαυσιθυρον*[1] ('a song at closed doors'), a form where "polite" young bloods after late revelling tried to win admittance to their mistress's house by serenading her. If unsuccessful, the suitor might resort to breaking in barred doors or pitching camp outside all night to impress the lady that the passion was serious.

The *κῶμος* is thus a tactic in a refined courtly mode, a game where the entreaty and night's vigil are not signs denoting depth of emotion primarily but connoting participation in a sophisticated convention. The goatherd's emotion may be earnestly expressed but its effect is neutralized because tainted by obvious ignorance. The goatherd not only does not know the rules but *could not* know the rules of this convention. Therefore the "sincerity" of his plea only confirms a detached reading or perhaps implies a tension between a sympathy at the hopelessness of his plight and amused detachment, which notes his comic appearance and rustic innocence. Amaryllis's dwelling is no town-house but a cave and the only door a veil of foliage. The reader learns that he has gained admittance before and his present rejection causes doubts about his physical appearance, namely his snub-nose and beard. Finally, the formal ode with which he concludes his serenade is an unlikely display of mythological knowledge on the subject of the successful suits of legendary lovers - information presumably only open to one of moneyed position and acquired education. The formal effect of these details is to substitute a dramatic mode for a lyrical one. Inevitably, the serenade is involved in a narrative context. This is implicitly achieved by the scene-setting in which his flocks are entrusted to an off-stage Tityrus - a detail otherwise redundant.

---

[1] The fullest account is given by Francis Cairns, *Generic Composition in Greek and Roman Poetry* (Edinburgh, 1972), pp.145ff.

The 1684 version shows little sign of these contrasts. The poem is more a Restoration love-lyric where the pastoral environment lends decorative grace and a thin veil of innocence. Dryden ignores the division of scene marked in the Greek between the leave-taking of the goats and the arrival at the cave-mouth so as to reinforce lyrical coherence. His goatherd is far from a gauche innocent. For example, the opening lines of his serenade include an eroticism quite foreign to the original goatherd:

> Ὦχαρίεσσ᾽ Ἀμαρυλλί, τί μ᾽ οὐκέτι τοῦτο κατ ἄντρον
> παρκύπτοισα καλεῖς, τὸν ἐρωτύλον; ἦ ῥά με μισεῖς;
> ἦ ῥά γέ τοι σιμὸς καταφαίνομαι ἐγγύθεν ἦμεν,
> νύμφα, καὶ προγένειος; ἀπάγξασθαί με ποησεῖς. [ll. 6-9][1]

> Ah beauteous Nymph, can you forget your Love,
> The conscious Grottos, and the shady Grove;
> Where stretch'd at ease your tender Limbs were laid,
> Your nameless Beauties nakedly display'd?
> Then I was call'd your darling, your desire,
> With Kisses such as set my Soul on Fire. [ll. 6-11][2]

Francis Fawkes, the next translator of all the Idylls (1767), wrote in his 'Preface' that although he had found Dryden's versions valuable, he also distrusted the overall impression for 'whenever he meets with any sentiment in an author which has the least tendency to indecency, he always renders it worse'.[1] Dryden, by omitting the demeaning physical details characteristic of a satyr and substituting success in courtship, removes any possible pathos from the characterization. His goatherd is indecent and fallen, not through a rustic lack of breeding but from a sense of sin. Theocritus invites a condescension by weaving the obvious discrepancy between reader and protagonist to the very fabric of the poem. Dryden, in writing a love-lyric, forgoes such complication and posits a goatherd not of innocent impotence but libidinous energy. When consulting the soothsayer Agroeo, Theocritus has the goatherd include the homely detail that she had until recently been cutting grass alongside him. Dryden's addition alters not only the relationship between them but even supplies a patronizing aside:

---

[1] 'Lovely Amaryllis, why no more do you peep out of this thy cave and call me in - me, thy sweetheart? Dost hate me? Am I, then, snub-nosed on closer view, maiden? And does my beard stick out? Thou'lt make me hang myself.'

[2] The full text can be found at Poems, 1: 366-69.

εἶπε καὶ Ἀγροιὼ τἀλαθέα κοσκινόμαντις,
ἀ πρᾶν ποιολογεῦσα παραιβάτις, οὕνεκ' ἐγὼ μέν
[ll. 31-32][2]

> (Agreo, that in Harvest us'd to lease;
> But, Harvest done, to Chare-work did aspire;
> Meat, drink and Two-pence was her daily hire:) [ll.72-74]

Dryden secularizes Agroeo by detailing an economic estimate of her worth, whereas for the goatherd such divination is not superstition but a living belief. Consequently, Agroeo becomes a witch or a 'testy beldame' not a soothsayer, someone seen from the city as a hireling rather than as a person with plausible desires and problems.

Creech's version of the same Idyll shares some of Dryden's emphases but there is a major difference when there is occasion for direct emotional statement. Whereas Dryden had removed some of the debilitating features of the goatherd's passion in Theocritus, Creech uses them to promote a pathetic and vulnerable emotion. When confronted with the cave-mouth, the goatherd in Theocritus is no poet.[1] His direct appeals do not reveal guile or urbanity. Creech's reading is still often innocent (far more so than Dryden's); however, this "sincerity" is conveyed by a naturalistic doggerel:

---

[1] The Idylliums of Theocritus, translated from the Greek with notes ... (London, 1767), p. viii.

[2] 'And Agroeo too, that divines with her sieve - she that was lately cutting grass by my side, told me truth ...'.

> Ah lovely Phyllis why so wondrous coy!
> Why won't you take me to the promis'd joy?
> Why won't you meet me now in yonder Grove
> Lean on my Breast, and Kiss, and call me love? [p. 22]

This is no impromptu speech, but more of a set-piece. Here are no sudden turns of thought. However, Creech's goatherd is not Theocritus's. The dramatic possibilities of the parody of the form do not arise and in its place is a more coherent lyric. This also involves a diminution of the goatherd's character not just his appearance. Dryden's goatherd could be a courtier or young spark in masquerade, but in Creech, he is an emotionally vulnerable simpleton - a man of feeling and little else. Theocritus's comic parody does not involve a complete loss of sympathy with the goatherd. His weakness stems from an inevitable incomprehension of a culture that must be foreign to him. As he is portrayed dramatically, he is granted some worth in love and the joke is not on account of the triteness of the sentiments he expresses but because of the whole framework of the poem. Creech's goatherd is sentimental in order to impress upon the reader that his life and the way it is lived common to many others is so unproblematic that he is troubled only by such artless and uncomplicated problems as are occasioned by blighted love. For example, Creech's goatherd offers a goat to Phyllis:

---

[1] He misses several opportunities in the opening lines to wax lyrical. He remembers Amaryllis παρκύπτοισα ('peeping') out of her cave, a word with 'low' comic associations of a coquettish woman peeping at a man through a door or window. She is also no 'nymph' but rather a human girl addressed as 'bride' ('νύμφα') The goatherd is hardly ideal either, being σιμός ('snub-nosed').

> I have a pretty Goat, a lovely white,
> She bears two Kids, yet fills three Pails at night,
> This *tawny Bess* hath beg'd, and beg'd in vain; [p. 24]

The desire to anglicize his scene leads Creech, in effect, to tip the balance between the potentially heroic and the comically rustic, towards the "low" concerns of more identifiable goatherds, not the idealized husbandmen of a recent past. The Theocritus, by comparison, includes more of an indication of the disparity between the goatherd and his loved one, and so increases the pathos of his pretensions to her:

> ἦ μάν τοι λευκὰν διδυματόκον αἶγα φυλάσσω,
> τάν με καὶ ἁ Μέρμνωνος ἐριθακὶς ἁ μελανόχρως [ll. 34-35][1]

'Mermnon's swarthy serving-girl' ("Μέρμνωνος ἐριθακὶς ἁ μελανόχρως") becomes '*tawny Bess*'. The analogy accurately conveys the plebeian rustic status of Amaryllis's rival, and shows a commitment on Creech's part to modernize the poetry. Absent on the other hand, is the notion of an absurd name-dropping which the Lydian and aristocratic connotations of Mermnon provide. In anglicizing Theocritus, Creech seems committed, in *Idyll* 3, to a more familiar approach to his classical original.

Fawkes, in 1767, found Creech's translation remarkable for its lack of cadence, confessing that he had read it when young and when he had no ear for 'poetical numbers'. He found the Creech: 'very bald and hard, and more rustic than any of the rustics in the Sicilian band'. Amplifying his grounds for comment, Fawkes deplores the 'Englishing' of Theocritus and points to the substitution of Crocylus by Dick in *Idyll*

---

[1] 'Truly I keep for thee a white nanny-goat with two kids which Mermnon's swarthy serving-girl wants off me.'

5 and of Argivus, Apis and Cleunicus by Tom, Will and Dick in Idyll 14.[1] Absent is the necessary distance that lent enchantment to this view of shepherd-life.

Creech's Doric is not Dryden's, but it is not the flexible style of the Idylls either, which, powered by the grandiose rhythms of the dactylic hexameter, holds two contradictory moods in a tension impossible in the English. As Rosenmeyer notes, there is a deliberate indecorum in the very seriousness with which a goatherd would wish to engage our sympathies.[2] The same sentiments on the lips of a land-owner with acres would be more acceptable. Dryden's interest in the Idylls lies not in their tenderness but their debased, yet liberated, sexual gusto. Creech does not grant his goatherd such delusions of grandeur, but he comes nearer to the 'soft and tender' Doric of simple, unvarnished feelings expressed in the clumsy directness that signifies rusticity. This is an attempt, without becoming dialectal, to render the non-standard aspects of the Idylls. Inevitably, however, some of the more plaintive and desperate gestures are simplified in mode and in motive.

To some extent Idyll 3 is not a true test-case. Its simplicities are those closely associated with sentiment and tenderness. The goatherd in the original elicits an ironical reading that a shepherd might not have.[3] The greatest problems of translation occur when Theocritus refuses emotionalism and either decisively honours or denigrates the bucolic character. In Idylls 1 and 7 there is potential for portraying a shepherd's life as ideal whereas the country life is

---

1. Idylliums (1767), p. ix.

2. See p. 54.

3. Goatherds are rarely portrayed seriously. Idylls 3 and 11 provide such examples. Priapus's insult to Daphnis (Idyll 1. 86-88) captures this patronizing perspective.

seen in a more realistic light in 4, 5 and 10. It is thus harder to find rural affairs homely and unprepossessing in 1 and 7 and impossible to read 4, 5 and 10 as portraying the Golden Age. In each case, the Augustan view of Theocritean pastoral has not done justice to the diversity and multiplicity of *plots* it can contain. Consequently, what might have appeared as the direct transmission of an original *plot* found in the *Idylls* is actually a subtle or, at times acknowledged, transformation of it, selecting and appropriating just so much as would grant the new model the trappings of classical authority.

Idylls 1 and 7

Idylls 1 and 7 portray characters and events which are suggested by the rural setting and yet which also signify life at a high pitch of imaginative scope and artistry. It is precisely in these pastorals that the shepherd metaphor and its rural context is most ambiguous. Daphnis, in *Idyll* 1, is hailed as a βούτας ('neatherd') by Priapus (86), but the rest of the poem seeks to deify him. Simichidas and Lycidas from *Idyll* 7 are not depicted working at all. Simichidas, the narrator of the *Idyll*, is travelling to the country from the town, and Lycidas, although identified (13) as a αἰπόλος ('goatherd') and dressing the part, is received by the travellers as a famous piper. Within each poem, the exact function of the rural references is symbolic, not mimetic. Both Daphnis and Lycidas are given the appropriate bucolic "presence" and yet are still divorced from such a context.[1]

---

[1] Daphnis figures much larger than the rest of his fellow herdsmen. Even gods visit him and fail to measure up to his greatness. Eventually he dies heroically, not with "simplicity" or yielding innocence. The main sources for the myth are discussed at greater length in Dover, pp. 83-86 and Lawall, pp. 19-22. Lycidas's relation to Simichidas reveals the former as the source of inspiration and poetic skill. This is the probable interpretation of his gift of a *κορύναν* ('wild olive-stick') (43) to his young companion, a symbol alluding to the Muses' gift to Hesiod (*Theogony* 30) which serves to embody his poetic vocation.

Daphnis appears in the pastoral elegy sung by Thyrsis. As such there is no attempt to realize him in the same way that Thyrsis and the unnamed goatherd are during their opening exchange.[1] The lament for Daphnis is presented as high artifice in that Thyrsis is striving to win by his art the Goatherd's stake: the decorated cup. Thyrsis becomes a poet, the goatherd constitutes an audience and Daphnis's death is an apotheosis of the whole tradition of "βουκολικᾶς ...... ἀοιδᾶς" ('pastoral song') with which the Muses inspire Thyrsis. In Idyll 7, Simichidas narrates his encounter with Lycidas on the road to a harvest celebration (a θαλυσια). Lycidas is known for his power of song and Simichidas attempts to match him. Thyrsis, Simichidas and Lycidas are primarily artists and their Idylls as a whole are predominantly concerned with the formal presentation and performance of such art. Even if there are degrees of realism in both Idylls, Creech's "naturalism" accorded the goatherd of Idyll 3 would neither render these varied degrees precisely nor the "literary" vocal accents of each performance.

a) Idyll 1

Thyrsis's song is not truly representative of the whole of Idyll 1. There are three distinct sections: the dialogues between Thyrsis and the goatherd (1-26, 146-53), the description of the cup (27-56) and then Thyrsis's song (64-145). The first section is a dramatic lyric, the second stands out stylistically by containing none of the formal refrains and symmetries of bucolic poetry but is, on the contrary, reminiscent of the descriptive set-pieces of epic and the last is an elegiac hymn.[1] However ideal these details may appear as a whole, even these episodes are shot through with touches of realism. For example, in the song, there are the rustic comments from Priapus (86-88) and in the concluding comments from the goatherd (151-52), there is an anti-climactic descent into the particulars of material existence:

---

[1] The elements of idealized vocabulary that are introduced for Thyrsis's song have been identified by Lawall, pp. 16-18.

> ὧδ' ἴθι, Κισσαίθα· τὺ δ ἄμελγέ νιν. αἱ δὲ χίμαιραι,
> οὐ μὴ σκιρτασῆτε, μὴ ὁ τράγος ὔμμιν ἀναστῇ.[2]

Here, at the poem's close, the goat is transformed from a symbol of victory (one of Thyrsis's prizes) to an animal kept for survival. The conclusion of the poem also places Thyrsis's lament in perspective. It is a trial of creative talent, not as it seemed before: the very peak of achievement:

> ἔκλυσε δίνα
> τὸν Μοίσαις φίλον ἄνδρα, τὸν οὐ Νύμφαισιν ἀπεχθῆ.
> λήγετε βουκολικᾶς, Μοῖσαι, ἴτε λήγετ' ἀοιδᾶς
> καὶ τὺ δίδου τὰν αἶγα τό τε σκύφος, ὥς κεν ἀμέλξας
> σπείσω ταῖς Μοίσαις. ὦ χαίρετε πολλάκι, Μοῖσαι,
> χαίρετ'· ἐγὼ δ' ὔμμιν καὶ ἐς ὕστερον ἅδιον ᾀσῶ.
>
> [11.140-45][3]

Similarly, the mythical mingles with what seemed precise and clear. Daphnis is allowed to die in eastern Sicily (68-69, 117-18), Thyrsis's home (65), and the goatherd feels that Thyrsis's talent deserves figs from Aegilus (147). The bucolic conventions with

---

1. The most famous example of epic description is of Achilles's shield, Iliad XVIII, 478 ff.. See also Heracles's shield in the Hesiodic poem named after it, 19 ff..

2. 'Come hither, Cissaetha; and milk her you. And you she-goats be not so frisky lest the buck-goat rouse himself.'

3. 'The waters closed over him whom the Muses loved, nor did the Nymphs mislike him.
    Cease, Muses, come cease the pastoral song.
There, give me the goat and the cup, so that I may milk her for a libation to the Muses. Farewell, many times farewell, ye Muses. A sweeter song will I sing you another day.'

which Theocritus is working allow both perspectives.[1]

Such stylistic and thematic variety, even if comprehensible as several facets of an overarching pattern, still demand a mercurial alertness on the part of the translator.[2] One of the most prominent complications involves where to locate Thyrsis. If he inhabits the Golden Age, there are few places more ideal for Daphnis to die. If he is transported to England, then the vines and fierce noon-day heat (15-16, 45-46) seem too incongruous. Creech is faithful to the musical patterns of the opening passage:

> αἴ κα τῆνος ἕλῃ κεραὸν τράγον, αἶγα τὺ λαψῇ·
> αἴ κα δ' αἶγα λάβῃ τῆνος γέρας, ἐς τὲ καταρρεῖ
> ἁ χίμαρος. [ll. 4-6][3]

> If *He* must have a *Kid*, a *Goat's* *Thy* due,
> If *He* a *Goat*, a *Kid* belongs to *You*: [p. 1]

When compared to the treatment in the anonymous translation of 1685, these symmetries do not seem too "literary" at all and are reminiscent of the naturalistic directness of *Idyll* 3. The goatherd's first lines are fulsomely poetic:

> ἅδιον, ὦ ποιμήν, τὸ τεὸν μέλος ἢ τὸ καταχὲς
> τῆν' ἀπὸ τᾶς πέτρας καταλείβεται ὑψόθεν ὕδωρ.
> [ll. 7-8][4]

> Sweeter thy Numbers, *Shepherd*, and thy Song,
> Than that fair lovely Stream which down along
> From yonder Hillock's gently rising Side
> Pours the smooth Current of its easie Tide. [p. 354]

Indeed, there is frequently the addition of elegance and tidiness to the Theocritus:

---

1. For an example of such analysis, see Cairns on *Idyll* 10, pp. 145, 172-73.

2. See Segal (1977).

3. 'If he choose the horned goat, thou shalt have the she-goat, and if he has the she-goat for his prize, the kid falls to thee.'

4. 'Sweeter, shepherd, falls thy song than yonder stream that gushes plashing from the rocks over there.'

τυτθὸν δ' ὅσσον ἄπωθεν ἁλιτρύτοιο γέροντος
περκναῖσι σταφυλαῖσι καλὸν βέβριθεν ἀλωά.

[ll. 45-46][1]

Not far from hence a seeming *Vineyard* grows,
The Vines all neatly set in graceful Rows,
Whose weighty Clusters bend the yielding Boughs. [p. 357]

Creech, too, is not averse to smoothing the way through the poem. One of the icons of the cup's decoration: the sea-worn, old fisherman, sheds years:

He stands as labouring, and his Limbs appear
All stretcht, and in his face mix hope and fear:
The nerves in's Neck are swoln, look firm and strong,
All-tho He's *old*, and fit for one that's *Young*. [p. 3]

The wooden cup does present a problem to Aristotelians.[2] The length of the description seems disproportionate to any obvious thematic significance. As an image of art, it is segregated from the world that Thyrsis inhabits. Creech emphasises the perfection of the figures that appear; they become symbols not direct representations, Art not Nature.

It is necessary, therefore, for Creech to supply a Thyrsis's song and cup free from the miniaturizing attempted on the shepherd's life and concerns. Although capable of song that transcends his everyday activities, Thyrsis must still appear untransfigured. It is in the interests of this segregation that the fisherman appears heroic, quite uncontaminated by the world from which he is abstracted. It is not as a fisherman that he catches the attention in Creech's translation, but as one caught in a moment of *stasis* before vigorous effort. He stands 'as labouring'; he does not labour. As a result, he becomes Art: an icon, not an imitation which calls to mind the original. This demarcation is not apparent in the original *Idyll*. Rosenmeyer has

---

1. 'And a little way from the sea-worn old man there is a vineyard with a ripe load of reddening clusters.'

2. See *Idylliums*, p. 65.

described the classical pastoral form as discontinuous:

> There is no single curve, no anticipation of a dramatic development .... One analogy that might throw some light on what Theocritus does is that of the suite or a similar musical form of successive units ... a loose combination of independent elements ... [p. 47]

This is indeed true if one searches for a narrative "action" in the poem. As Charles Segal has argued, however, there is a unity founded on parallels and verbal repetitions, in which the three "worlds" and styles of the Idyll explore the interdependence of myth, artistic creation and a reality rejuvenated constantly by both.[1]

The virtue of Creech's translation is that it demonstrates two insights into the poem. Firstly, Creech's style for the description is plainer and yet less "naturalistic" than for the opening dialogue and, secondly, there is some attempt to associate the 'independent elements' of the poem without the logic of cause and effect that characterises the simpler narrative structures. This lies behind the modification of another icon: the boy encircled by two foxes. Theocritus does not offer a moral interpretation:

αὐτάρ ὅγ' ἀνθερίκοισι καλὰν πλέκει ἀκριδοθέραν
σχοίνῳ ἐφαρμόσδων· μέλεται δέ οἱ οὔτε τι πήρας
οὔτε φυτῶν τοσσῆνον ὅσον περὶ πλέγματι γαθεῖ [ll. 52-54][2]

The boy is more interested in the skilful interlacing of rush and asphodel to create a cage for crickets than he is in his duty (to protect the vines) or his own physical well-being (the threat to the food in the wallet). As crickets were kept for the pleasure of their song, this self-absorption is inspired by aesthetic interests just as the fisherman's is by the effort of labour. The trio of lovers are

---

1. "'Since Daphnis Dies': The Meaning of Theocritus' First Idyll", Museum Helveticum, 31 (1974), 1-22.

2. 'But the boy is plaiting a pretty cricket-cage of bonded rush and asphodel, and has more joy in his plaiting than care for wallet or for vines.'

similarly intent on the immediate concerns of passion and possession. As depicted on the cup, however, these human icons become a cold pastoral, more artefact than drama. Art invites a disinterested gaze, an appreciation of form more than life, which, however, enriches life as well. The wooden cup signifies how the functionality of life (the cup as drinking-vessel) is sanctified by Art. The goatherd, therefore, recommends it to Thyrsis for its workmanship not its function:

> αἰπολικὸν θάημα· τέρας κέ τυ θυρὸν ἀτύξαι.
> οὐδε τί πω ποτὶ χεῖλος ἐμὸν θίγεν, ἀλλ' ἔτι κεῖται
> ἄχραντον.
>
> [ll. 56, 59-60][1]

Creech's version of the boy's medallion interprets the scene as a moral fable. One fox

> minds the Skrip, resolv'd to seize
> And rob the Fondling of his Bread and Cheese;
> Whilst He sets idly busy, neatly tyes
> Soft tender twigs, and frames a Net for Flyes; ... [p. 4]

The boy's disinterested absorption becomes idleness and the object of his misguided curiosity is devalued until not only is it non-functional, which might be excused, but also of no aesthetic value as well. These modifications are not anarchic or a result of misreading as they show clear additions to the text not inexact equivalents of what appears there. In Creech's translation, the girl and her two lovers are hardly altered at all. The three icons that Creech produces resemble its own genre of Hellenistic poetry. From this point of view, the fisherman is a detail taken from an epic, the lovers from lyric and the boy from didactic poetry. What is significant, however, is that the artificial simplicity of Thyrsis's exchange with the goatherd is dropped altogether in the description of the cup. Although there are significant alterations for Creech's version, the insistence on artifice and its positive value are still retained.

---

1. 'A marvellous object it is to a goatherd's eyes, a marvel that will strike thy heart with amaze; ... never yet has it touched my lips; it lies unsullied still.'

If the world inhabited by Thyrsis and the goatherd is now compared with the description of an artefact, Creech's division is all the plainer. It is in the interests of asserting this incommensurability that the medallions become more iconic and less dramatic and, accordingly, the opening exchange is granted less seriousness. The cup is called a 'fine Two-handled Pot' (p. 3) by the goatherd and yet such a literal, unrefined definition is certainly not the goatherd's impression of it in the descriptive set-piece where it is magnified as a product of craftsmanlike love and care. Similarly, the goatherd's fear of disturbing Pan which is clearly presented as a sincere belief in the Theocritus (15-18) is domesticated in the Creech:

> And He lyes down to sleep by purling streams,
> He's very touchy if we break his dreams: [p. 2]

However, in the elevated register of Thyrsis's song, Pan's majesty is respected:

> *Pan*, *Pan*, where e're you keep your *Sylvan* court [p. 8]

and Thyrsis himself gains a heroic voice:

> Θύρσις ὅδ' ὡξ Αἴτνας, και Θύρσιδος ἁδέα φωνά.[1] [l. 65]

> 'Tis *Thyrsis* song, *Thyrsis* from Ætna came,
> Sweet is his voice, and sounding as his fame. [p. 5]

The clearest evidence of this exaltation lies in the refrain. For:

> Ἄρχετε βουκολικᾶς, Μοῖσαι φίλαι, ἄρχετ' ἀοιδᾶς.
> [l. 64, passim][2]

becomes an unmistakeable plea for a less humble pastoral:

> Pan raise my voice, Pan move my learned tongue,
> Begin sweet Muse, begin the rural song. [p. 5, passim]

In accentuating the special grandeur of the cup and in raising Thyrsis's voice for his lament for Daphnis, Creech can modulate smoothly from the simplicity of Thyrsis's daily conversation to his capacity to compose such highly stylised and high-flown songs. Whereas Theocritus could write in such a multi-valent medium as the Greek Doric dialect, Creech had to choose between mitigating the heroism of Daphnis and Thyrsis's song in general in order to help the transition, elevating the opening dialogue or as he finally accomplishes, gradually building up to the heroic self-assertion of Daphnis. This would also force the goatherd's admonition to the she-goats at the poem's close to be even sharper. As a result, there is less surprise about the contrasts of the Theocritus, but a more consistent sorting of the Natural from the Artificial . By the close of Creech's *Idyll* 1, the simple desires and pretensions of the shepherd and goatherd are firmly established as the bucolic locus of reality or its foreground and not the aspirations conveyed in Thyrsis's song.

---

[1] 'Thyrsis of Etna am I, and sweet is the voice of Thyrsis.'

[2] 'Begin, dear Muses, begin the pastoral song.'

The 1685 version so varnishes the opening exchanges between Thyrsis and his companion that they become positively Arcadian. Smoothness, easiness and gentleness replace the tumbling καταχές of the stream's descent amongst the rocks. This is not propitious for the heroic possibilities of Daphnis, and indeed the poem becomes much more tender and pathetic. Daphnis does not die of a broken heart in Theocritus but wills his own death by keeping faith in a vow, presumably of chastity.[1] It is this very self-denial that earns Daphnis such an apotheosis. However, in this version Daphnis is a man of feeling. Absent are the possible similarities with Aeschylus's Prometheus noted by Rist[2] and the heroism that Virgil takes over in his own version of the myth in *Eclogue* 5. Adam Parry is unequivocal about Thyrsis's song: 'Far more than Virgil's and Milton's imitations of it, this is an heroic

---

1. The full context of the debate is given in Dover, pp. 83-86.

2. *The Poems of Theocritus*, translated with introductions by Anna Rist (Chapel Hill N.C., 1978), p. 25.

song. At least it represents with remarkable directness some of the essential feelings of epic and tragic poetry - the sense of death, of fate, of deliberate and dramatic resolution.'[1] For the 1685 translator, Daphnis is the victim of his own sensitivity not his will.

In the Theocritus, Daphnis is attended by a consort of mourning animals:

> τῆνον μὰν θῶες, τῆνον λύκοι ὠρύσαντο,
> τῆνον χὠκ δρυμοῖο λέων ἔκλαυσε θανόντα.
> [ll. 71-72][2]

They are described as having found a natural form for their grief, a proposition reinforced by the formulaic repetitions redolent of oral epic song. In 1685, the natural world becomes a lachrymose funeral train:

> For him the Panthers and the Tygers mourn'd:
> They came, they saw; and with swoln Eyes return'd.
> Lyons themselves, did uncouth sorrows bear,
> Their savage Fierceness softning to a Tear. [p. 359]

It follows that the central issue of Daphnis's death eludes the translator. Priapus informs the reader that the maiden in the poem is searching for Daphnis (82-83). In the translation, the process is reversed:

> 'Why all this grief? ah! wretched Daphnis, why?
> While the false Nymph, unmindful of thy Pains,
> Now climbs the Hills, now skims it o'er the Plains.' [p. 360]

This is bound to qualify Daphnis's heroic qualities. Cypris's (Aphrodite's) taunts that he had been bested in love elicit a defiance not just of Cypris but of the whole concept of Ἔρως:

> ἤδη γὰρ φράσδῃ πάνθ' ἅλιον ἄμμι δεδύκειν;
> Δάφνις κἠν Ἀίδα κακὸν ἔσσεται ἄλγος Ἔρωτι.
> [ll. 102-3][3]

The translation is content to keep matters to a personal level, between

---

1. "Landscape into Myth : Theocritus' Bucolic Poetry", Ramus 4 (1975), 115.

2. 'For him the jackals howled, for him the wolves; for him dead even the lion of the forest made lament.'

3. '... do you dare to think, then, that all my suns are set already? Even in Hades shall Daphnis be a bitter grief to love.'

Daphnis and Cypris:

> Too well I know, my fatal hour is come,
> My Sun declining to its Western Home.
> Yet ev'n in Death thy Scorns I will repay. [p. 362]

This tenderness of sentiment also forces on the poem a coyness and reticence quite alien to the original's mixture of styles. In a mythical song such as Thyrsis's, he dares have Priapus pity Daphnis for being like the goatherd:

> ᾡπόλος, ὅκκ' ἐσορῇ τὰς μηκάδας οἷα βατεῦνται,
> τάκεται ὀφθαλμὼς ὅτι οὐ τράγος αὐτὸς ἔγεντο. [ll. 87-88][1]

In the 1685 rendering, this 'sport' has become 'frisking' and 'playing' (p. 361).

So the later translation of Idyll 1 offers an alternative Augustan reading of Theocritus as tender and sweet. To perpetuate this reading, it is necessary to neutralize the several stylistic differences that Theocritus exploits in gaining a multiplicity of effects – humour, satire or pathetic incapacity to contrast with the grandeur of a tough, self-asserting heroism. Remove the contrasts and dissonances and the poem is emasculated. Creech's more varied verbal registers give a more accurate translation, but even here there are frequently just three "voices" predominating: the naturalistic mode for the opening dialogue, a plainer, denotative style for the description of the cup and then the epic song of Thyrsis. So as to avoid the discontinuities of the Greek, there is more of a gradual elevation in style right up until the closing return to the importunities of an "unartful" Nature signalled by frisky she-goats and recalcitrant male-goats. This contrast points the organization of the translation: the clear contrast between the world of imagination and that of work. In order to modulate from one to the other, however, Creech begins the plain style of dialogue before the song is finished - what is more, right at the climax of it, the drowning of Daphnis:

---

[1] 'Neatherd were you called, but now you are more like the goatherd, who, when he sees the nannies at their sport, weeps that he was not born a goat.'

> This said He dy'd, fair *Venus* rub'd the swain,
> And idly strove to bring him back again.
> For cruel *Fate* had broken every thread
> And o're the *Stygian* lake young *Daphnis* fled. [p. 9]

Theocritus's description is markedly direct and unembellished:

> χὢ μὲν τόσσ' εἰπὼν ἀπεπαύσατο· τὸν δ' Ἀφροδίτα
> ἤθελ' ἀνορθῶσαι· τά γε μὰν λίνα πάντα λελοίπει
> ἐκ Μοιρᾶν, χὠ Δάφνις ἔβα ῥόον.
> [ll. 138-40][1]

It is a style to honour Daphnis. The lines even include the Homeric detail that a thread spun by the Fates is coexistent with each human life. Creech's Daphnis does not aspire to such gravity. The indecorous action of rubbing ascribed to 'Venus' (not Aphrodite, a more august deity), and the periphrastic 'Swain', charge the passage with a vulnerability that, in Theocritus, there is no need to emphasise. In Creech, Daphnis dies a man; in Theocritus, he is approaching the Gods.

b) *Idyll* 7

Alone out of the poems that make up the bucolic corpus of the *Idylls*, the narrative of *Idyll* 7 is told in the first person. This provokes problems of interpretation rather than resolves them. The first person singular is no infallible indication of privileged insight in the *Idylls* as 3 and 20 both testify, but it could promise a more coherent form. *Idyll* 7 stretches even the most ingenious commentator in the search for a central action. Simichidas tells the tale of a walk with two friends to the estate of an aristocratic family of Cos

---

1. 'So much he said, and ended; and Aphrodite would have raised him up again, but all the thread the Fates assigned was run, and Daphnis went to the stream.'

to celebrate the harvest. On the way the friends encounter a goatherd named Lycidas who joins them and who swaps songs with Simichidas. Lycidas begins by singing of Agaenax, with whom he is in love and for whom he prays a fair voyage to Mitylene. Simichidas replies by celebrating a love-affair of his friend Aratus. Lycidas gives him his staff as a pledge of friendship and their ways part. The _Idyll_ ends with an extended and lush description of their refreshment at the journey's end. The events of the narrative seem to have no clear thread. Simichidas's companions are functionally redundant and the appearance of Lycidas has only the loosest of connections with the festivities at the poem's close. Furthermore, in a characteristic Theocritean scheme, two quite dissimilar songs are included as _divertissements_ along the route. There seems no attempt to exploit either of them symbolically nor do they further the narrative. They appear merely as distractions. The only possible link is between a detail in Lycidas's song describing his reaction on Ageanax's safe arrival and the closing luxuriance.

> κἠγὼ τῆνο κατ' ἆμαρ ἀνήτινον ἢ ῥοδόεντα
> ἢ καὶ λευκοῖων στέφανον περὶ κρατὶ φυλάσσων
> τὸν Πτελεατικὸν οἶνον ἀπὸ κρατῆρος ἀφυξῶ
> πὰρ πυρὶ κεκλιμὲνος, κύαμον δέ τις ἐν πυρὶ φρυξει
> χὰ στιβὰς ἐσσεῖται πεπυκασμένα ἔστ' ἐπὶ πᾶχυν
> κνύζᾳ τ' ἀσφοδέλῳ τε πολυγνάμπτῳ τε σελίνῳ.
> καὶ πίομαι μαλακῶς μεμναμένος Ἀγεάνακτος
> αὐταῖς ἐν κυλίκεσσι καὶ ἐς τρύγα χεῖλος [ll. 63-70][1]
> ἐρείδων.

This song is introduced by Lycidas as being ἐξεπόνασα ('fashioned') and therefore not improvised. It cuts through the bucolic mood initiated by the account up until that point. These descriptive details

---

1. 'And I on that day will bind my brows with sweet anise, roses, or white stocks, and draw from the bowl the wine of Ptelea as I lie by the fire; and beans shall be roasted on the hearth. And elbow-high shall my couch be strewn with fleabane and asphodel and curling celery, and I will drink at my ease, remembering Agaenax in my drinking and gulping it down even to the dregs.'

are artificially assembled and are not directly mimetic.

Just as discontinuous is the poem's style. The narrative opening gives way to the hybrid προπεμπτικον ('farewell song')/ παιδικα (homosexual love song) of Lycidas, full of simple, rich details, and the urbane wit of Simichidas, who avoids in his song the carefully composed musical flow of his companion. Indeed, the epistle to Aratus is digressive and conversational, not as rhapsodic or elevated as Lycidas's.[1] In between these set-pieces is the conversational give-and-take between the two poets.[2] When the friends arrive at Thrasidamas's farm, the description of the harvest-party suggests the sensuous particulars of Lycidas's song. In short, there is a constant fluctuation in styles, offering a variety of formal and verbal effects.

As a backdrop to this virtuoso poetry, Theocritus firmly localises the scenes. Gow claims that the place (Cos) and even the month (July-August) can be identified from the details of the poem.[3] This has led to the critical hypothesis that the poem is a Mascerade bucolique or, if particular poets cannot be found to fit Lycidas or Simichidas, that it embodies a contribution to a literary debate between two schools of Alexandrian poetry: the 'Μοισᾶν ὄρυιχες' (47)[4] who try to emulate Homer and those who are content with more modest, but accomplished, creations. Just as in Idyll 1, the contrasts in style are

---

1. The two songs are contrasted in Josef-Hans Kühn, "Die Thalysien Theokrits (id. 7)", Hermes, 86 (1958), pp. 52-56.

2. This is not to say that the farewell to Ageanax is without bucolic colouring. There is interest in Daphnis and Comatas. The pathetic fallacy of lines 74 ff. resembles Moschus 3.1 ff. or Bion 1.31 ff. Indeed, the whole point of the contrast may be to pit an elevated rusticity against an urbane detachment.

3. Gow, 2: 127. For the evidence for a non-allegorical reading, see Charles Segal, "Theocritus' Seventh Idyll and Lycidas", Wiener Studien, Neue Folge, 8 (1974), 20-76.

4. 'The cocks of the Muses' yard.'

powerful, not to say irreverent. Simichidas's song betrays a Rabelaisian taste in love. The characteristic tone is struck in the opening words which refer to the Erotes 'sneezing' (96) for Simichidas. In contrast to Lycidas's song, bathed in spiritual intensity, Simichidas images Aratus's desire as located 'beneath his guts' (99) and 'in his marrow' (102). These physical details lead easily into the catalogue of Pan's rewards and punishments. If Aratus is successful, Pan will no longer be flogged around the flanks and shoulders. His punishment will be biting and scratching inflicted with his own fingernails, and sleeping in nettles (106). Such is Theocritus's heterogeneity that Creech omits such discontinuous and physical details, and interpolates a love-lyric of pathos and more acceptable abstraction:

> Ye smileing Loves, fair *Venus* soft delight,
> Like ruddy *Apples* pleasing to the sight,
> Leave *Byblis'* fountain, leave her purling streams ...
> Shoot *Philinus*, wound his stubborn mind,
> Shoot, for he hath no *pitty* for his friend;
> Tho soft as Parsly, tender as the Vine,
> And oh that he would clasp his Arms in mine! [p. 47]

Creech is more accurate when he can idealise or glorify. Lycidas is introduced in terms that, whilst not departing radically from the Greek, are apt to show his figure in a more favourable light. He is a man of Cydonia 'and a worthy' (12) and wears an aged tunic (18). He has already gained a reputation as the best of pipers and treats Simichidas with avuncular indulgence, dubbing him 'a sapling whom Zeus has fashioned all for truth' (44). These details do not suggest Creech's portrait:

> οὔνομα μὲν Δυκίδαν, ἦς δ' αἰπόλος, οὐδέ κέ τίς νιν[1]
> [l. 13]

---

[1] 'His name was Lycidas, and a goathered was he.' Theocritus goes on to emphasise how very much like a goatherd he appeared.

His name was Lycidas, the gay the young,
A Cretan born, and fam'd for Rural Song [p. 42]

or, more decisively, the transition from the relatively neutral:
ἀλλ' ἄγε δή, ξυνὰ γὰρ ὁδὸς ξυνὰ δὲ καὶ ἀώς
βουκολιασδώμεσθα· τάχ' ὤτερος ἄλλον ὀνασεῖ
[ll. 19-20][1]

to the Arcadian:

Gay, vigorous, sweet, and in the pride of youth,
And as he spoke a smile sat on his mouth [p. 43].

Rapin's Golden Age deserves more than the goatherd alone.

To some extent this festive heightening is justified by the θαλυσια, or harvest-festival, of Theocritus's title, which also provides the destination of the friends' journey from the city as well as the reader's progress through the poem. This progression is a smoother one in Creech. For example, the country songs which form the competition during the encounter were expressly so that one poet could learn from the other.[2] Creech sustains a reading where pleasure seems the goal of the song-making:

Let's Pipe, and wanton as we walk along,
For we may please each other with a Song [p. 44]

This is a significant alteration, for no longer is the reader encouraged to applaud the cool artistic skill of both singers and profit by the formal display of their art. There is only the obligation to enjoy the contest and allow it to pass the time. This is a deliberate diminution of the original poem's complexity for the contrast between the two songs introduces a polarity between the country and the city. If there is no complete demarcation between Lycidas's hymning of rustic life and the knowing asperity of Simichidas's urbanity, if they are both pleasurable in their particular ways, then the criticism of the city loses its force and point, and the polemical allure of Lycidas's description of rural ease does not lead forward to the friends's awareness of such beauty at the festival.[1] It is only as a contest that Theocritus presented the singing; Creech, with an ear for a melodic flow and lyric mood, cannot allow such contrasts of mood.

---

[1] 'And with a quiet smile and twinkling eye he spoke to me, and laughter hung about his lip.'

[2] Theocritus is decisive on this point: ἀλλ' ἄγε δή, ξυνὰ γὰρ ὁδὸς ξυνὰ δέ καὶ ἀώς,
βουκολιασδώμεσθα· τάχ' ὤτερος ἄλλον ὀνασεῖ. [ll. 35-36]
'But come; the way and the day are ours to share; let us make country song, and each, maybe, shall profit the other.' These country songs are θαλυσια and therefore competitive in nature.

Imperceptibly, these alterations, small in themselves, create an alternative plot. Absent from the Creech are not only the surprising contrasts and dissonances of Theocritus, but the restraint of conscious artifice before the Harvest Festival. Because Lycidas's song includes his own locus uberrimus, there is preparation for a symbolic reading of the poem's conclusion: Simichidas's enjoyment of the feast to Demeter. In Creech this associative narrative is not only absent but even positively negated, for even though Theocritus's title for the poem suggests a festive theme, that is not synonymous with the holiday that the singers and friends enjoy in the translation. In the original, Lycidas's prayer for the safe landfall of Ageanax includes the earthly delights of the celebratory bowl of Ptelean wine only as a persuasive snare to entice the Prince to live with him. Creech's version introduces a note of Epicurean self-forgetfulness instead:

> For then with Violets or with Roses crownd
> I'le sport a Glass, and see his Health go round;
> I'le tost my Beans, to raise pall'd Appetite.

---

[1] Segal (1974) notes the similarities between the two, but also the difference: 'This final scene (132-157) presents a tamer world than Lycidas'. It is an agricultural, not a pastoral setting. The presiding deity is Demeter, not Pan ...' (p. 58).

> Make me drink on, and lengthen the Delight:
> Whilst stretcht on Beds I'le spend my easy hours,
> And roul, till I have lost my self in flowers [p. 45]

This same abandon is evident in the later descriptive set-piece. Indeed, there is more need in Creech's translation for the delights of the festival to be a fitting crescendo of sensual and poetic fulfilment since this has become increasingly apparent as the motive for the poem. It is here that the musical analogy is most accurately descriptive of its merits and its distinctive aim.

> We lay, we wanton'd on a flowry bed,
> Where fragrant Mastick, and where Vines were spread,
> And round us Poplars rais'd their shady head:
> Just by a spring with pleasing Murmurs flow'd,
> In every bush, and thicket of the wood
> Sweet Insects sang, and sighing Turtles coo'd.
> The labouring Bees buz'd round the purling spring,
> Their Hony gather'd, and forgot their Sting:
> Sweet Summers choicest fruits, and Autum's pride
> Pears by our head, and Apples by our side
> Lay round in heaps; and loaden Plums did stand
> With bending boughs, to meet the reaching hand:
> To please us more he pierc't a Cask of Wine,
> Twas four years old, and from a noble Vine; [pp. 48-49]

In inspiration this conclusion is redolent of Golden Age harmony. The flowers accommodate themselves to form a bed; poplars provide shade and a spring pleases with its flowing music. Even bees who are 'labouring' contribute to the natural music. It is also significant that the almost transparent similes and parallelism that characterise Creech's "simplicity" are dropped altogether and replaced by a metrical variety ultimately contained by the overarching metre of the heroic couplet. Unlike the "simple" world of rustics, this is a serious beauty free of demeaning pathos. In Theocritus's description not only is there little attempt to harmonise the natural elements to Man's desire but the organising principle behind the details, the celebration of the Harvest and Nature's plenty is never far from view. The friends laid themselves down on 'βαθείαις ..... χαμευνίσιν' ('deep couches') (132-33) of sweet rush, and in the fresh-stripped vine-leaves. Poplars, elms, the sacred water from the cave of the Nymphs join with cicadas and tree-frogs in a series of sound images: 'πάντ' ὦσδεν θέρεος μάλα πίονος, ὦσδε δ ὀπώρας' (143: 'All things were fragrant of rich harvest and of fruit time'). Each natural object has its own music and its own autonomy. The waterfall is not merely babbling soothingly but κελάρυζε (137: plashing),[1] no easy flow. However, in relation to the narrative up until that point, the description is markedly interior. Lawall believes that the passage is an 'allegory of poetic inspiration'.[2] What is certain is that the situation of the earlier narrative in Cos has been forgotten which is remarkable in that the care to set the journey in a recognisable landscape was obvious before.

Idyll 7 is influential in the interpretation of Theocritus mainly on account of the widely-held belief that the first person of the poem might be Theocritus himself.[3] Amongst later commentators, this has encouraged a disposition to find the poem a direct reflection of the Coan landscape and its customs. It has already been noted that Lady Mary Wortley Montagu found Theocritus realistic in his depiction of landscape. As this poem constitutes the only extended piece of descriptive verse in the Idylls, she must have found the set-pieces of this Idyll directly mimetic. It is also noteworthy that Tickell's description of Theocritus in his pastoral allegory in the Guardian (32) more accurately describes Lycidas than it does Simichidas. As it is hard not to conclude that Lycidas is a more sympathetic figure than the 'I' as narrator, there must be substantial doubt as to whether or to what extent Simichidas could be equated with the poetic personality of Theocritus. Certainly in the writing of Idyll 7 he has not composed a song such as that addressed to Aratus and it may be concluded that if he wished to write autobiographically he would have been clearer in his intention, as he is in the epistolary introductions to Idylls 11 and 13.[1] "Simichidas", far from helping a reading to balance the disparate styles and levels of diction in the poem, functions as a persona not a Schlüsselname; the full significance of the poem is only realised if the narrator is placed as just one voice in the poem's chorus not as a soloist.

---

[1] It also echoes Homer at Iliad, XXI: 261.

[2] Lawall, p. 12.

[3] Some identifications are attempted in Lawall, pp. 74 ff.

Creech, in accepting the poem as autobiographical, has an added responsibility to render an atmospheric unity; as in the version of Idyll 1, he smooths out most inconsistencies of style. The exception to this levelling of tone occurs in the exchange between Thyrsis and the goatherd. "Nature" is rendered in a tender "simplicity" that is quite unlike the style suitable for "Art", either Thyrsis's song or more questionably, the rusticities of Simichidas. In maintaining this stylistic divide between the eventually emasculated songs of the singers and the lyrical environment in which they are performed, Creech is choosing not to follow Theocritus in suggesting that high Art could be created in rustic conditions and, indeed, could derive much of its energy from a descent into lower styles of poetry. The Doric that Creech cultivates is a medium orthodox enough to avoid regional limitations and yet, within these limits, simple and innocent enough to be Golden.

---

1. Idyll 11. 1-6, 87; 13. 1-4, 97.

Idylls 4, 5 and 10

Ancient comment on Theocritus's style usually defines it as *humilis* or ἀφελης.[1] Freed from the connotations of the literate urban culture in which Theocritus wrote the *Idylls*, the style could imply an unpretentious clarity, freed from the conceitful difficulties of most contemporary Alexandrian forms. Consequently, Theocritus was prepared to forgo the medium of Socrates and Aristophanes. The stylised Dorian, redolent of archaic choral poetry, suggested the past but did not express its mood obscurely. This variety of plain style approximates to Demetrius's formula in *On Style*. Although more directly intended for those composing prose oratory rather than poetry, the treatise accurately describes the Hellenistic Doric. It emphasises the need for short clauses with clearly felt, unprotracted endings (par. 204), recommends the avoidance of unusual words and pointed rhythmic effects (221) and endorses a concreteness and full presentation of details (209). The internal hiatus of long vowels (207), frequently employed to increase the effects of drama and tension at the expense of lucidity, is foreign to the *Idylls* as well.[2] This internal asyntaxis led Scaliger to characterize the Theocritean mode of pastoral as relaxed and extended, compared to Virgil who appears economical, concise, polished, smooth and compact.[3] This unperiodic diffuseness was noticed by Rapin as well, who realised that the 'periods ... have no conjunctions to connect them;' with pleasurable 'stops and breakings off' (p. 40). It seems contradictory, therefore, to turn to Purney and Pope's observations that pastoral poems should, as a whole, be brief, mere sketches rather than complete actions such as the epic.[1] This brevity of scope could, however, be a consequence of the supposed limited capacities of the rustic character, which appeared incapable of abbreviating its discourse by pithy generalisation. Idylls 1 and 7 could be construed as confronting this rustic metaphor with imaginative myth, a display of transcendence. The very looseness of style signifies a rusticity that the heroic metre and its occasionally noble subjects would seek to efface. In the Idylls now under consideration, it is harder to consider their bucolic content as pleasurably transparent metaphor.

---

[1] See Servius, *Proem. in Vergilii Bucolicon*, ed. G. Thilo (Leipzig, 1887), 3: 1-2; Hermogenes βουκολικον 2.3.

[2] "*Aristotle*, The Poetics; '*Longinus*', The Sublime; *Demetrius*, On Style", translated by W. Hamilton Fyfe (London, rev. ed. 1932), Loeb Classical Library, pp. 426, 428, 436-37.

[3] *Select Translations*, p. 27.

Theocritus's reputation for "low" realism and inadmissible coarseness is not obvious in the two Idylls just analysed. In an inconsistent canon of bucolic poems, where the attempt to make them fit one generic definition is difficult, the three most rustic Idylls have largely escaped critical notices. Where they have most attracted attention is in their challenge to the heroic image of Theocritean pastoral if Thyrsis's song or the lush descriptions of Nature are selected from Idylls 1 and 7, or the reputation for tender sentiment is perpetuated, such as expressed by Polyphemus in Idyll 11 or the goatherd in Idyll 3. Most significantly these Idylls repudiate the notion of the Golden Age with its inherent idealism not only as concerns the character of a shepherd but also his surroundings. In relation to this pastoral myth the alternative presented by the dialogues between Battus and Corydon, Comatas and Lacon and finally Milon and Bucaeus is realistic

---

1. See pp. 128-35. Pope deduces a 'brief' eclogue from 'brief sentences'. TE, 1: 26.

to the extent that it stresses the more instinctive side of Man and his possibly debased desires, and resists a lyrical presentation. Rapin's distaste at the railing as 'bitter as Billingsgate' is natural when pastoral is expected to display an image of the 'sedate times of the Happy Age'.[1] It is no coincidence that these poems owe much of their inspiration to the techniques of the urban mime and exploit such possibilities for emphasising the contrast and conflict of a dramatic model. Consequently, the undramatic aspects of the more normal Doric mode are forsaken for a superficial tension, some of the conflict that is a result of the plot of the amoebaean contests rather than its conceptual framework.

a) Idyll 4

It proves something of a surprise to find Idyll 4 introduced by Creech with the headnote: 'Battus and Corydon in a pastoral way discourse of several things' (26). As this comment is the only direct gloss by Creech on his own translations, it certainly gains in significance as it points to the fact that, in Creech's eyes, this Idyll is the only poem in need of one. There are several possible explanations for this. Firstly, the headnote might have stood as an apology for the apparent formlessness of the poem. The verb 'discourse' had long since been loosened from its academic definition: to reason in dialogue, and could now mean merely to converse, so there is no obvious mock-heroic irony in the note. The crux might be the description of the poem's subject as 'several things'. Alternatively, this particular 'pastoral way', although not the first mime in the collection, is certainly the most unpropitious in subject and style. Correspondingly, Creech is preparing the reader for a particular pastoral diction that he would not have expected. Finally, the 'pastoral way' could be a faintly derogatory reference implying that the inconsequential looseness of the poem is merely what might have been expected of the genre.

---

[1] See p.25.

That *Idyll* 4 might not be as formless as its first commentators believed has only recently been noticed.[1] What is more obvious is the spontaneity of conversation suggested by the long chatter about the wretchedness of Aegon's herd of cows left to Corydon's care. However wayward the topics of conversation there are some formal constraints that gradually become noticeable. The dactylic hexameter is an obvious example but just as important is the opening στιχομυθια confirming the poem's dramatic model. This lasts for the first fifteen lines to be succeeded by four units of three lines of speech each. This patterning is only broken by Corydon's speech commencing at line 29 which lasts for nine lines and the intrusion of dramatic interest from outside their dialogue at line 44 when Battus realises that Corydon's herd is eating olives on the slopes below them. Battus, in driving back the herd, then spikes himself on some spindle-thorns. Metrical order and the lineation is restored to some extent by the four concluding speeches which are all of two lines each. By reference to the appearance of the poem on the page it is possible to conclude that at least two of those 'several things' are highlighted by breaking up

---

1. Lawall, pp. 50-51, claims that this *Idyll* exploits the tension between the two poles of erotic attitudes: 'purely physical desires and sentimental longing' (p. 50), whereas Rist, pp. 52-55, finds the predominant emotion to be a kinship and fellow-feeling between man and beast. Segal's "Theocritean Criticism and the Interpretation of the Fourth *Idyll*", *Ramus* 1 (1972), 1-25, treats the poem as a test-case for the appreciation of the whole canon. Once again the critical vocabulary stresses a dichotomy, for where 'time seems suspended and where nature is bountiful, serious and trivial can appear as aspects of the same thing'. The effect created is humble and rustic but still the 'humor of Homer's Olympus' (p. 17).

a loose, discursive pattern. The patterning is loose to allow the impression of unrehearsed speech to grow but not disjointed enough to break the tension of form and the undifferentiated topics of speech.

The first break in the speech-pattern occurs when Corydon answers Battus's jibe to the absent Aegon that his pipe is getting flecked with mildew through lack of use. Corydon, in answer, asserts his own prowess as a player and states that Aegon had left that pipe to him. Although, taken out of context, this assertion appears insignificant, the miniature frame that presents this image of artistic confidence sets it off most forcefully. The second break occurs when reality or, more specifically in this case, Corydon's duty as a cowherd intrudes into the discussion and both Battus and Corydon become countrymen again rather than singers. Judging merely from the form of the poem there would seem to be a dichotomy in that a countryman both sings and yet also has work to do, the same ambiguity that taxed Rapin and Kennet.

As expected, Theocritus provides a precise topographical setting[1] and a seasoning of "low" words and phrases not least of which is the closing belly-laugh about Aegon's lecherous father (58ff.). What is remarkable is the degree to which this occupies the forefront of the reader's attention. Being wholly dramatic in mode, there are no lyrical moments, and no songs. Indeed, Theocritus seems to be leading up to the inclusion of a lament for Amaryllis when such impending transcendence is dispersed in three abrupt stages: the Hesiodic sententiousness of Corydon (41 - 43), the discovery that the cows have trespassed into the olive-grove (44 - 49) and, the climax, Battus's wound (50 - 57). When the conversation feels free to ignore its surroundings again, it then has lost its moment of spirituality and there follows the coarsest comments of the poem about Aegon's enduring virility. Gow, in his commentary on this poem and the next, states that:

---

[1] The cattle are pastured by the rivers Aisaros (17) and Neaithos (24). These are both near Croton on the southern coast of Italy. This is crucial as Croton suffered continuously and severely in the first half of the third century B.C.. Livy (24: 3.1) comments on its consequent diminution and desolation.

> The fourth and fifth Idylls are poetically on lower plane than T.'s other bucolic Idylls and the conversations which they contain, owing to the reduction of the poetical element, approach more nearly to the possible speech of rustics than anything else in T. except the remarks of Milon in Id. 10.[1]

This is of a piece with Rand's description of Idyll 5 as 'rude realism'[2] in that 'poetry' is associated with an element that is added to language that would otherwise be clear denotation. If it is not the choice of words that transforms reality into poetry, then, according to Gow, the poetry is 'lower' or, for Rand, such realism is 'rude' or uncultivated. As already noted (p. 35), Fontenelle's comment on Idylls 4 and 5 demonstrates a neoclassicist's objection to the representation of 'real Country fellows' as problematic characters. Even Charles Segal, in an essay which argues that the Hellenistic conventions with which Theocritus was working stressed form rather than localised fine effects, argues that Theocritus's poetry remains closer to the earth, more concerned with the rhythms of nature.[3] This reception of the Idylls and, in particular, the less consciously ideal poetry, has as its basis the assumption that there is a direct correspondence between a verbal description and its object. Daphnis attracts

---

1. Gow, 2: 76.

2. E.K. Rand, The Magical Art of Virgil (Hamden, Conn., 1966), p. 84.

3. A 'poetry which relaxes and dissolves tensions by its very limitations, by its rootedness in the soil and the earthy life of herdsmen ...', Segal (1975), p. 118.

the conventions of myth and symbol but Battus seems untransformed and so less "poetical". However, just as there is a risk that the less bucolic Idylls will be misread if they are considered unrelievedly lyrical or ideal, the less mythic poetry will be misunderstood if believed to be "rude" or coarse. In this vein, comments on Theocritus's "realism" appear heavily loaded and conceal an adverse value-judgement on the subjects of such verse as much as the poetry that refers to them.

Creech's apologetic approach to Idyll 4 is founded on a refusal to grant that the subject-matter has only a token reality. Although Battus and Corydon are comic, that does not bar the whole poem from serious consideration, especially if a full appreciation of the complexities of the poem derives from its form rather than any assortment of isolated components. It is no surprise that the στιχομυθια that intensifies interest in form rather than character during the opening lines of the original is notably absent in Creech.

> B. Whose Herds? Philonda's? tell whose Herds they are,
> C. Aegon's, for Aegon gave them to my care,
> B. Don't you play false, and sometimes milk a Cow,
> By stealth? C. No, my old Master eyes me so,
> Gives the Calves suck, and watches what I do. [p. 26]

Creech stresses the conversational informality that is accurate in its rendering of the Doric but crucially limiting as far as the whole poem is concerned. This same refusal to take the poem seriously is clearly demonstrated by the translation of Battus's ill-advised attempt to help Corydon round up the latter's wandering herd. Theocritus just dramatises the incident enough to break up the reflective mood of the dialogue:

> θᾶσαί μ', ὦ Κορύδων, ποττῶ Διός· ἁ γὰρ ἄκανθα
> ἁρμοῖ μ' ὧδ' ἐπάταξ ὑπὸ τὸ σφυρόν. ὡς δὲ βαθεῖαι
> τἀτρακτυλλίδες ἐντί. κακῶς ἁ πόρτις ὄλοιτο·
> [ll. 50-52][1]

Creech emphasises this event quite out of proportion to its formal significance, until it reveals the simple characters concerned rather than furthers the poem's more central preoccupations:

---

[1] 'Look at me, Corydon, for heaven's sake. A thorn has just got me under the ankle. How thick those thorns grow.'

> B. Look here for God's sake, oh it pricks, it pricks!
> I've caught a thorn, oh me how deep it sticks!
> Pray, pull it out, dost see it? Look 'tis there. [p. 29]

Battus's reflection on his injury in Theocritus is not insistently ludicrous:

> ὁσσίχον ἐστὶ τὸ τύμμα, καὶ ἁλίκον ἄνδρα
> δαμάσει [l. 55][1]

In Creech's version, the gesture becomes positively mock-heroic, endorsing a division between the simple lives of the rustics and their pretensions to epic grief:

> How small the wound, yet what vast Courage fell! [p. 29]

This attitudinising comes from Battus not Corydon. The contrast between them is clear and is consistent with the dramatic form. Corydon is more equable and quietly efficient whereas Battus is emotional and sentimental. The differences appear both in language and in situation. Battus lends himself to a mock-heroic treatment by frequently giving vent to tragic exclamation: φεῦ φεῦ...καὶ ταὶ...(26); αἰαῖ (40). This is a posture noticeable in the opening lines where Aegon's disappearance assumes tragic proportions: ὁ βουκόλος (5).[2] By refusing to grant Battus a problematic status, however, Creech is disturbing the balance of the poem, lending more weight to the sentimental view of the countryman and far less to the more Hesiodic Corydon who provides a countryman worthy of respect and who also exists with no obvious symbolical trappings that would seek to idealise simple country tasks.

---

[1] 'What a small wound to overcome a man as big as me.'

[2] Corydon's contributions are usually practical and positive. For instance, he notices when the cows get too close to the olive trees: σίτθ'... σίτθ'.. (45-6) and reassures Battus as he extracts the thorn: 'ναὶ ναὶ' (54).

b) *Idyll* 5

Daphnis appears in *Idyll* 5 but the magic and myth appear but dimly, as memories tossed proverbially into a song-contest or quarrel (21, 80ff.). This is the measure of how far *Idylls* 5 and 1 are from each other in the Theocritean bucolic corpus. *Idyll* 1 treated myth as superseding or giving value to the everyday concerns of country workers; in *Idyll* 5, myths are taken for granted as if their power is weak, too weak to animate the coarse immediacies that occupy Lacon or Comatas. When Lacon, in asking Comatas to stake a kid urges ἔστι μὲν οὐδὲν ἱερόν (21ff.: 'it doesn't much matter'), he implicitly demonstrates the absence of ὕδωρ that sacred or numinous element prominent in the settings of 1 and 7 (1.69, 7.136). The harsh enjambement stresses a defiant and anti- literary impulse in both singers. Finally the cup of cypress wood which Comatas unsuitably attributes to Praxiteles (104ff.) is a reduced and trivialised form of the wondrous cup of *Idyll* 1. Theocritus, in his more bucolic *Idylls* may still be artful but his terms of reference are to materials that resist the Academy.

Idyll 5 presents a fundamental challenge to Creech's programme of stylistic simplification in his Theocritean translations. On the one hand, Comatas and Lacon indulge in the most basic of verbal skirmishes but when this is formalised as a singing-contest, both provide polished well-turned songs radically different from the diction and conversational tactics of the rest of the poem.[1] In what is a characteristically Theocritean perspective, high Art is all the more remarkable for its growth in the midst of the most unpoetic material. In *Idyll* 7 the

---

1. The contest (80-137) is extempore, the respondent attempting to cap the other's couplets. Consequently, symmetry and ironic reversal are a necessary ingredient. Compare 94-95 with 92-93 or the mockery of 122 with 120-21.

singers could modulate from the idiomatic to the formal with only a little strain; here the change is sudden and contrived. That this is a probable reading is endorsed by the presentation of both Comatas and Lacon as slaves tending another's flock or herd - possibly to account for the especial coarseness of their behaviour, but, in the terms of the poem, the effect is to underscore the dramatic transformation that is effected by the artistic occasion. That both countrymen are touchy about tending others' property is evident from the opening exchange in which both talk of the goats or sheep as their own (1-3). Comatas reminds Lacon he is Sibyrtas's slave (5) whereupon Lacon addresses him with the ironic title: ὦλεῦθερε (8), a retort to Comatas's δῶλε (5), and casts a slur upon his master Eumeras (10). That slaves can sing extempore is presented as surprising in the formal contrasts but in their businesslike attitude towards it and the practised ease they accomplish such verbal dexterity, such surprise could turn to admiration.

However, there is no synthesis or resolution achieved within the poem. Morson awards victory to Comatas who immediately taunts the loser before reverting to more pressing matters:

οὗτος ὁ λευκίτας ὁ κορυπτίλος, εἴ τιν' ὀχευσεῖς
τᾶν αἰγῶν, φλασσῶ τυ, πρὶν ἦ ἐμὲ καλλιερῆσαι
ταῖς Νύμφαις τὰν ἀμνόν. ὃ δ' αὖ πάλιν. ἀλλὰ
  γενοίμαν,
αἰ μή τυ φλάσσαιμι, Μελάνθιος ἀντὶ Κομάτα. [ll. 147-50][1]

The poem ends with this gratuitous and unexplained curse.

There are several suggestions in the poem which cannot be assimilated to a central thesis, one which guarantees either discursive or narrative unity. Conversely, there appear a concentration of elements which aim to deconstruct the security and integrity of bucolic myth. For example, the contestants do not sing, but speak otherwise musical verses and they choose not to share the same *locus amoenus*.[1] *Idyll* 5 is the only poem which has an umpire to judge the bucolic contest, a detail in keeping with the seriousness given to the agonistic elements *per se*. This umpire, what is more, cuts down oak trees professionally (64) and is therefore responsible for helping the destruction of the bucolic locus. He is also a city-dweller, and is making for his home when he is detained by the contestants (78). As such *Idyll* 5 stands in contrast to the movement out of the city in *Idyll* 7 (2). The dialectic between the city and the countryside is the focus of many of the *Idylls*, as is the contrast between Art and Nature. *Idyll* 5 intensifies these differences and proposes the view that the πονος of life, far from alien to the pastoral, is a major term in its series of signifying devices. Once again, Creech is confronted by a naturalistic Doric which is considerably "lower" than the songs of both herdsmen, a difference which questions the accuracy of an undifferentiated translation.

---

[1] 'You there the white butting billy, if you tamper with just one of the nannies before I've sacrificed the lamb to the Nymphs, I'll castrate you. He's at it again! If I don't take my knife to you, may I be Melanthius and not Comatas.' Even here, the translation does not do justice to the violence of φλασσῶ which literally means to bruise or pound. This is consistent with the reference to Melanthius (150): a goatherd whose savage castration and dismemberment is recorded in the Odyssey XXII.475.

As in *Idyll* 4, however, Creech's translation attempts to steer a middle course between rusticity and gentility. There is one salient distinction between the two translations: in *Idyll* 4 there is no attempt to anglicise the locale or the speakers, but in *Idyll* 5 Lacon and Comatas are transplanted to not only England but the present as well. To this end, the efforts by Theocritus to place the singers in an exact Italian location are omitted. Whereas the original has indications that Lacon and the owner of the goats are men of Sybaris (1, 72), that the owner of the sheep is a man of Thurioi (72) and there are two clear references to the river Krathis (16, 124), Creech does not attempt to supply the same topography for his singers and omits all such exact indications of place. What he does supply is a flavouring of English fruits and names placed in a scene where the Doric names of Lacon and Comatas are kept. This compromise has two main results. Firstly, such rustic "realism" as is represented in the collection most forcibly by Idyll 5 appears on the one hand unfit to be given a wash of pastel colouring afforded by southern Italian placenames from the indefinite past but, on the other, deserving of some particularised pointillist effects to suggest the physical presence of the English countryside. Secondly, such anglicization suggests that in some way this landscape and these singers do not fit a scheme where pastoral song is sung in the Golden Age or in Arcadia. Creech, considering this, transports them to a more recognisable, but far less ideal, landscape.

---

[1] λέγεις (78) literally means to converse. The dispute over who has "home advantage" is at 45-60. Comatas is apparently beneath the shade of oaks and pines but Lacon remains with his flock.

> ἀλλ' οὐ συμβλήτ' ἐστὶ κυνόσβατος οὐδ' ἀνεμώνα
> πρὸς ῥόδα, τῶν ἄνδηρα παρ' αἱμασιαῖσι πεφύκει.
> οὐδὲ γὰρ οὐδ' ἀκύλοις ὀρομαλίδες· αἳ μὲν ἔχοντι
> λεπτὸν ἀπὸ πρίνοιο λεπύριον, αἳ δὲ μελιχραί.
> [ll. 92-95][1]

becomes an evocation of exclusively English beauty:

> C. Who with the Rose, whose flower the bush adorns,
> Compares the meaner beauties of the Thorns?
>
> L. And who will Sloes with Damzen Plums compare?
> For those are black, and these are lovely fair: [p. 34]

Another extended example of such substitution is in the naming of Lacon's cows:

> οὐκ ἀπὸ τᾶς δρυός, οὗτος ὁ Κώναρος ἅ τε Κιναίθα;
> τουτεὶ βοσκησεῖσθε ποτ' ἀντολάς, ὡς ὁ Φάλαρος.
> [ll. 102-3][2]

---

1. 'CO: But the briar or anemone don't compare with roses whose beds bloom by the wall.
LA: Nor even wild-apples with acorns. The oak provides but a thin rind to the acorn, but the apples are as sweet as honey.'

2. 'Come away from that oak, Conarus, and you Cinaetha. Feed here, towards the east, where Phalarus is.'

becomes:

> Ho, *Sharp-horn, Browning*, leave those hurtful weeds'
> And come and graze this way, where *Colly* feeds: [p. 35].

This "Englishness" is hardly of a robust or rugged nature. Indeed, there is little of the scatological about it. Comatas's concluding speech of triumph implies that the goats are about to couple a few feet away and that Comatas, in order to keep the sacrifice of the lamb to the Nymphs as sacrosanct as possible, was trying to prevent it. Creech's rendering deliberately suppresses this tension between a ritualistic ideal and the potentially anarchic energies of an unheeding nature:

> Frisk, Goats, and leap; in *Sybaris* purling spring
> I'le wash you all, and all the while I'le sing:
> Push not the Kids, you Goat, till I have done
> The Sacrifice, if you dare push but one,
> Thou shalt - how now? well, thou shallt smart for this,
> Or may *Comatas*, He that won the prize,
> Forget his Pipe, and loose his flock, be poor;
> And basely beg his bread at *Laco*'s door. [p. 37]

The last three lines are an addition by Creech. Besides taking the edge off Comatas's exultation by extending the poem and changing the mood, this version introduces a softening equilibrium in line with his strategy of translation elsewhere in the poem. This is not a case where Creech's blindness when confronted with Theocritus is merely dissimilar to our own, but a positive measure calculated to provide an order not found in the Greek.

This compensation is an attempt to allow all the disagreeables of Theocritus's images of country labour to evaporate. The result is more lyrical and less disjunctive. Such a Golden Age is peopled with emotionally vulnerable swains whose complaints of love do not sting the reader because they are robbed of a problematic status. The singers are exemplary not because they are morally superior but because they exist to express beautiful sentiments unqualified by urban reminders of a world of getting and spending. As soon as any dramatic interest centres upon Daphnis or the contestants in *Idylls* 4 and 5, the incipient discord and separateness suggested by this is carefully diluted. This is why Creech is interested in Theocritus as a lyric poet rather than as a dramatic one: in lyrical poetry what is disparate is synthesized but in drama there is necessary segregation, especially as at the conclusion of *Idyll* 5 there is a winner and a loser. In the Golden Age, such a meritocracy is foreign and ultimately destructive.

c) *Idyll* 10

It has recently been argued that Theocritus not only was master of several sophisticated Alexandrian genres but also deliberately put them by when attempting his more bucolic *Idylls*.[1] *Idyll* 3 illustrates the manipulation of a bucolic setting for comic effect.[2] The conventions of the urban κῶμος are applied to an incongruous situation and so help disqualify the goatherd from serious consideration. This collision between city and country works against the bucolic locus. *Idyll* 10 provides an example of the bucolic exposing the vulnerability of urban convention. As some of the material is reminiscent of Hesiodic didacticism and its attendant reliance upon the proverbial folk-culture that endorses the dignity of labour, there is an argument that this disqualifies the poem from the bucolic corpus proper.[3] However, as discovered in the consideration of both the more heroic *Idylls* and the "lower" bucolic ones, the principal concerns of *Idyll* 10 are merely an intensification of the series of contrasts that animate most of Theocritus's pastoral poetry.

---

[1] See Frederick T. Griffiths, *Theocritus At Court* (Leiden, 1979).

[2] For a similar analysis of *Idyll* 10, see Francis Cairns, "Theocritus' Idyll 10", *Hermes*, 98 (1970), 38-44.

[3] Both Dover, pp. 166-73 and Segal (1977), p. 35, are doubtful about its bucolic status.

Idyll 10 explores the discontinuity between sentimental longing and its alternative: the absorption of the self in work. It is wholly dramatic in form, being a dialogue between two reapers: one lovesick and, as a result, unable to work, and an experienced husbandman unsympathetic to the forlorn gestures of his companion. The inconsistencies that are normally disguised in the Golden Age pastoral prove here to be the very stuff of the poetry. Bucaeus cannot reconcile his two roles of private amoreur and fellow-worker. He feels he cannot at one and the same time feel intensely and work profitably. Milon's refusal to accept this is itself a gesture that dramatizes a contradiction between pastoral and the Hesiodic alternative. It is fitting that these poetic antitheses should be exemplified in song. The lover sings a homely song to his mistress and he is answered with a Hesiodic harvest song. Significantly, it is the worker who has the last say:

> ταῦτα χρῆ μόχθεντας ἐν ἁλίῳ ἄνδρας ἀείδειν,
> τὸν δὲ τεόν, Βουκαῖε, πρέπει λιμηρὸν ἔρωτα
> μυθίσδεν τᾷ ματρὶ κατ' εὐνὰν ὀρθρευοίσᾳ. [ll. 56-58][1]

Creech unpredictably accentuates the physical effects of such labour:

> Such songs should Reapers sing that toyl, and sweat,
> That work at Noon, and bear the burning Heat.
> But starveing love should never vex thy head,
> Such tales will bring Thee to a bit of bread,
> Tales for thy Mother, as She lies a bed [p. 59]

However, the work-song is specifically a reaper's creation not a herdsman's. With this in mind the contradiction in the poem could quite easily be avoided. No longer does it appear to dramatize alternatives within pastoral but alters the terms to pastoral and georgic, on the grounds that reapers cannot signify to the extent that shepherds do; the world of work is too much with them.

---

1. 'That's the stuff for men who labour in the sun to sing. And as for your cheapskate love, Bucaeus - tell it to your mummy when she stirs in bed in the morning.'

The proposition that this dichotomy exists in the poem has also been questioned from another quarter. Anna Rist finds in Bucaeus's song a 'sentimentality' that 'is at all points patent and exposed renders it harmless and amusing' (p. 97).[1] Bucaeus is, in view of this, hardly qualified to stand as a spokesman for the more lyrical end of the pastoral spectrum. If this is accepted, then the poem is scarcely pastoral at all and Milon's comment on the love-lament is particularly ironic:

> ἦ καλὰς ἄμμε ποῶν ἐλελάθει βοῦκος ἀοιδάς
> ὡς εὖ τὰν ἰδέαν τᾶς ἁρμονίας ἐμέτρησεν.
> ὤμοι τῶ πώγωνος, ὃν ἀλιθίως ἀνέφυσα. [ll. 38-40][2]

This would introduce a satiric note not only difficult to trace by the internal evidence of the Idylls but also quite foreign to the undidactic techniques of all of the other Idylls.[3] Idyll 10 is not marked off from the rest of the corpus. By designating it a Hesiodic work-song rather than a pastoral is to substitute definitions that have only subsequently become apparent. Indeed, Bucaeus represents himself in much the same mode as the goatherd of Idyll 3 or Polyphemus of Idyll 11. Bucaeus is, as Milon exhorts him (22-23) attempting to transform his unrequited desire through the artless naïveté of song. A similar theme is found in most of the Idylls. Milon is the embodiment of the implicit doubts that Theocritus habitually sows, concerning the integrity of such passion. As such, he is the logical extension of those signs that summon the world of work, such as straying goats or

---

1. Dover, p. 171 ff. argues that the Hesiodic note struck by Milon might be similarly bogus when compared with real Greek work-songs.

2. 'Truly Bucaeus was a maker of fine songs, and we never knew it. How well he shaped his tune - curse the beard I've grown with so little profit', - that is, 'although I'm older, I've not spent my time so well', an obviously complimentary statement.

3. Indeed, the Hesiodic sententiousness introduced by Milon's work-song is the only example of sound advice to be gleaned from the canon.

noon-day sun. In short, Milon signifies the unvarnished bucolic alternative to a more courtly lyric tradition.

In line with his procedure of translation in many of the other poems Creech emphasises the vulnerability of the lyricist. Bucaeus becomes a sentimentalist rather than a misguided juvenile. This is achieved by an accumulation of alterations which gradually provide new emphases. In Theocritus Milon accosts Bucaeus with the matter-of-fact enquiry:

> ἐργατίνα Βουκαῖε, τί νῦν, ὤζυρέ, πεπόνθεις [l. 1][1]

Creech's Milon is more admonitory and forbidding:

> Ah labouring *Reaper*, Wretch! what ails thee now! [p. 58]

For the purposes of the poem Theocritus never portrays Bucaeus as a worker at all, but here he is introduced as one and a reaper at that, not the traditional subject of pastoral. He is also reified as a 'wretch' or object of pity, not as a man able to alter that state of mind. This is also borne out by Bucaeus's initial response:

> Μίλων ὀψαμᾶτα, πέτρας ἀπόκομμ' ἀτεράμνω,
> οὐδαμά τοι συνέβα ποθέσαι τινὰ τῶν ἀπεόντων [ll. 7-8][2]

which softens to:

> Ah Milo! thou canst hold out all the day,
> But I'me grown weak; ah peice of flinty clay! [p. 58]

The lyricist in Theocritus contrasts with the labouring man who longs for nothing that is absent or abstract. In Creech's dialogue much of the early emphasis is upon Bucaeus and his emotions. The point and counterpoint of Theocritus's dramatic structure is ignored. Although Bucaeus may seem unalterably the amorist spurned, it is Milon that lacks an answering steadfastness of alternative quality, deflecting

---

1. 'Bucaeus, hey, what's the matter with you, my friend?'

2. 'Milon, you that can reap for hours, chip of the unyielding rock, didn't it ever occur to you to long for one who's absent?'

the reader's attention back onto Bucaeus. Sometimes Milon can be moralistic too, which is quite foreign to Theocritus's text. When answering Bucaeus's assertion that his love has lasted ten days, Milon emphasises the difference between them:

> ἐκ πίθω ἀντλεῖς δῆλον· ἐγὼ δ' ἔχω οὐδ' ἅλις ὄξος [l. 13][1]

> A wealthy Man, enjoy thy fancy'd store,
> I am, and am contented to be poor. [p. 59]

Not only does Creech, in including the one word 'fancy'd', create a self-righteous Milon, but also a far less colloquial speaker, a change which minimises the dramatic contrast between the two speech-patterns. The translation reads into the poem a consistent finality of judgement on Bucaeus. This is most clearly demonstrated by contrasting the two versions of Bucaeus's rejoinder to Milon's speech above:

> τοιγάρ τὰ πρὸ θυρᾶν μοι ἀπὸ σπόρω ἄσκαλα πάντα.
> [l. 14][2]

> Hence 'tis that I'me o'rerun with lazy ease.
> My field's neglected, and my Ploughs displease. [p. 59]

For Creech, there is no free play of contrasts. Consequently, his translation is closed prematurely to differing perspectives in the interests of an "essential" coherence.

The major problem lies in the portrayal of Bucaeus's song. If the issue of his wrong-headedness is so clear-cut, then it would seem unnecessary to allow him to utter such engaging endearments as:

> Βομβύκα χαρίεσσ , οἱ μὲν πόδες ἀστράγαλοί τευς,
> ἁ φωνὰ δὲ τρύχνος· τὸν μὰν τρόπον οὐκ ἔχω εἰπεῖν.
> [ll. 36-37][3]

---

1. 'May be then, you've the store to draw on. My drink's sour, and weak at that.'

2. 'That's why the land before my door is all uncultivated since the sowing.' However, as Dover points out (p. 168) this might not be a protracted negligence.

3. 'Charming Bombyca, whose feet are like knuckle-bones [Greek dice, but also referring to the capitals of Ionic columns], and whose voice the belladonna, and whose ways - they are too much for me to describe.'

The absurdity of the clumsy similes aids the portrayal of an innocence that can offer them seriously. Here would be an opportunity for pathetic sentiment, usually rendered elsewhere by Creech in the "simple" style reserved for the unproblematic rustic. Instead Creech keeps the reader very much at a distance:

> Bombyce charming; oh wouldst Thou be kind!
> How sweet thy voice! but who can tell thy Mind? [p. 59]

This version is more reminiscent of the coy Restoration love-lyric which addresses urban nymphs from knowing swains than the unassimilable and discontinuous details of the Idylls. By disallowing any sympathy for Bucaeus, Creech is not only simplifying the poem but even clearly transforming its kind from a Theocritean pastoral to a dramatic Hesiodic parody.

William Bowles's version in Dryden's miscellany (1685) also attempts to soften the harsh outlines of both Bucaeus's and Milon's perspectives. In order to accomplish this, Milon becomes less of a worker and more of an audience until the time comes for his own performance. Bucaeus's praise of Milon's reaping until late and his descriptive metaphor of 'chip of the unyielding rock' (7) establishes in the original a precise distinction between the two countrymen. The amorist praises the worker for his unflinching endurance, a steadfastness that has been eroded in his case by love. Bowles's Bucaeus is not offered as capable of anything other than deep sentiment:

> Milo, thou piece of Flint, thou all of Stone,
> Dids't never yet an absent Friend bemoan? [p. 368]

Some of these charges are meant to stick. The metaphor describing Milon's rock-like qualities is adapted to a more "pathetic" reading of the poem and becomes an index of emotional aridity not unyielding duty. Even though Bucaeus's opinion of Milon is rapidly discredited, its function here is not. The reader glimpses a less impeccable Milon and supposes that Bucaeus's weakness at work is due to the capacity to feel more deeply. Bowles also has Bucaeus float the suggestion that Milon has not up until the present felt the absence of someone. Milon in the original context is supposed never to have suffered such a loss. Within the compass of just 58 lines, these modifications are major and contribute to an altered relationship between the two men. In the original poem, Theocritus has Milon and Bucaeus provide contrapuntal rhythms consistently throughout the poem. Dover points out that the colloquial vigour of the poem stems directly from Milon, full of clichés and proverbs, leaving the more lyrical but still naive sentiments to Bucaeus (p. 167). Far from sympathising with Bucaeus, Milon is insensitively jocular, a reaction sustained by the concluding emphasis of the poem. Bowles's Milon is, initially, a convenient sounding-board for Bucaeus until his stern response:

> Who but such Fools as thou, the absent Mind?
> Sure what concerns you more, you here may find. [p. 368]

In the Theocritus, Milon does not sound such a moralistic note:

> οὐδαμά. τίς δὲ πόθος τῶν ἔκτοθεν ἐργάτᾳ ἀνδρί[1]
> [l. 9]

From that point, the poem contains more of the elements of a moral fable. Absent is the freer interplay of alternatives which is sustained in the original until the last three lines. Bowles marks a dramatic change in the balance of the poem at Milon's second speech that irrevocably casts Bucaeus in the role of misguided juvenile and Milon as the voice of righteous experience.

In order to sustain the exemplary role in which Bowles casts him, Milon has to be given speeches susceptible of judicious heightening rather than colloquial colouring. Therefore, Milon's difference from

---

1. 'Never. What business has a working man with desiring anything outside his work?'

Bucaeus is not one of temperament but moral awareness. This interpretation needs bolstering by various additions to the original text. Bucaeus when confessing to his distraction through love not only points to the effects of the passion but even curses its very object:

> See! all neglected lyes before my Door,
> While I run mad for a confounded Whore. [p. 368]

In his turn, Milo had sermonised on the inadvisability of such preoccupations:

> The Gods preserve me from that restless Care,
> Oh Reapers all, the gilded Bait beware! [p. 368]
>
> The God's for some old Sins have sent this Evil,
> And shame long due has reach'd thee from the Devil. [p. 369]

This is a pointed but clumsily contrived modernization. Firstly, *Idyll* 10 is persistently secular. Its only household gods are the Muses in Bucaeus's case or Demeter in Milon's and, as they are only mentioned in the invocation to the two formal songs, it is probable that their importance is only nominal. The real tutelary spirits of the two figures are Eros and the sanctity of Labour not the Hebraic God that Bowles suggests. In adopting such a pre-determined and polemical course for the poem, Milon's praise for Bucaeus's singing seems either grotesquely sarcastic or completely out of place. As in Creech's version, the desire to harmonize the contrasting songs and singers in one scheme is effectively to excise the visceral and "unpoetic" details that form Milon's songs and proverbs - details which are truly indecorous. Creech and Bowles, although different in the degree of their moralism, both rank the two songs in the light of Milon's last words. Instead of being companions Milon and Bucaeus assume the roles of teacher and pupil. This is especially true of Bowles's version which, faced with the admiration Milon displays for the artfulness of Bucaeus's song, challenges him as preface to his own song. The original merely has

Milon remark:

θᾶσαι δὴ καὶ ταῦτα τὰ τῶ θείω Λιτυέρσα. [l. 41][1]

Theocritus refuses to relate the two songs until the closing lines, but Bowles attempts to present the work-song as exemplary much earlier:

> How just the Rhymes' how equally they meet,
> The Numbers how harmonious, and how sweet!
> Yet mark, and this diviner Song attend,
> 'Twas by immortal *Lyrierses* penn'd. [pp. 370-71]

Milon's song has to be 'diviner' according to the logic of Bowles's version, whereas in diction and rhythm it is less poetically elevated in the Greek. The distance he is compelled to travel from Theocritus in pre-empting the reader's perspective on Bucaeus is concisely illustrated in the translation of the closing speech:

> Such songs at once delight us, and improve;
> But thy sad Ditty, and thy tale of Love
> Keep for thy Mother, *Battus*, I advise,
> When stretch'd and yawning in her bed she lyes. [p. 372]

The Theocritean conclusion emphasises two themes that are either omitted or even denied in Bowles's version. Firstly, it is apparent throughout *Idyll* 10 that Milon is an alternative to Bucaeus but not superior. He points out by his song that Bucaeus's state for hard work *which he ought to be doing* is unsuitable. Bucaeus is a reaper not doing his job; *therefore* such lyrics as he sings are superfluous. If Theocritus was interested in praising Milon's work at the expense of Bucaeus's song-writing in general, this contrast would be better served if the latter were an idle, but tuneful, bystander not a fellow-worker guilty at his own inefficiency. Secondly, Milon re-introduces the disturbing anxiety first suggested at lines 44 to 45 that the reapers have wages to earn.[2] If Bucaeus's love-lorn condition continues, he will starve. Bowles has

---

1. 'Come, consider too these lines from the hero Lityerses.'

2. They also have the pride of their work at stake, so Bucaeus's distraction results in a loss of face as well.

UNIV DUNELM

Milon merely praising his own kind of song as a literary critic rather than a fellow-labourer.

Raymond Williams has observed that the background of sowing and harvesting in Idyll 10 is only an intensification of the context of all the Idylls: a 'working context' that is 'recognizable and at times insistent'.[1] By composing a moral fable, Bowles avoids the awkward conclusion that Theocritus forces the reader to accept by setting the Idyll amidst 'recognizably' strenuous work which frames and tacitly comments on the lyricism of Bucaeus: that, when confronted by harsh reality , the Golden Age pastoral of simple love and delicate sensibilities is exposed because it appears obviously cosmetic. No matter how artfully this "realism" of work descriptions is presented, its contrast with the abstract and idealised landscapes of song is a contradiction present in the Idylls as a whole and also in each poem.

In considering these translations of Theocritus, it is tempting to conclude that Creech and others misread their author and that therefore they wrote "incorrect" versions. However, several of the translations must be regarded as conscious recastings of the Greek rather than examples of scholarly or poetic inadequacy. The Idylls that are represented in Creech's translations are approximate versions of the original texts. However, they do show an influence from Rapin's veneration for Virgil. Cos is transfigured by Theocritus, it is true, but its connotations do not appear to be those of Arcadia. Arcadian is not, by and large, separated from the orthodox mode of literary dialect; the Doric does stamp Cos as nobly savage, at times the dwelling-place of yokels but, just as frequently, of values that have been regrettably lost. As it is an artificial speech in the Idylls,

---

[1] The Country And The City (Harmondsworth, 1973), p. 14.

Theocritus could suggest provinciality whilst retaining a capacity for an occasional grand gesture. As Creech's Doric is the first attempt at providing an English equivalent and lasted unrivalled for over eighty years as a standard text, it is central to any understanding of the Augustan pastoral canon.

So much separates Francis Fawkes from Creech that when, in 1767, he attempted only the second full-length translation of Theocritus, he reported that his predecessor's attempt satisfied him only in his youth and when he was 'better pleased with the rough music of the last age, than the refined harmony' of his own (p. ix). Fawkes found Creech's 'simplicity' too rustic to move the reader, and he selected three examples where Creech had misguidedly anglicised Theocritus. The first is in Idyll 1 when the noble pastoral cup becomes a 'fine two handled pot' (p. x). In Idyll 5, Crocylus is 'Dick' and in Idyll 14 Argivus, Apis and Cleunicus are recognisable English labourers: 'Tom', 'Will' and 'Dick'. This lack of 'refined harmony' is felt to be Creech's fault not Theocritus's.

The growing appreciation of landscape descriptions in a lyrical form that characterize the mid-century included Theocritus as one of its prime examples. Creech's attempt to retain some of the rustic power of the Greek dialect is not suitable for such readings. There are hints of this in the early years of the century. Lady Mary Wortley Montagu had discovered in Italy that, to her surprise, the Idylls directly portrayed the enviable simplicity of country folk and especially their surroundings.[1] There was no need to resort to myths such as the Golden Age as Sicily was golden enough. Theocritus becomes the most influential pastoral instance of such a

---

1. See p.36.

rejection. The roots of this stem from the vogue for a "rough", non-standard sweetness, the kind of smoothness suggested by a Yorkshire rustic drawl noticed by Dryden.[1] Fawkes extends this distinction between Theocritean Doric and subsequent English versions by pointing out that, on purely philological grounds, the Greek Doric was more flexible:

> It is to be observed that Theocritus generally wrote in the modern Doric, sometimes indeed he used the Ionic; the Doric dialect was of two sorts, the old and the new; the old sounded harsh and rough, but the new was much softer and smoother; this, as Mr. Pope justly observes, in the time of Theocritus had its beauty and propriety, was used in part of Greece, and frequent in the mouths of the greatest persons. [pp.xxxi-xxxii]

This distinction is crucial; by 1767, it was possible, perhaps even orthodox to read Theocritus as a stylist in the image of Virgil.

This "Preromantic" vogue for a refined Theocritus was made the more possible by Creech's frequent attempts at limiting the variety of stylistic "voices" that the Doric fostered. He especially produced two quite distinct speech registers: the naturalistic for informal conversation and the more "poetic" for the songs, which correspond to Fawkes's 'old' and 'new' dialects. By mid-century, the 'older' and rougher dimension is barely traceable. In reviewing Fawkes's translation, The Critical Review found Theocritus not only writing in an 'exquisitely sweet and harmonious' style but reflecting in it a beauty and order that had actually existed: 'He lived in the most fertile country in the world, and under the most serene sky. The sweetness of the climate naturally furnished him descriptions from real life.'[2] This passionate realism can only be noticeable if free of human figures.

---

[1] See pp.140-42.

[2] Critical Review, 24 (March 7, 1767), p. 17.

The reapers, goatherds and shepherds of the Coan landscape all too obviously labour as well as create poems, but, as such, they are less ideal or harmonious. Fontenelle had thinned out the acceptable bucolic poetry by emphasising that 'the Pastoral life is the most idle of all others.' Consequently, 'no Ploughmen, Reapers, Vine dressers or Huntsmen can by any means be so properly introduc'd in Eclogues, as Shepherds' (p. 283). Although Warton considered the Golden Age an 'empty notion', that did not prevent him painting Theocritus's Sicily in gold: 'The poet described what he saw and felt: and had no need to have recourse to those artificial assemblages of pleasing objects, which are not to be found in nature'.[1] These 'pleasing objects' must, it would seem, include shepherds as "low" as Battus or Comatas.

Some of this desire to efface the human figure from the landscape can be traced to Creech's Idylls. Shepherds or goatherds frequently become 'swains' or 'clowns'. For example, Battus addresses his absent master as a 'rude, artless swain' and a 'clown' (p. 26). Milon hails Bucaeus as 'labouring Reaper, Wretch!' (p. 58) when just simple 'Bucaeus' sufficed in Idyll 10. Even more strident is this intrusion into some of the Hesiodic passages:

> σῖτον ἀλοιῶντας φεύγειν τὸ μεσαμβρινὸν ὕπνον·
> ἐϰ ϰαλάμας ἄχυρον τελέθει τημόσδε μάλιστα.
> [11.48-49][2]

> Ye Clowns that winnow never sleep at noon
> For then the Chaff is loose, and quickly gone. [p. 60]

Battus's relationship to Aegon and Milon's to his fellow-reapers is formalised by such "mock-heroic" invocations which reflect Creech's recognition of convention and his expected readership.

---

1. An Essay on the Genius and Writings of Pope (London, 1756, 1782), 2 vols, 1: 3-4. See also Idylliums, pp. 27-28.

2. 'When you thresh the corn, shun sleep at midday, for it is then that the ear parts easiest from the stalk.'

Pre-romantic emotional realism reacts against this miniaturizing but is still recognizably an offshoot of it. The countryman blends into the landscape because his work and its effects on Nature do not isolate and differentiate him. Fontenelle (as translated by Motteux) was puzzled by Theocritus's decision to represent his rustic figures as individuals rather than types of rural low-life:

> But I don't know how Theocritus having sometimes rais'd his shepherds in so pleasing a manner above their native Genius, could let them so very often fall to it again : I wonder he did not perceive 'twas fit that a certain gross Clownishness, which is always very unbecoming, should be omitted. [p.278]

This glaring gaucherie of indecorous and uneven portrayal is censored because it does not conform to a required level of abstraction. Seen through the wrong end of a telescope any figure loses individuality and can fulfil any role the observer expects. This critical position finds difficulty in providing the emotional flexibility and variety of perspective needed in a reading of Idyll 10. In view of the concluding dominance of Milon's singing and its prevailing ethos, Fontenelle distrusts its lack of "beauty": 'I must needs own that I do not so well like this conclusion. For I would not be drawn from a pleasing and soft Idea to another that is low and without Charms' (p. 283). This desire for a seamless succession of pleasurable images needs to gloss over the example of Theocritus:

> If those who are resolved to find no faults in the Ancients, tell us that Theocritus had a mind to draw Nature just such as it is, I hope that, according to those principles, we shall have some Idyllia of Porters or Watermen discoursing together of their particular Concerns: Which will be every whit as good as some Idyllia of Shepherds speaking of nothing but their Goats or their Cows. [pp. 284-85]

Theocritus's rustics become as "real" in the comparison, and consequently as "poetic" as London porters.

The contradiction between Creech's determination to ground the

Idylls in the Golden Age and the unalterable details of the Doric original where such idealism is at best threadbare is more apparent in theory than in practice. Fontenelle may distrust such discontinuities of mood and style but Creech's translation exploits them, without ever denying that Lacon or Battus are nobly simple creatures. That he saw such idealism as inherent in the Doric is evident from his foreword: "To His Honoured Friend *Arthur Charlet* AM, Fellow of *Trinity College* in Oxon." He claims there that reading the *Idylls* reminds him of occasions when 'publick Cares' have allowed them to retreat and they have

> retir'd to a Grove, where Quiet spreads all around, and a springing verdure, and Checquer'd variety to raise the Thoughts and recreate the Fancy; whilst soft breezes murmur'd thro the Trees, which, like our Affections, serv'd only to intermix, but never to shatter or disturb.

Theocritus and Virgil by comparison are 'disturbers of mankind' in that they offer no hope for emulation by setting their pastorals in the Golden Age. To this end, Theocritean pastoral is read in the light of other, less disjunctive works such as the various Odes to Solitude or Horace's *Epode* 2. The contradictions have disappeared. What remains is a therapy for the public man: '... it smooths all the natural Asperities of Humor and Passion, and spreads an obligeing tenderness thro the whole Man' (p. 3). Even the Billingsgate disputes of *Idylls* 4 and 5 must be seen as essentially resolvable.

This results in a lyrical Doric and a considerably diminished dramatic element in the *Idylls* as a whole. When Allan Ramsay adopted the Theocritean manner in the 1720s, it is significant that he also resurrected the dramatic possibilities of the Doric.[1] In Ramsay's

---

1. See the variety of characteristic styles in *The Gentle Shepherd*, especially as between the assumed dialect of Sir William Worthy and Symon's broader mode in Act III, scene 4, *Works*, 2: 248-52.

case, however, this did not mean a sacrifice of tenderness or unity. Ramsay defends the Scots Doric on two counts: firstly, it is, despite its appearance on the page, a fluent medium and secondly, it helps provide a direct impression of Midlothian life. The nationalistic connotations of the style are analogous to the "lived" speech of Coan Doric amidst Alexandrian imperialism. Ramsay is quite clear about such a rejection of received standards of good style. In the "Preface" to his 1721 volume of poetry, he is out to anticipate the objections of the learned:

> Such Pedants as confine Learning to the critical Understanding of the dead Languages, while they are ignorant of the Beauties of their Mother Tongue, do not view me with a friendly Eye: But I'm even with them, when I tell them to their Faces, without Blushing, that I understand Horace but faintly in the Original, and yet can feast on his beautiful Thoughts dress'd in British; ... [1: xviii]

This unorthodoxy, however, is to make the Doric more not less 'liquid and sonorous, and much fuller than the English.' (p. xix). Indeed, Ramsay's pastoral muse is frequently "pathetick" and elegiac. This is a characteristic noticed by the anonymous contributor of "On Mr. Ramsay's Poetical Works" that also prefaces the 1721 volume. Ramsay's 'pathetick Rhyme' (90, 1: xxiv) is most noticeable, especially in his "Richy and Sandy, A Pastoral on the Death of Joseph Addison, Esq.". Far from rescuing the dissonances and ironies of the elegies of Idyll 1 or 6, this new Doric is a precursor of the Preromantic pastoral:

> So smoothly flow thy nat'ral rural Strains,
> So sweetly too, you've made the mournful Swains
> His Death lament, what mortal can forbear
> Shedding like us upon his Tomb a Tear. [ll. 96-99, 1: xxv)

This is a Golden Age that is not constructed out of the classical literary traditions but from the recent Scottish past. In The Gentle Shepherd, the tender scenes of estrangement and reconciliation are described in the dedication "To the Countess of Eglintoun, with the following

Pastoral" as clothed in an 'ancient Garb' (135) but not of Attic cut – rather

> The Garb our Muses wore in former Years;
> As in a Glass reflected, here behold
> How smiling Goodness look'd in Days of Old [ll. 136–38, 2: 211]

Even Ramsay's attempt at embodying some of the provincial cadences analogous to Sicilian resulted in an endorsement, ultimately, of an idealism also found in Rapin's theory and created in Creech's translation.[1]

This simplified reading of Theocritus survives. A.J. Boyle, in a recent translation of the Eclogues, performs the common task of damning the Greek precedent to praise its Virgilian fruition:

> The differences between Theocritean and Virgilian pastoral are, however, considerable. The bucolic idylls have nothing approaching the moral passion of the Eclogues. There is no antithesis between city and country, between urban and rural values; there is no moral outrage at a degenerate present, no contrast between a corrupt contemporary society and a prelapsarian golden age ... Theocritus' poetry is more descriptive than analytical, presentational rather than exploratory.[2]

That this position has been so tenaciously upheld and so pervasively repeated is, to a great extent, the result not only of Theocritus's earliest critical reception but that of Virgil's pastorals too. A full explanation of the simplification of the pastoral genre must include the various readings of the Eclogues at this time and the critical principles involved.

---

[1] Compare the claims made by Ramsay in his "Preface to The Ever Green" (1724): 'Their Poetry is the Product of their own Country, not pilfered and spoiled in the Transportation from abroad: Their Images are native, and their Landskips domestick; copied from those Fields and Meadows we every Day behold' (4: 236).

[2] The Eclogues of Virgil, translated by A.J. Boyle (Melbourne, 1976), p. 7.

CHAPTER 2

Dryden's Translation of Virgil's *Eclogues*

Dryden's Works of Virgil ... Translated into English Verse was published by Jacob Tonson in 1697. Bound in a handsome folio, adorned with one hundred 'sculptures' [engravings], the mere appearance of the volume is significant. The author himself is in no doubt of what he was attempting besides paying homage to Virgil. In the "Postscript to the Reader", it is hoped that, if 'judged in after-ages', the work will 'be no dishonour to my native country, whose language and poetry would be more esteemed abroad, if they were better understood.' This patriotic responsibility to the language is taken to lie 'in the choice of words, and harmony of numbers, which were wanting, especially the last, in all our poets, even in those who, being endued with genius, yet have not cultivated their mother-tongue with sufficient care; or, relying on the beauty of their thoughts, have judged the ornament of words, and sweetness of sound, unnecessary.'[1] This interest in the form and cast of the language illustrates a concomitant desire, by example, to help English measure up to the stylistic and cultural standards of antiquity. This portentous edition was revised for a second printing in 1698 and then it appeared in three volumes octavo in 1709. Numerous further editions followed, which testify to at least a contemporary acclaim for his success.[2]

The full significance of just what Dryden was attempting in 1697 and to what cultural norms he referred is adequately acknowledged only by taking in a series of his statements on such topics. Dryden's Virgilian pastorals are so very much an expression of particular perspectives on Virgil and translation in general that it is inevitable that such non-pastoral concepts should affect the mainstream of the Augustan pastoral tradition.

---

[1] Essays, 2: 241.

[2] The Works had reached its fifth edition by 1721.

It has been suggested that Dryden in the eighties and nineties turned increasingly to translation in order to both revalue the classical past and also, at one remove, create an English heroic poem.[1] Translation, however, was no gesture of failure. For Dryden, as for many of his contemporaries, translation was a critical activity, where the demonstration of a certain modification of the original was the main reason for undertaking the exercise in the first place. A lifeless and pedantic adherence to Virgil's very words, whilst more accurate locally, did not satisfy in more crucial areas, such as rendering the overall structure of the work and charting accurately its poetic qualities. Dryden's translation was, therefore, a self-conscious attempt not only to re-interpret Virgil but also to provide a model for the transmission of Augustan Roman values. As such, the dividing-line between translation and open imitation is faint indeed.[2]

---

1. See Edward Pechter, Dryden's Classical Theory of Literature (Cambridge, 1975), pp. 157-59; H.T. Swedenberg, Jr., "Dryden's Obsessive Concern with the Heroic", Essays in English Literature of the Classical Period Presented to Dougald MacMillan, edited by Daniel W. Patterson and Albrecht B. Strauss, Studies in Philology, extra series, 4 (1967), 12-26; W.P. Ker, Form and Style in Poetry (London, 1928), pp. 103-4; Reuben Brower, "Dryden's Epic Manner and Virgil", PMLA, 55 (1940), 119-38; and Mary Thale, "Dryden's Unwritten Epic", Papers on Language and Literature, 5 (1969), 423-33.

2. The tradition of free translation was no recent development. Cicero's description of his translations from Aeschinas and Demosthenes had stressed the necessity for interpretation, De optimo genere oratorum, translated by H.M. Hubbell, Loeb Classical Library (London, 1959), pp. 364-65, and Horace's rule: 'nec verbo verbum curabis reddere fidus interpres ...' was enthusiastically greeted throughout the century, Ars Poetica, translated by H. Rushton Fairclough (London, 1961), Loeb Classical Library, pp. 460-61. For an account of such influence, see T.R. Steiner, English Translation Theory, 1650-1800 (Amsterdam, 1975), Approaches to Translation Studies No. 2, pp. 7-8, 27-28, 147 nn. 2-5.

Dryden first writes on the art of translation in his "Preface to Ovid's Epistles, Translated by Several Hands" (1680),[1] where he defines three separate modes of translation: a metaphrastic literalism best exemplified by Ben Jonson's version of Horace's Ars Poetica, a 'paraphrase, or translation with latitude' where the words are not to be so strictly followed as the sense of the original 'and that too is admitted to be amplified', and finally imitation itself', where the translator (if now he has not lost that name) assumes the liberty not only to vary from the words and sense, but to forsake them both as he sees occasion:' (1: 237). Dryden rejects both the extremes of the first and third varieties for the paraphrase, and, in addressing himself to this, he in effect declares an interest in problems of style rather than of the parallels that may be drawn from thematic similarities, which is more the province of the imitation.[2] Inexorably linked to this call for a limited freedom from the text translated, is his awareness that he is working in a debased medium, where English, tainted with 'the barbarity, or the narrowness of modern tongues' cannot hope to rival Latin '(a most severe and compendious language)' (1: 238). Latin stretches the capacities of English to the utmost and, by analogy presents a stylistic goal. Although Ovid's particular turn of thought and phrase are to be principally honoured, the implication is that the translation is a work not, as in the imitation, of applying the original text's premisses to modern life, but a stylistic examination of the verbal medium itself.

---

1. Essays, 1: 230-243.

2. The tradition of the imitation is discussed at pp. 429-31. On the specific differences between translation and imitation, see Howard D. Weinbrot, The Formal Strain : Studies in Augustan Imitation and Satire (Chicago, 1969), pp. 15-17, 20-21, 32-33. Earlier authorities for free translations, especially Denham and Cowley, are reprinted in Steiner, pp. 63-67. Chapman is quoted pp. 8-12.

This mode of translation was favoured consistently by Dryden,[1] and was strongly endorsed by the popular Essay on Translated Verse (1684) by the Earl of Roscommon. The Essay is cited several times in Dryden's later prefaces, so obviously it was read with approval.[2] What is uppermost in Roscommon's list of priorities is the need to avoid obscenities or provincialisms and so to provide an English version fit to rival the grace of the original. There is a definite patriotic desire to appropriate the translated texts by anglicizing them. This lies behind his opening praise for the Earl of Mulgrave:

> For who have long'd, or who have labour'd more
> To search the Treasures of the Roman store,
> Or dig in Grecian Mines for purer Oar?
> The noblest Fruits, Transplanted, in our Isle
> With early Hope and fragrant Blossoms smile [ll. 11-15][3]

This literary mercantilism has its trading rivals as well, namely the French whose 'courtly, florid' diction 'Of softer sound' (49-50) cannot hope to rival 'The comprehensive English Energy' (52). This vivid fire, however, must not overstep the mark for

> Immodest words admit of no defence,
> For want of Decency is want of Sense.
> What mod'rate Fop would rake the Park or Stews,
> Who among Troops of faultless Nymphs may chuse? [ll. 113-16]

---

1. Dryden took Virgil for a stylistic example very early in his career. In his "Preface" to Annus Mirabilis (1667), he appreciates his 'elocution': '... the Art of clothing and adorning[a] thought... in apt, significant and sounding words' (1: 15). Similarly, Dryden admires Virgil's diction above Homer's in his A Parallel of Poetry and Painting (1695), even if he grants Homer superiority in invention or design (2: 148). However, this desire to emulate Virgil led Dryden to the realization that it would always be impossible to match his model, hence the injunction in the "Dedication" to the Aeneis to 'lay by Virgil ... when you take up my Version' as he felt his powers were insufficient to 'copy his Harmonious Numbers ... [or] imitate his Noble Flights' (2: 233). It could be, on the other hand, that Dryden wanted the freedom to replace Virgil a little as there is no parallel Latin text to his translation. Certainly, Dryden could emphasise the more liberal tendency of this mean between literalism and imitation; see his demand for 'elbow-room to express [Ovid's] elegancies' (2: 9).

2. See 1: 237, 239, 251-52, 257-58, 263.

3. Critical Essays of the Seventeenth Century, edited by J.E.Spingarn, 3 vols (Oxford, 1908), 2: 297-309 (p. 297).

The 'faultless Nymphs' float free of any demeaning particularity, especially the familiarity of the '*Park* or *Stews*'. As such, there should be no fear of gradual obsolescence, at least of the signified material. The language may decay but, as there is every effort to allow the material to refer to literary conventions such as pure nymphs or artless swains rather than particular historical conditions, there is a constant movement in Roscommon's dictates for translation towards the abstract and enduring. In translating a text, it seems advisable to remove it from its historical context:

> *Truth* still is *One*; *Truth* is Divinely *bright*;
> No cloudy *Doubts* obscure her *Native light*: ...
> He only proves he *Understands* a Text,
> Whose *Exposition* leaves it *unperplex'd*. [ll. 193-94, 199-200]

'*Truth*' being so perspicacious, any local interference is indeed perplexing.

As Roscommon's *Essay* was so influential, it does help to place two schools of translation in perspective. The first errs on the side of a pedantic accuracy, the second on the side of a modernizing freedom. Dryden consistently from 1680 to 1700 allies himself with a mean between the two and especially from 1684 onwards with a corresponding concern for enriching the capacities of English style by contact with famous Ancient models. On the other hand, he also clearly marked off his translations from those liberal theories that shaded off into imitation, a tradition that took in Chapman, Cowley and Denham. Later in his "Preface to *Ovid's Epistles*", he, even if conditionally, questions the propriety of attempting such an autonomous version of Virgil or Ovid who are 'regular intelligible authors'. Cowley was correct in imitating Pindar as 'So wild and ungovernable a poet cannot be translated literally;'. Cowley could improve on Pindar by regularizing the original, yet there seemed little hope of that in the case of Virgil, an act which would have seemed much too presumptuous: 'To state it fairly, imitation of an author is the most advantageous way for a translator to show himself, but the greatest wrong which can be done to the memory and reputation of the dead' (1: 240). Dryden, therefore, stands resolutely against any tactic that would affect the transmission of classical values at the expense of Modern presumption.

What is distinctive about Dryden's theory of translation is his attention to purely formal difficulties. Whilst the sense of the original is 'sacred and inviolable', the struggle to find a verbal equivalent necessitates a certain liberty so that the 'native lustre' does not dim in translation (1 : 242). This liberty is, in effect, an exercise of the judgement, a pitting of the expressive capacities of the translator's medium against the compendious Latin. This contest is even more of a mismatch in the case of Virgil. In the "Preface to *Sylvae*" (1685), Dryden fears that the 'inimitable grace' of Virgil's diction 'is never to be copied, and since it cannot, he will appear but lame in the best translation'. The formal properties of his verse, the 'turns', 'breakings', 'propriety', 'numbers' and 'gravity', all highlight 'the poverty of our language and the hastiness of [his] performance' (1: 258). Completely absent is that sense of Anglo-Saxon hubris that motivated Roscommon. Indeed, Dryden's view is pessimistic in the extreme. In both his "Dedication of Examen Poeticum" (1693) and *A Discourse concerning the Original and Progress of Satire* (1693), it is clear that he felt posterity might be cheated of the full force of his translations because the language was in a state of decay.[1] The remedy lay in the institution of an Academy to

---

[1] Dryden was not alone in sensing this. From the Restoration, an English Academy had often been proposed to regularize the language. See Dryden's desire for an Academy 'Indow'd with large Privileges by the present King' as early as 1664 (1: 5) and his involvement with a Royal Society committee for that purpose; B.S. Monroe,

(Continued on p.116)

oversee linguistic standards:

> For after all, our language is both copious, significant, and majestical, and might be reduced into a more harmonious sound. But for want of public encouragement, in this Iron Age, we are so far from making any progress in the improvement of our tongue, that in a few years we shall speak and write as barbarously as our neighbours.[2: 12]

Even when confronted with the prospect of using some of that unharmonious energy to render the sternness of Juvenal, the translator is confronted with the inadequacy of the English language, possessing 'no English prosodia, not so much as a tolerable dictionary, or a grammar; so that our language is in a manner barbarous; and what government will encourage any one, or more, who are capable of refining it, I know not.' Hence the outlook is for 'a declination of the language' (2: 110).

It might be argued that this is a dedicator's self-effacement, but the incidence of such humility with the recognition on Dryden's part of the special difficulties associated with translating Virgil in particular make it much more probable that this gesture signalled an important motive for undertaking such a large task. Virgil, it was hoped, might influence English letters for the better, not by providing epic actions or themes, but by adding that harmony and order of elocution that might temper native energy and fire. Although the Epic was the centrepiece of Dryden's memorial to Virgil, it is the characteristically Virgilian styles enjoyable in Eclogue, Georgic as well as Epic that most claim

---

(1 - Continued)
"An English Academy", Modern Philology, 8 (1910), 107-16; Oliver F. Emerson, both "John Dryden and a British Academy", Proceedings of the British Academy, 10 (1921), 45-58, and "Dryden and the English Academy", Modern Language Review, 20 (1925), 189-90; and George McFadden, "Dryden and the Numbers of his Native Tongue", Essays and Studies in Language and Literature (Pittsburgh, 1964), 87-109. Swift was to echo this call in 1712, in "A Proposal for Correcting, Improving and Ascertaining the English Tongue. In a Letter to Robert, Earl of Oxford", in A Proposal for Correcting the ENGLISH TONGUE, Polite Conversation etc., edited by Herbert Davis and Louis Landa, 4: 1-21 (8-9 especially) (Oxford, 1957) of Prose Writings (Oxford, 1939-68) 13 vols.

his attention.[1] It is obvious that the subjects in the *Aeneid* are by no means more exemplary than the improved manner of rendering them. In dedicating his translation to the Earl of Mulgrave, Dryden recognises the strength of the opening couplet of his "Essay Upon Poetry" (1682): 'Of Things in which Mankind does most excell, / Nature's chief Master-piece is writing well; ...' (1-2).[2] With a little Platonism added, Dryden endorses this with respect to the heroic poem which, in the "Dedication of the *Aeneis*", is hailed as the 'greatest work which the soul of man is capable to perform ...' (2: 154). Dryden's translation-work is a stylistic and formal exercise, a metatext in relation to its original, in that the translated text was read *through* a knowledge of the source text. Since Dryden was, to a large degree, freed from the exigencies of having to publicize either the narrative or theme, greater emphasis was placed on the task of transferring the spirit of the author rather than his every word. This involved specifically coining a certain style of English Virgilian. He confesses as much in the "Dedication of the *Aeneis*": 'I have endeavoured to make Virgil speak such English as he would himself have spoken, if he had been born in England, and in this present age' (2: 228). It is precisely the attraction of this task that lies behind the decision not only to attempt an Epic translation but specifically to experience the rigours of finding an English equivalent for the supreme craftsmanship of Virgil.

Dryden's *Virgil* was therefore significant in several associated ways. Primarily, Dryden was anxious that Virgil's poetry would be the kind not to get lost in translation. This determination was more in the direction of attempting to reproduce the judgement and propriety of the dictio Virgiliana, than in rendering the source exactly. In accepting this duty, Dryden was also bolstering the unstable linguistic capacities of the language and helping it sustain flights of the very highest craftsmanship. The English Virgilian would be no transparent "plain" style, however, for from the very earliest writings of his career, Dryden had venerated a Virgil who was a master of Art rather than Nature. In his "Preface to Annus Mirabilis : An Account of the ensuing Poem" (1667), the claim that the poem is Virgilian lies not in its powers of narrative, but its elocution, a freedom 'to confess as well the labour as the force of his imagination' (1: 16). In providing his age with a Virgil displaying English manners and speech, Dryden was also attempting something else: to absent himself from the barbarism so prevalent in most Modern poetic practice by recourse to a higher authority, higher because not limited by the accidents of history that assail the translator. In his ode "To Sir Godfrey Kneller" (1694), both poet and painter are depicted captive to an Iron Zeitgeist which fails to nourish native talent, and significantly makes the creation of an epic poem impossible:

---

[1] In the "Dedication", Dryden rejects 'our old Teuton monosyllables' as suitable ornamentation for poetry. However, the remedy which is importing a classical elegance from the source text is a licence to be used 'very sparingly; for if too many foreign words are poured in upon us, it looks as if they were designed not to assist the natives, but to conquer them' (2: 234-35). Compare Horace, *Ars Poetica*, 46-62.

[2] Spingarn, 2: 286.

> That yet thou hast not reach'd their high Degree
> Seems only wanting to this Age, not thee:
> Thy Genius bounded by the Times like mine,
> Drudges on petty Draughts, nor dare design
> A more Exalted Work, and more Divine.
> For what a Song, or senceless Opera
> Is to the Living Labour of a Play;
> Or, what a Play to Virgil's Work wou'd be,
> Such is a single Piece to History. [ll. 145- 53][1]

---

1. Poems, 2: 858-63 (862). In the same poem, Dryden uses the Fine Art parallel to distinguish between Homer and Virgil. Homer's is 'the Nobler part' for resembling Raphael who 'colour'd best'. Virgil's 'Art' is confirmed by the similarity to 'Titian's Painting', and its power of colouring (61-65).

This elegiac perspective seeks some illumination from Virgil's historical imagination and the hope of founding a new city, a civitas verbi, built of like-minded companions. One of that number would be Congreve. In his "To my Dear Friend Mr. Congreve, On His COMEDY, call'd The Double-Dealer" (1694), Dryden greets a young talent beset by a flaccid age: 'But now, not I, but Poetry is curs'd; / For Tom the Second reigns like Tom the first' (48-49).[1] Dryden looks back to the Restoration writers, as a 'Gyant Race, before the Flood' (5) whose virtues were strength and boldness, unqualified by the circumspection visited on the present age of wit by regularity and 'skill' (12). He creates the persona of a world-weary elder statesman bowing out of the public eye:

> Already I am worn with Cares and Age;
> And just abandoning th' Ungrateful Stage:
> Unprofitably kept at Heav'ns expence,
> I live a Rent-charge on his Providence: [ll. 66-69][2]

Translation takes on an enhanced significance given this context, and helps ensure a freedom from the 'petty Draughts' that the writer seemed destined to sketch. Having lost his official posts and turned his back on the stage, despairing of support for the epic he wished to write, Dryden sought a rapprochement with an age from which he felt estranged both in matters of religion and sensibility.

More immediately, Tonson intended Dryden's Virgil to replace the much-reprinted translation by John Ogilby (1649).[3] Ogilby's name has been notoriously remembered for posterity in several works. In the anonymous "Verses on *Virgil*", prefixed to the 1697 edition, Dryden's version is praised for its freedom from the 'lewd Rhymes of groveling *Ogleby*'. This is a theme that runs throughout the praise, for 'mangling *Ogleby's* presumptuous Quill' is a convenient scapegoat to contrast with the new version.[1] Dryden himself had lamented in 1685 that Latinless readers would be ill-served by depending on Ogilby.

---

[1] Poems, 2: 852-54 (853).

[2] Dryden even prophesies Congreve's Laureateship:

> ... Thou shalt be seen,
> (Tho' with some short Parenthesis between)
> High on a Throne of Wit; and seated there,
> Not mine (that's little) but thy Lawrel wear (51-54).

[3] For a fuller discussion, see John Barnard, "Dryden, Tonson and Subscriptions for the 1697 Virgil", Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America, 57 (1963), 129-51.

> What English readers unacquainted with Greek or Latin will believe me or any other man, when we commend those authors, and confess we derive all that is pardonable in us from their fountains, if they take those to be the same poets, whom our Ogilbies have translated? But I dare assure them, that a good poet is no more like himself in a dull translation, than his carcass would be to his living body. [1: 253]

If Ogilby's Virgil is the mere superficies of the *Eclogues*, then Dryden's eventual version would supply the substantial, living essence of the poems, not adhering doggedly to its literal appearance but capturing the spirit of the original. Indeed, Ogilby's dullness recommended him to Pope as a Dunce of a most prepossessing confidence. In the 1728 *Dunciad* , Ogilby looms large on Theobald's shelves as one of the volumes, full of 'learn'd lumber', that is as 'yet unpawn'd' (I, 116). No doubt this vast expanse of misplaced endeavour would have fitted into the category in which 'by sculpture made for ever known, / The page admires new beauties, not its own,' (I, 119-20) a reference to the arresting engravings of Ogilby's original edition. Pope's note to line 121 supports this inference, commenting on his 'sending into the world so many *large Volumes!* His translations of *Homer* and *Virgil*, *done to the life*, and with *such excellent sculptures!* and (what added great grace to his works) he printed them all on special good Paper, and in a very good Letter.'[1] Obviously, Ogilby's text had not stood up to the test of time, especially in the call for an added elegance that was deemed Virgilian in spirit.

---

[1] *Dryden: The Critical Heritage*, edited by James and Helen Kinsley (London, 1971), p. 220.

Dryden's translation had its detractors as well. Matthew Prior read his translations of Eclogues 4 and 9, published in the 1684 Miscellany, without much relish. In his "A Satyr on the Modern Translators" (1685), he objects to their liberal rendering of Virgil and finds 'Bayes' an eminent member of their 'Club', the one thought 'most fit / To violate the Mantuan Prophet's wit' (54).[2] Swift obviously found Dryden emulous. In the "Dedication to PRINCE POSTERITY", from A Tale of a Tub (1704), Dryden's folio edition is numbered amongst those works that he thought were written for the perpetuation of the translator's name rather than the translated.[3] Swift returns to this theme during the battle between the Ancients and Moderns in St. James's Library. Virgil, 'in shining Armor, compleatly fitted to his Body' confronts a Dryden in armour too big for him: 'For, the Helmet was nine times too large for the Head ... And the voice was suited to the Visage, sounding weak and remote. Dryden in a long Harangue soothed up the good Antient, called him Father, and by a long deduction of Genealogies, made it plainly appear, that they were nearly related.'[4] Such a relationship it is the main premise of the work to deny. Dryden, by at times

---

1. TE, 5 : 78.

2. Prior, Poetical Works, 1 : 20.

3. Dryden's work appears 'lately printed in a large Folio, well bound, and if diligent search were made, for ought I know, is yet to be seen'. A Tale of a Tub, With Other Early Works, 1696-1707, edited by Herbert Davis (Oxford, 1939), vol 1 of Prose Writings, p. 22.

4. A Tale of a Tub, p. 157.

departing from a literal translation of Virgil, seemed, to Prior and Swift, to interpose an impertinently personal reading. It is possible, however, that the objection was less to a lack of congruence than to the new "Virgil" so created.

Virgilian Lyricism and Allegory

Virgil's Eclogues were the major influence on Augustan definitions of the pastoral form. Not only did they supply a catalogue of pastoral themes and commonplaces but also a formulaic stock of words and metaphors in which to render them. C.E. Ward's account of Dryden's schooling details how Virgil was an integral part of a scholar's general classical education and how, by translation or imitation exercises, not only meaning but also the sound, placement and generic suitability of the words used had formed a taste by which Virgil was to be enjoyed.[1] Critical and interpretative agreement as to the exact conventions at work in the Eclogues is not as clear as might have been expected. Indeed, two alternative emphases were possible. One was indirectly the result of the exegetical traditions that regarded the allegorical as a level of interpretation common to both divine and secular texts. Commentators such as Servius in his In Virgilii Bucolica et Georgica Commentarii inevitably regarded Virgilian pastoral as autobiographical narrative. Seen in this light, Eclogue 1 maintains a precise correspondence between Virgil himself and Tityrus. Servius added such suggestions as that Galatea was Mantua and Amaryllis Rome.[2] Correspondingly, the Daphnis of Eclogue 5 is Julius Caesar

---

1. See especially Charles E. Ward, The Life of John Dryden (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1961), pp. 10-12, and Eric Rothstein, Restoration and Eighteenth-Century Poetry 1660-1780 (London, 1981), pp. 84-98.

2. Servii Grammatici, Qui Feruntur In Vergilii Bucolica et Georgica Commentarii, edited by H. Hagen and G. Thilo (Leipzig, 1887), I. 29 (9).

and the dedicatee of *Eclogue* 8 is Augustus, an identification which brings in its train a host of related correspondences only tangentially significant to the poem as a pastoral: for example, that there is some relevance in the association with the Illyrian campaign of 35 B.C.. This reading necessarily reduces the *Eclogues*' lyricism and replaces it with definite and discrete signifieds. The other Virgil is a more objective artist: a writer of carefully crafted lyrics, absorbing the πονος of life into an all-embracing image of order. Rural dispossession and Augustan campaigns in Illyria enter the poems only to be exorcised either by transcendence or assuagement. This version evokes the gentle elegies produced in Arcadia as its representative image and earned the *Eclogues* the complimentary description from Horace of 'molle atque facetum' ('delicate and witty').[1] The point of Horace's judgement is its distinction between the lyric and the epic concerns of war and public affairs. Bruno Snell sums up this position in his examination of the creation of Arcadia: 'Virgil needed a new home for his herdsmen, a land far distant from the sordid realities of the present ... he needed a far-away land overlaid with the golden haze of unreality'.[2] It is with the desire to accommodate both these "Virgils" that the readings of this time were most interested.

The Renaissance pastoral was most excused by reference to its conceptual framework. Rustics may sing of religious abuses but fundamentally the countrymen were singers or aristocrats in disguise. The "low" concerns of the real shepherd were never those of a pastoral shepherd. Alexander Barclay, in the "Prologe" to his own Eclogues considered the pastoral a dialogue 'Betwene Shepherds, as it were but

---

1. *Satires*, I, 10.44.

2. *The Discovery of the Mind*, translated by T.G. Rosenmeyer (Oxford, 1953), p. 282.

a fable, / To write of matters both true and profitable' (45-46).[1] Decorum, the due observance of "high" and "low", was still to be observed:

> It were not filling a heard or man rurall
> To speake in termes gay and rhetoricall.
> So teacheth Horace in arte of poetry,
> That writers namely their reason should apply
> Mete speeche approping to every personage. [ll. 83-87]

This 'Mete speeche' is open to a latitude that renders ambiguous the dividing-line in allegory between the object and its descriptive terms for, although Barclay's shepherds will speak in the correct 'homely language not passing their degree' their topic of speech will be 'courtly misery' (130-31). The shepherd is, in such theories, a multivalent figure. Thomas Puttenham's The Arte of English Poesie (1589) finds such homeliness a mere 'vaile' to mystify the 'voice' of the poetry: he claims that the pastoral was devised

> not of purpose to counterfait or represent the rusticall manner of loves and communication, but under the vaile of homely persons and in rude speeches to insinuate and glaunce at greater matters, and such as perchance had not bene safe to have beene disclosed in any other sort, ...[2]

It follows, therefore, that the style of a pastoral will be accordingly 'rude' and 'homely' but capable of heightening due to the moral gravity of its argument. This paradox empties the 'rustic' and 'homely' of content. Therefore, although Drayton was confident that 'The subject of Pastorals, as the language of it, ought to be poor, silly and of the coarsest Woofe in appearance', the very next sentence casts great doubt: 'Nevertheless, the most High, and most Noble Matters of the World may be shaddowed in them, and for certain sometimes are.'[3] If decorum is

---

1. Eclogues, pp. 1-4.

2. Elizabeth Critical Essays, 2 : 40.

3. "To the Reader of His Pastorals", Poems by Michael Drayton, Esquire (London, 1619), p. 432.

to be exceeded, then it is only acceptable if due warning is given as Virgil provides at the opening of Eclogue 4 (see below). Allegory both sanctions a release from a strict observance of decorum and yet, in its place, calls another decorum into being.

Eclogue 4 provided a precedent for a wider range of both symbolic matter and style: 'Sicelides Musae, paulo maiora canamus. / non omnis arbusta iuvent humilesque myricae;' (1-2).[1] Eclogues 1 and 9 set a precedent as well for pastoral comment on matters of public concern. Sidney thought Eclogue 1 representative of the pastoral kind as a whole and attempted a defence on its merits:

> Is the poor pipe disdained, which somtime out of Meliboeus' mouth can show the misery of people under hard Lords or ravening soldiers? And again, by Tityrus, what blessedness is derived, to them that be lowest from the goodness of them that sit highest; sometimes, under the pretty tales of wolves and sheep, can include the whole considerations of wrong doing and patience; sometimes show that contention for trifles can get but a trifling victory;[2]

The Renaissance tradition of satiric allegory incorporates an autobiographical narrative but is frequently a more public form than the poem à clef. Both kinds of allegory share the desire to limit or determine their possible readings, and, in so doing, they dilute the self-conscious artistry that clothes the signified. Style becomes a mere carrier of discourse not discourse itself.

Although the allegorical tradition in pastoral composition and criticism is noticeable in the early seventeenth century, as the century progresses, the lyrical evocation of nostalgia and love mingles with it and finally alters its appearance out of all recognition. However, as

---

1. 'Sicilian Muses, let us sing a somewhat grander strain. Not all do the orchards please and the humble tamarisks. If our song is of the woodland, then let the woodland be suitable for a consul.'

2. An Apology for Poetry, p. 116.

late as 1675, Edward Philips in the "Preface to Theatrum Poetarum" claimed that 'the Bucolic, or Eclogue, pretends only the familiar discourse of shepherds about their loves or such like concernments, yet under that umbrage treats oft times of higher matters, thought convenient to be spoken of rather mysteriously and obscurely than in plain terms ...'[1] There is little doubt that Philips finds the mystery and obscurity unnecessary, but his comment does suggest the survival of the pastoral allegory well into the time of the French neo-classical insistence on the Golden Age. The 'familiar discourse' of shepherds appears as a faint reminder of the 'coursest Woofe' (Drayton) or 'rude speeches' (Puttenham) on which the allegorical form seemed to depend.

In the last chapter, evidence of how Theocritus was read in the years 1680 to 1730 suggested an unease about the mimetic foundations for the Idylls' style and form. Touches of disconcerting particularization jostled with artful abstraction. Sicily loomed large yet only appeared through a nostalgic filter redolent of an unselfconscious and uncorrupted culture. Allegorical readings of Virgil avoid such ambiguity by reducing the representation of country life to mere form or mere signifier. Truth exists elsewhere; Tityrus can only testify to the existence of Virgil and the Child of Eclogue 4 to Jesus Christ or Pollio.

This simple allegory where there is a limited parallel between the figure and its referent was a convenient means of interpreting the role of the singers in the Eclogues and also accounting for Virgil's drudging in a "low" form. John Caryll's translation of Eclogue 1 which appeared in the Miscellany Poems of 1684 has in its introduction a full account

---

1. Spingarn, 2 : 266-67.

of Virgil's supposed status at the composition of the poem: 'The Reader may be pleased to observe, that Virgil, under the Name of Tityrus, personates himself, newly saved by the Favour of Augustus Caesar, from the general Calamity of his Mantuan Neighbours; ...'.

Those less unfortunate Mantuans are 'personated' by Meliboeus and, following Servius's identification, Amaryllis suggests Rome and Galatea Mantua. It is logical, therefore, that the significance of the poem is not seen to be as generally satirical as Sidney's remarks above. Caryll sees the poem as possessing little or no symbolic value save that of portraying a scene from Virgil's own life in that 'The drift of this Eclogue, is to celebrate the Munificence of Augustus towards Virgil, whom he makes his tutelar God, and the better to hit this off, he brings in Melibeus ...' (p. 323). The Eclogue becomes, in Caryll's analysis, a panegyric; Meliboeus's mournful song constructs an emotional backdrop to Tityrus's thankfulness and does not comment upon it. There are problems with this interpretation which require some ingenuity to resolve. The major one surrounds the suitability of an aged 'Candidior Barba' (28) or 'Fortunate Senex' (51) to represent the young Virgil. Caryll is not deterred by this anomaly and finds Virgil portraying Tityrus's 'Exemption from the common Calamity of his Country-men' by the 'Allegory of a Slave, recovering his liberty ...' 'And because Slaves did not commonly use to be infranchist, till Age had made them useless for Labour, to follow the Trope, he makes himself an old Man.' (p. 324). Any further explanation as to why a young poet should be adequately represented by an old slave is not forthcoming.

Addison, when he came to write his headnote to Dryden's translation, is content merely to identify Tityrus with Virgil and Meliboeus with 'his Mantuan neighbours' (2 : 873), but Joseph Trapp in his Virgil

(1731), although assenting, actively questions the further identifications of Rome or Mantua, pointing out that Rome is mentioned by name twice already in the *Eclogue*.[1] Labelling Amaryllis Rome appears redundant, therefore, a mistaking the literal for the allegorical. On the other hand, if the *Eclogue* is controlled by a tight allegorical form, Amaryllis and Galatea appear beside the point altogether. Trapp's explanation of their presence in the poem reveals a surprising nervousness about the allegorical reading, for he finds the mistresses's names 'to be taken literally, as beautifully specifying the Circumstance of *Time*; and adding a *Poetical Grace* to the Narration, by the Intermixture of *Love Affairs* with it' (p. 2). This desire to accommodate the lyrical and the allegorical does not last long. In the next paragraph, Trapp busies himself with advancing the proposition that Galatea could embody Virgil's sympathies for '*Brutus's* Party' and Amaryllis stand for '*Octavius's*'. In changing mistresses, Tityrus could represent Virgil's changing political allegiance. As this might brand him a turncoat, Trapp sketches in his own realistic appraisal of Virgil's position, an explanation heavily committed to a reading which sees Virgil writing autobiographically: 'For what had a private Person to do in that Case, but submit to the Conqueror? Especially since it was plain that the *Common-wealth* was destroy'd, and the *Liberty* of *Rome* lost ...'. Trapp is so confident of this interpretation that he concludes his introduction to the poem with the definitive claim that his explanation 'will clear the whole Matter; though no Commentator takes notice of it' (p. 3).

There is a similar treatment of *Eclogue* 9: the encounter between Lycidas and Moeris. Moeris complains of his hard usage at the hands of a centurion in receipt of his own patrimony by an imperial gift. Addison identifies Moeris as Virgil's bailiff and the unnamed centurion as Arius: 'This Pastoral therefore is fill'd with complaints of his [Virgil's] hard Usage' (2: 906). Trapp is consistent in his consideration of the lyrical aspects of the poem. After a review of Virgil's life (or of relevant 'Facts' as he terms it), he tries to account for the songs of Menalcas quoted by both Lycidas and Moeris. These form 'an ingenious Tissue of Poetical Fragments neatly inserted, and interwoven .... The Whole is very beautiful: But the Subject, and the Disposition of the Scene are particularly agreeable' (p. 79). It seems possible by 1731 to allow an allegorical and lyrical interpretation to co-exist.

---

[1] *The Works of Virgil, with large explanatory notes and critical observations* (1731-5), 3 vols, 1 : 6, vv. 37, 38.

When reading both Eclogues 1 and 9, therefore, there is an habitual procedure: to identify in order to interpret and only then to find in the lyrical lines a superadded beauty. Similarly Eclogue 5, although superficially an elegy to Daphnis, becomes a requiem for Julius Caesar;[1] Eclogue 6 is, in Addison's words, 'design'd as a Complement to Syro the Epicurean, who instructed Virgil and Varus in the Principles of that Philosophy' (2: 894) and Eclogue 10 is a rural love complaint but more particularly an elaborate compliment to Virgil's patron: Gallus.[2] In each case, the Eclogue is principally an occasional form with some additives or allusions to more confessional modes.

The most famous example of an allegorical reading concerns the reception of Eclogue 4, the sublime compliment to Pollio's consulship

---

1. See the arguments for and against in Vergil : Eclogues, edited by Robert Coleman (Cambridge, 1977), pp. 173-74, and H.J. Rose, The Eclogues of Vergil (Berkeley, 1942), pp. 124ff., 130ff.

2. 'pauca meo Gallo, sed quae legat ipsa Lycoris, / carmina sunt dicenda: neget quis carmina Gallo?' (I must sing a few lines for my Gallus, yet such as Lycoris herself may read. Who could refuse verses to Gallus?) (2-3).

or, in the imposed Christian version from the Renaissance onwards, the heathen prophecy of the coming of Christ. Addison's introduction is firmly in this tradition:

> The Poet celebrates the Birth-day of Saloninus, the son of Pollio, born in the Consulship of his Father, after the taking of Salonae, a city in Dalmatia. Many of the Verses are translated from one of the Sibils, who prophesie of our Saviour's Birth. [2: 887]

Trapp is more decisive in his description, calling the Eclogue 'one of the most remarkable Pieces of Heathen Antiquity; inasmuch as it contains a manifest and illustrious Prophesy of our Blessed Saviour, utter'd, in Ignorance, by a Pagan Writer;' (p. 37). Accordingly, he dismisses the counter-claim that it is an elaborate panegyric to Pollio and concludes that it has the 'Air of an Evangelical Prophesy, and seems to be translated from Isaiah' (p. 39). Whereas Addison is content to accept Servius's identification,[1] Trapp renders the Eclogue as an act of innocent devotion.

In each of these instances, the full significance of Virgil's work is regulated in the pursuit of a unifying plot. By pursuing an analysis in autobiographical terms, comprehensiveness is sacrificed to interpretative clarity and the acceptability of a "low" form. The taste for the allegorical eclogue, however, could develop in one of two ways. Firstly, as is revealed in the uncollected comments of Sidney and his contemporaries, the Renaissance defended the form for its ethical perspectives, where the 'simple' country setting testified against the luxurious corruptibility of the court or city. The roots of this tradition lie in the memory of bergerie lyrics or the pastourelle of the Middle Ages.[2] However, in the Restoration version, there is an

---

1. Thilo-Hagen, 4.1 (3: 44).

2. The most recent account is in Helen Cooper, Pastoral : Medieval into Renaissance (Ipswich, 1977), pp. 50ff.

increased interest in revealing the symbolism as a branch of autobiographical narrative, either snatches of song from a Mantuan childhood or, more directly, a thinly-veiled dramatization of Virgil's own experience. This desire to identify the singers in the Eclogues removes the opportunity for a wider symbolic range, for as soon as the identification is complete, the resonance of the image is dulled.

There is one exception to this norm. Eclogue 4 had long been available for eulogies to specific political figures. In November, 1702, the anonymous The Golden Age plundered Dryden's translation for a Tory polemic in praise of Queen Anne. The opening lines allude directly to Virgil:

> Sicilian Muse, thy Voice and Subject raise,
> All are not pleas'd with Shrubs and Sylvan Lays,
> Or if we Shrubs and Sylvan Lays prepare,
> Let 'em be such as suit a Consul's Ear. [ll. 1-4][1]

From this basis, the poem unfolds a series of careful identifications. Anne is the famous progeny of Britain, arrived to spread justice as the Saturnian times roll around again:

> O Goddess, Genius of this Favourite Isle,
> On thy own Work, this Revolution, smile, [ll. 12-13]

There must, however, be a certain tinkering with sources in order to achieve an apt image of a Golden Age Britain. Virgil's merchants did not need to venture forth on the sea because all goods were to hand.

> pauca tamen suberunt priscae vestigia fraudis,
> quae temptare Thetim ratibus, quae cingere muris
> oppida, quae iubeant telluri infindere Sulcos ...
> hinc ubi iam firmata virum te fecerit aetas,
> cedet et ipse mari vector, nec nautica pinus
> mutabit merces; omnis feret omnia tellus. [ll. 31-33, 37-39][2]

---

[1] Poems on Affairs of State : Augustan Satirical Verse, 1660-1714, 7 vols, vol 6 (1697-1704), edited by Frank H. Ellis (New Haven, 1970), pp. 449-465 (p. 451).

[2] 'However some few traces of primeval sin shall lurk behind, to entice men to essay the sea in ships, to gird towns with walls, and to cut the earth with furrows .... Next, when you have taken on the strength of maturity, even the trader shall leave the sea, and the ships of pine no more trade; every land shall bear all fruits.'

In the Golden Age of 1702 such vestigial sin is encouraged:

> Fearless of loss, and confident of Gain,
> The Merchant shall in Safety Plough the Main;
> The lab'ring Hind shall cleave the Country Soil,
> And Plenty rise and Court the Farmer's Toil [ll. 95-98]

In less than three months' time William Walsh had provided a Whig answer in his *The Golden Age Restor'd* (1703).[1] If Queen Anne could only just stand comparison with the divine boy of Virgil's inspiration, then Walsh's set of correspondences push the analogy in a mock-heroic direction. Pollio's consulship becomes Dashwood's mayoralty (18-19) and Virgil's Apollo becomes Walsh's William Bromley (10). A certain satiric edge is fostered by this however: 'The lambs shall with the Lions walk unhurt, / And *Halifax* with *Howe* meet civilly at Court' (29-30) which illustrates an acknowledgement that the earlier compliments are hyperbolic. This poem was in its turn answered by an anonymous *The Golden Age Revers'd* one month later but by then the Virgilian element was all but exhausted.[2]

This public element in *Eclogue* 4 aided a narrower interpretation of pastoral allegory. Dryden was to apply its prophetic optimism to specific historical interests both in the epigraph to *Astraea Redux* (1660) and in the concluding sections of *Absalom and Achitophel* (1681).[3] This enhanced role for the poem threatened to lift it out of the pastoral category. Servius had only admitted seven of the ten eclogues as bucolic poetry, excluding 4, 6 and 9.[1] However, Rapin demonstrated greater tolerance by allowing both Idyll 10 and Eclogue 4, even if this welcome is a little diluted by a text taken from the opening of Eclogue 6:

---

[1] *Poems on Affairs of State*, 6 : 487-505.

[2] *Poems on Affairs of State*, 6 : 517-529.

[3] The epigraph to *Astraea Redux* (1 : 16-24) reads: 'Iam Redit et Virgo, Redeunt Saturnia Regna. *Virgil*.' - line 6 of *Eclogue* 4 ('Now the Virgin [i.e. Justice] returns, the reign of Saturn is come round again.')

The relevant lines of *Absalom ...* (1 : 215-243) also present the Restoration in Virgilian terms:

> Henceforth a Series of new time began,
> The mighty Years in long Procession ran:
> Once more the Godlike *David* was Restor'd,
> And willing Nations knew their Lawfull Lord. [ll. 1028-31].

> Prima Syracosio dignata est ludere versu
> nostra nec erubuit Silvas habitare Thalia.
> Cum canerem reges et proelia, Cynthius aurem
> vellit et admonuit: 'pastorem, Tityre, pinguis
> pascare oportet ovis, deductum dicere carmen.'
> nunc ego ...
> ... agrestem tenui meditabor harundine Musam. [ll. 1-6, 8][2]

Songs of kings and battles suggest the epic and Rapin is most concerned that a sharp distinction is drawn between the rustic and the heroic, the two sorts of Imitation of Aristotle and Horace. In the comparison, the "high" and "low" are polarized to the pastoral's detriment. The form is not to attempt a lofty subject but keep to its proper sphere: 'Rustick Affairs: such as are mean and humble in themselves' (pp.19-25).[3] This association of the poem and its described sphere of narrative action attempts to establish a mimetic relationship of the most direct order. "Arcadia", on the other hand, both is and is not a topographical reference. In Rapin's reading of Virgil, it is an expression of the

---

1. Thilo-Hagen, 3: 2-3.

2. 'My Muse first deigned to sport in Sicilian strain, and did not blush to dwell in the woods. When I came to sing of kings and battles, the Cynthian touched my ear and warned me: "A shepherd, Tityrus, should feed sheep that are fat, but sing a lay finely woven." ... now will I woo the rustic Muse on a slender reed.'

3. This parallel between the style and the caste of life described was most influentially expressed by Thomas Hobbes in his Answer (1650) to Davenant's "Preface to Gondibert". Pastoral was imagined as a direct expression of the countryside. In its narrative form, it was plain Pastoral, and in its dramatic mode, it had to be Pastoral Comedy. The verse was expected to partake something of the people described, namely a 'plainness, and though dull, yet a nutritive faculty in rurall people, that endures a comparison with the Earth they labour.' (Spingarn, 2 : 55).

Golden Age and as such the manners of its inhabitants are impeccable. What is needed is an unstained shepherd, one fit to have his being there; a figure 'represented according to the Genius of the golden Age, in which ... every man follow'd that [the shepherd's] employment' (pp. 33-34). These rustic figures are heavily encoded by conventions of literary not ethical origins. Consequently, the allegorical mode of the Eclogues is not only heavily qualified but also rendered incapable of its enlarged sense of enforcing social justice.

Fontenelle also establishes an ideal, unhistorical matrix. His shepherds are 'without any controul by Superior Power, being in a manner the Kings of their own Flocks'. This blessed state could not continue due to the rise and consequent attraction of the city: '... the Pastoral Life being grown the Lot of the most wretched sort of People, [it] no longer inspir'd any delightful thought' (p. 276). Given the already felicitous advantages of this life, it is remarkable that Fontenelle should then consider the pastoral voices of the Pollio too high for a pastoral poem. Mimetic criteria are still apparent. He too quotes the opening of Eclogue 6, proof that shepherds could not pretend to be interested in kings or wars. To reinforce this requirement, allegory too is excluded from the pastoral, the only greater sin being the expression of impious thoughts.[1]

Both Rapin and Fontenelle, for their own reasons, arrive at the conclusion that the subject of pastoral verse is defined within the orbit of a shepherd's affairs - a countryman who is lodged nostalgically in an irrecoverable past, not the victim of contemporary privation and confiscation of property, but his noble antecedent who owned his own flocks and who was never obliged to visit the City. As such, this

---

1. 'Allegorical Eclogues ... are not very easie ... Now, though in the main our Mantuan has pretty well kept the Allegory, 'tis too ridiculous to find ... Controversie ... handled Ecloguewise.

Yet I had rather see a Shepherd represent one of these, than have him act the Epicurean, and say impious things' (pp. 287-88).

Golden Age shepherd does not need to be transformed by an allegorical context but fulfills his own symbolic status in the lack of historical certainty wished on him; in this light, Tityrus and Gallus appear already transformed in their very conception. The limitation thus required by French neo-classicism: that the decora due to the depiction of "low" figures be enforced literally, seems unnecessary. It is surely an unnecessary requirement that nobility of sentiment and expression be foreign to the pastoral if there is the basic insurance against rusticity provided by primeval aristocratic 'Kings of their own Flocks'.

Dryden and Chetwood on the Pastoral

Fontenelle's passionate apology for the pastoral involved the absorption of the shepherd-figures into the landscape. This lyricism was resisted forcibly from several sources, none more direct than Knightly Chetwood in his "Life of Virgil" and preface to Dryden's translation of the Eclogues, 'with a short Defence of Virgil against some of the Reflections of Monsieur Fontanelle' (1697).[1] Chetwood had contributed a translation of Eclogue 8 for Dryden's first Miscellany (1684) and was an associate with the Earl of Roscommon in two projects: an eventually unpublished Life of the Earl and an edition of Roscommon's translation into French of Dr. Sherlock's Treatise of Passive Obedience (1685). He was a particularly apt choice for the role of sponsor. His early involvement in the foundation of the Society of Antiquaries had led to his encouragement of Roscommon in his influential translation of Horace's Ars Poetica and the equally seminal writing of the Essay on Translated Verse (1684). Chetwood had also just gained the post of Chaplain to the English forces sent into Holland under Marlborough (1689) and been created Doctor of Divinity at Cambridge (1691). In choosing Chetwood, Dryden's efforts had gained an influential and respectable imprimatur.

---

[1] The "Life" and the "Defence" were both unsigned. They were originally ascribed to William Walsh. Sir Walter Scott and George Saintsbury in their edition of the Works (Edinburgh, 1882), 18 vols, 13: 292-316, 328- 44) were the first to note Edmond Malone's claim that they were both by Chetwood (see Critical and Miscellaneous Prose Works of John Dryden (1800), 3: 549). Malone had discovered a letter from Dryden to Tonson, dated December, 1697, which describes his waiting for Chetwood to correct his 'preface, which He writes me word is printed very false' (Letters, Letter 50, p. 98).

The remarkable point about Fontenelle's position on Virgil's Eclogues is that it is hardly condemnatory at all. It is specifically hesitant in its appreciation of Eclogue 4, however, and thereby Virgil's pretensions to such an elevation of tone:

> When Virgil desir'd to give a pompous Description of the imaginary Return of the Golden Age, which he promises to the World at the Birth of Pollio's Son, he should not have excited the Pastoral Muses to leave their natural Strain and raise their Voices to a pitch which they can never reach; his Business was to have left them, and have address'd himself to some others. [pp. 285-86]

This is in direct opposition to Rapin's reverence for Virgil's example, who, as he 'useth no Numbers but Heroick', could sanction such a treatment of country life for his successors (p. 63).[1] It is imperative to remark that Rapin could also still develop a sophisticated conceptual periphrasis. When applauding both Theocritus and Virgil for their 'admirable and excellent' example, he distinguishes them from those 'others' who prove 'despicable, and to be pittied: for they being enfeebled by the meanness of their subject, either creep, or fall flat ...' (pp. 56-58).[2] The triumph of both Virgil and, surprisingly given Rapin's preferences, Theocritus, lies in their talent for formalistic virtuosity, where an advised and qualified heroism is cut free of

---

1. However, this 'Heroick Measure' should be 'not so strong and sounding as in Epicks' (p. 63).

its demeaning referent. Fontenelle praises the idea of a rural life and its creation of a pleasing ambience which thereby must ignore the claims of *Eclogues* 4 and 6. It is specifically the excellence of both these poems that Chetwood wishes to illustrate and so offers the reader a Virgil as master craftsman, working to conquer unpropitious material and so delighting in his display of art.

Much of the power of Chetwood's defence stems from the enlisting of Ancient authority as a stick to beat Modern presumption. The moderns become 'extravagant heirs, made rich by their industry, [who] ungratefully deride the good old gentleman who left them the estate'.[1]

There gradually unfolds in the Preface a distaste for Modern pastoral not on the grounds that its practitioners are not up to the mark but because it is based on an unnecessarily vulnerable foundation that cannot be repaired except by a change in the reader's perceptual experience:

> One of the ancients has observed truly, but satirically enough, that, 'Mankind is the measure of everything'. And thus, by a gradual improvement of this mistake, we came to make our own age and country the rule and standard of others .... We figure the ancient countrymen like our own, leading a painful life in poverty and contempt, without wit, or courage, or education. [13: 329]

The classical poets could faithfully render an unspoiled countryside. To attempt pastoral compositions on new models would be to base a pastoral myth on too manifest a lie. This respect for Virgil extends to defending *Eclogues* 4 and 6 in particular. Fontenelle had found the song of the tipsy and lewd Silenus to be out of character with the other *Eclogues*. Chetwood defends its pastoral character by resurrecting the allegorical apology of Servius who 'would have discovered that,

---

1. Scott-Saintsbury (Edinburgh, 1882), 13: 329.

under the allegory of this drunkenness of Silenus, the refinement and exaltation of men's minds by philosophy was intended' (13: 334). Eclogue 4, on the other hand, is given a less grandiose origin, one not immediately suggested by the text. The poem is given a pastoral coherence by considering it the 'discourse of a shepherd comforting himself, in a declining age, that a better was ensuing' (13: 337). Chetwood, when confronted by the corporeal Silenus, suppresses such "low" particulars and removes it from his influence by allegorizing his song but ignoring its singer. However, where the Pollio might have offered itself up to an allegorical Christian interpretation, he spurns the invitation and personalizes the song. This inevitably restrains the exalted rhetoric to align it with the other bucolic settings, and thereby restores the more philosophical Eclogues to the pastoral canon. This weightier pastoral form is then more suitable to pit against the love-lyrics that constitute Fontenelle's norm. Chetwood is directly opposed to such airy sentiments: 'He seems to take pastorals and love-verses for the same thing. Has human nature no other passion?' (13: 338).

What is needed, therefore, is a positive suggestion as to what a pastoral poem is. Chetwood's formulae are based largely on Rapin's Golden Age assumptions. The shepherd is to exude an 'air of piety' (13: 335) consonant with his 'ancient innocence and unpractised plainness' (13: 337). A more pressing dilemma is over the formal qualities of the poetry. Although pleading for 'some ordonnance' (13: 337) in the composition, Chetwood does not relinquish a hope for a 'choice diversity of subjects.' as well (13: 337), a mixture he leaves to the poet able to show the correct measure of artistic 'judgement and contrivance' in which Virgil excels Theocritus (13: 337). Just as Chetwood finds the erotic pastoral too limited in its diversity of subject, he also refuses to find an alternative in an allegorical reading of the poems. This is apparent in his concern to stress the surface incidents of the poetry. Indeed, the whole concept of a dark conceit is absent from his account of and introduction to Dryden's translation. For example, the treatment of *Eclogue* 6, his one mention of allegory, is most directly concerned with praising a style that is 'natural, clear and elegant' (13: 339). Indeed, his polemic against Fontenelle is apt to push his ideal pastoral quite away from the Golden Age of leisurely nobility:

> But the persons brought in by Mr. Fontenelle are shepherds in masquerade, and handle their sheep-hook as awkwardly as they do their oaten reed. They saunter about with their *chers moutons*; but they relate as little to the business in hand, as the painter's dog, or a Dutch ship, does to the history designed. [13: 339]

There is a difficulty in this that Chetwood ignores too easily. In claiming that a return to the poetry *à clef* of Marot or Mantuan is undesirable, he offers two opposed factors in any pastoral representation: the 'sheep-hook' and the 'oaten reed', both of which, it would seem, relate more to the 'business in hand' than the nominal shepherds of most Renaissance pastoral. The self-indulgence of including the 'painter's dog' in the picture is as redundant to the 'ordonnance' as the unnecessarily detailed account of a ship's nationality in a harbour-scene. Too much unmotivated detail is an extravagance. The 'business' of the form, by contrast, should derive from a more substantial relation between the shepherd and his work, a concern itself quite unnecessary if there were not a certain nervousness about the Golden Age motif, and its obvious fictiveness.

Chetwood's "Preface" answers Fontenelle's Modern theories in two ways. Firstly, it claims for the pastoral genre a significance and scope much wider than that expected from the lyrical forms, and, in so doing, presupposes some unifying framework other than the overheard emotions of the poet. Secondly, the Modern presumption that new pastoral myths may be found is invalidated on the authority of Virgil's far-ranging excellence: no new variations are to be found. Consequently, Chetwood rejects both allegory and lyric. It is an ill-mapped path but it eventually leads to Virgil's actual practice rather than any theoretical synthesis.

Dryden's preface to his own translation "To The Right Honourable Hugh Lord Clifford, Baron of Chudleigh" (1697) displays the pragmatic approach of the practitioner rather than the theorist. He is, however, at pains to vindicate both the advisability of following the example of Theocritus and Virgil and, on the other hand, the judgement needed in the translator to draw back from a literal transcription, and so a similar forbearance on the part of a modern pastoralist. This even-handedness is clearly demonstrated in his contradictory view of those who would depart from classical precedent. Although the 'spring of Virgil' may justly shame the 'filth and ordures of the Goths and Vandals' by comparison and 'our miserable age' not hope to measure up to the past excellencies of classical patronage, Fontenelle is found to be 'the living glory of the French' and Spenser's diction in The Shepheardes Calendar approved for its 'northern dialect', the nearest one could hope to reach in making the Doric of Theocritus over to a later age's taste.[1] Such flexibility is not the aimless negligence of an occasional preface, but very much a feature of Dryden's conception of imitation throughout his critical work, best exemplified by the dialectical structure of

---

1. Selected Criticism, p. 282.

his Of Dramatic Poesy: An Essay (1668).[1]

Even so, the rusticity of pastoral subjects does cause some difficulty. Dryden displays a desire that the "natural" be seen as something more substantial than a rhetorical illusion, and it is in the preface that he debates this in relation to Virgil. In common with Chetwood Dryden finds the Eclogues a triumph of judgement 'wherein [Virgil] has raised himself above that humble style in which pastoral delights, and which ... is proper to the education and converse of shepherds' (p. 280), a triumph in that he had chosen when and when not to be pastoral. Dryden sees the poet of the Georgics and the Aeneis testing himself for a longer flight in his Eclogues. The metaphor is no casual one. The answer as to what the poet is supposed to be in flight from is given in the first of Dryden's prefatory remarks on Virgil:

> He could not forbear to try his wings, though his pinions were not hardened to maintain a long laborious flight. Yet sometimes they bore him to a pitch as lofty as ever he was able to reach afterwards. But when he was admonished by his subject to descend, he came down gently circling in the air, and singing to the ground. [p. 280]

'His subject' is defined by its opposites. Firstly, it has not the elevation or freedom suggested by a bird's flight and, secondly, this freedom is qualified to some degree by an 'admonitory' subject-matter that must oblige the lyrical grace to descend and remember its dependence on more material foundations. Choosing *Eclogues* 4, 6 and 8 as his texts, Dryden is pleased to find this denial of mimetic duty where Chetwood found it reprehensible in Fontenelle. Noting that in *Eclogue* 8, Virgil had made his 'herdsmen somewhat too learned for their profession', Dryden uses an image similar to that found in Chetwood's "Defence": 'There is a kind of rusticity in all those pompous verses; somewhat of a holiday shepherd strutting in his country buskins. The like may be observed, both in the Pollio, and the Silenus; where the similitudes are drawn from the woods and meadows. They seem to me to represent our poet betwixt a farmer, and a courtier...' (p.281). This safe distance from both a literal rustic and the masquerading allegorical or otherwise, of the genteel visitor is a norm safeguarded and guaranteed by the plain style, that reassuring and disarming rhetorical expression of what is, in fact, an opinion as to what is natural but rendered as "nature". For this to be accepted, it must be argued that some verisimilitude is an essential component, that the shepherd must be neither too defined by his setting nor totally defeat the expectations of the reader who clearly expects the pastoral to be so defined. By 1750 when Samuel Johnson tried to define the genre in what he felt was its decline, Virgil's works testified to little of the awe that Chetwood and Dryden experienced: 'If we search the writings of Virgil, for the true definition of a pastoral, it will be found "a poem in which any action or passion is represented by its effects on a country life".'[1] This is a particularly rational extension of the hint supplied almost a century earlier, with quite an opposite understanding by Rapin. Glossing the claim that a pastoral poem

---

[1] Even Crites, Dryden's spokesman for the Ancients, includes a significant qualification of his admiration for classical example. Their Modern successors were forced not to 'build upon their foundations, but by their models' (1: 36). For more general comment, see John M. Aden, "Dryden and the Imagination: The First Phase", PMLA, 74 (1959), 28-40, and John C. Sherwood, "Precept and Practice in Dryden's Criticism", Journal of English and Germanic Philology, 68 (1969), 432-40.

---

1. *The Rambler*, No. 37 (July 24, 1750), Yale Edition of the Works of Samuel Johnson, 9 vols., 3: 201 (edited by W.J. Bate and Albrecht B. Strauss).

imitated 'the Action of a Sheaperd, or of one taken under that Character' (p. 19) he takes as his example: Gallus, the most explicit reference Virgil makes in the Eclogues to a contemporary figure. In Eclogue 10, this prominent statesman, military leader and elegiac poet is introduced to the lyrical artifices of Arcadia to sing of unhappy love to its inhabitants. His nearest generic precursor is Thyrsis from Idyll 1, but whereas the Theocritean semi-deity blends his notes with each detail of the sympathetic landscape, Gallus eventually resists such assimilation and will not be so consoled.[1] He remains outside the pastoral enclosure even in the very heart of it. This example is a strange choice of Rapin's. Gallus would naturally fit into the category of those who could be 'taken under' the character of a shepherd, but even this is to stretch a reading of Eclogue 10 to its limits for there is no internal evidence that Virgil presents Gallus as a countryman at all. There is no sign of even the most perfunctory sheep-hook; in the terms of the poem, he remains stubbornly "real", quite apart from the Arcadian shepherds he addresses. Johnson's remarks imply that a pastoral should treat a 'country life' as a central representative element. In Eclogue 10, Gallus is as much a stranger to rural activity as the Arcadians that attempt to console him, an idea echoed by Rapin in the next sentence after his preliminary definition of the pastoral: 'Virgil's Gallus, tho not really a Shephard, for he was a man of great quality in Rome, ... belongs to Pastoral, because he is represented like a Shepheard' (p. 19). What principally picks out Eclogue 10 as a pastoral therefore is the representation, the placing of a shepherd's weeds onto Gallus, rather than the landscape and characters. Such formalism in 1659 was seminal enough to be perpetuated with hardly a change in wording by Chetwood: 'As all sorts of poetry consist in imitation, pastoral is the imitation of a Shepherd, considered under that character' (13: 329), and by Pope: 'A Pastoral is an imitation of the action of a shepherd, or one considered under that character'.[1] Considerations of a 'country life' are by no means central to the formalist pastoral, either allegorical or lyrical.

---

[1] For a fuller account of the pastoral conventions in Eclogue 10, see Robert Coleman, "Vergil's Pastoral Modes", Ancient Pastoral: "Ramus" Essays on Greek and Roman Pastoral Poetry, edited by A.J. Boyle (Melbourne, 1975), pp. 66-68. 'It is, however, striking that Vergil should have closed his bucolic collection with what seems an explicit rejection of the doctrine of Arcadian consolation' (p. 67).

It is therefore striking that both Dryden and Chetwood should occupy themselves to the extent they do in appealing to mimetic criteria when hinting a dislike of Virgil's practice. Chetwood's desire to see a pastoral shepherd's portrayal including a relation to his work also implicitly uncovers a further wish to see the pastoral conform to a decorum based on its nominal subject-matter. Dryden admired the younger Virgil's exuberance in his Eclogues, yet found him also departing from his subject-matter or, in other words, not conforming to the pastoral genre. His comments on Eclogue 8 illustrate this position: 'the former part of it being the complaint and despair of a forsaken lover: the latter, a charm of an enchantress, to renew a lost affection. But the complaint perhaps contains some topics which are above the condition of his persons; and our author seems to have made his herdsmen somewhat too learned for their profession.'[2] In his earlier "Preface to Sylvae" (1685), Dryden had considered Virgil's shepherds 'too well read in the philosophy of Epicurus and of Plato' (1: 265), a reference to Eclogues 4 and 6. In Eclogue 8,

---

1. TE, 1: 24.

2. Selected Criticism, p. 281. For Epicurean statements, see 6.27, 31-40, and for Platonic references, see 4.36, 6.14.

the indecorum of the shepherd "voices" is harder to trace. Damon's complaint at Nysa's neglect of him is a clear allusion to Idylls 3 and 11, where a goatherd's unkempt and ill-mannered figure is considered both comic and pathetic. Virgil keeps these traits for Damon (32-35) and yet also grants him knowledge of a poeticism such as pocula for water (28), a precious Alexandrianism such as the repetition at line 50, and a blasphemous yoking of the pastoral world with Olympus: '... sit Tityrus Orpheus, / Orpheus in silvis, inter delphinas Arion' (55-56).[1] Dryden's own translation (2: 901-5) emphasises this breach between Orpheus/Arion and Tityrus:

> Hoarse Tity'rus strive with Orpheus in the Woods:
> And challenge fam'd Arion on the Floods.
> Or oh! let Nature cease; and Chaos reign: [ll. 76-78]

As these lines are part of a catalogue of impossibilities that result from Nysa's unnatural behaviour - the adynaton so characteristic of classical pastoral - the extra insurance that Dryden provides to insulate the pastoral subject-matter from any flights of glorification is remarkable.

These faults apart, Dryden shares Chetwood's approval of the pastoral nature of the Eclogues. Virgil's standing as a major classical model could be called as witness to defend his actual practice against any accusations of impropriety. For Dryden, the thorny problem of how the pastoral genre could contain quite contradictory impulses: the homely detail of rural life which was a legacy of the allegorical signifiers of the Renaissance with the more abstract and idealized locale suggested by Arcadia, was solved by reference to the actual practice of Virgil. This 'poet betwixt a farmer, and a courtier' appeared to possess the correct amalgam of polite rusticity

---

1. '... let Tityrus be an Orpheus - an Orpheus in the woods, an Arion among the dolphins.'

that could serve as an example for all subsequent bucolics: '... he maintains majesty in the midst of plainness; he shines, but glares not;' (1: 256). In 1685, indeed, Dryden was prepared to give to Virgil's pastoral descriptions an iconic "presence" that offered his formal variety as a transparent rendering of the subject of the poetry: 'His verse is everywhere sounding the very thing in your ears, whose sense it bears; yet the numbers are perpetually varied;' (1: 255). Dryden's most positive remarks concern the form and style, the actual "clothing" of the shepherd, and the nearest he arrives at disagreement is when he turns to questions of the equivalence between that shepherd and life. In matters of decorum Virgil's plain majesty formed a stylistic mean that did adequate justice to two potentially divergent perspectives on the countryman as the noble savage or as an allegorical symbol.

It is remarkable, given the popularity of Dryden's Virgil, how quickly the classical pastoral shepherd becomes a man of sentiment, much nearer to the Theocritean than the more august Virgilian norm. Thomas Tickell during his Guardian series on pastoral poetry (1713), praised Theocritus above Virgil, notwithstanding his occasional 'grossness and clownishness', for possessing 'a soul more softly and tenderly inclined' to the pastoral. Virgil's genius, by contrast, led him naturally to sublimity.[1] Theocritus may be the more talented pastoralist but Virgil the greater poet. The culmination of this distrust of the sublime pastoral appears in Thomas Purney's A Full Enquiry into the True Nature of Pastoral (1717). Although Virgil is linked with Theocritus in Purney's roll-call of acceptable models,

---

1. The Guardian, 28 (April 13, 1713), 1 : 113.

his inclusion is never anything more than formulaic. Theocritus, Spenser and Ambrose Philips supply many examples each, but Virgil none. Purney justifies this neglect by emphasising the simple inspirations of the pastoral, which even leads him to question Spenser's use of allegory as being 'not consistent with the simplicity of that Poem [the Pastoral]' (p. 50). One of the few places where Virgil is mentioned exposes Purney's desire for an unadorned simplicity. The introductory paragraph to chapter 7 of Part 3 finds Virgil's art redundant:

> SIMILIES in Pastoral must be managed with an exceeding deal of Care, or they will be faulty. As a Poet may range Nature for Comparisons; this gives a Pastoral-Writer a very easy opportunity of introducing rural Thoughts. VIRGIL therefore, and those Swains who have written Pastorals more by Art and Imitation than Genius, generally heap three or four SIMILIES together for the same thing; and which is of no Moment; nor wanted any Comparison. [p. 54]

Although Virgil is not directly corrected here, there are some clear party lines drawn up. By implication, the Eclogues do not sufficiently 'range Nature' and therefore cannot give rise to truly 'rural Thoughts'. This identification of Nature with the rustic is founded on the principle of direct transcription in Art. Those objects normally found by experiencing the country life deserve to stand forth boldly for what they are: a portion of the Sublime, untrammelled by the obfuscation of Art. Just as Longinus finds this gift of representing thoughts rather than images the hallmark of genius,[1] Purney applies this distinction to the pastoral. The result is to admit a pastoral of sentiment rather than sculptural calm, based on a particularly partial opinion as to what constitutes a country life:

> There are also another kind of Similies, which being heapt in the same manner, seem to be

---

[1] On the Sublime, 8.1, 9.2.

> design'd by VIRGIL, and those who have taken their Thoughts from him, rather to fill up Space with something Pastoral, than to be the natural Talk of Shepherds. For Swains are not suppos'd to retard their Storys by many or long SIMILIES; their Talk comes from the Heart, Unornamental; but Similies, in Pastoral, are for Ornament. [p. 55]

Purney here unites the pathetic and the realistic to form an unholy yet persuasive alliance against the Ornamental and therefore insincere. Far from 'sounding the very thing in your ears' in Dryden's version, Virgil is seen as the poor relation of Theocritus, one who cannot keep his eye close to the object. The corollary to this is that the affairs of the heart and ornamentation are mutually exclusive in pastoral poetry, and that the 'Emblematical', 'Allegorical' and 'Refined' modes (pp. 49-52) are unsuitable for the avowed object of the form: the presentation of the 'natural talk of shepherds' and the reification of its projection of urban sensibility. Even Pope's "Discourse Concerning Pastoral Poetry" (1717) qualifies its otherwise concerted praise for Virgil. Both Theocritus and Virgil are recognized as 'the only indisputed authors of Pastoral' and yet some of Virgil's 'subjects are not pastoral in themselves, but only seem to be such'.[1] Indeed, although Virgil exceeds Theocritus in judgement, regularity and brevity, there are two significant areas where Virgil is found wanting in the comparison: the 'simplicity and propriety of style; the first of which perhaps was the fault of his age, and the last of his language' (1: 30), a conclusion different in emphasis but not in substance from Purney's own. Gradually, the more elevated Eclogues were considered unpastoral. Charles Gildon in his The Complete Art of Poetry (1718) examines the Pollio in terms reminiscent of Fontenelle when he claims that the poem 'loses so much of the Pastoral kind, as it gains of Majesty and Force'.[1] Pope himself had suggested that if Virgil's pastorals were compared with the Modern kind 'they are by no means *Pastorals*, but "*something better*"'.[2] As the desire for sentiment and "natural" shepherd talk grew, the neo-classic answer was to remove the *Eclogues* from contamination by refusing them the name of pastorals altogether.

---

[1] TE, 1: 29-30.

So tainted was the pastoral form by what it avowedly described, the humble concerns of rural life, that later pastoralists forsook many of the Virgilian themes and even the attempt to imitate the rusticity of what was taken to be the Theocritean Doric. By 1708 and the election of Joseph Trapp to the first Chair of Poetry at Oxford, pastoral poetry is regarded as a 'humble kind', an example of the "low" style, as it dealt with country matters, the 'common concerns of life'.[3] *Eclogues* 4 and 6 are allowed, on the other hand, as they demonstrate a 'certain Sublimity, agreeable enough to Pastorals; a Sublimity that arises from Philosophy and Religion, not from the Tumults of War, the Pomps of a Court, or the Refinements of the City' (p. 175). This sublimity is as sharply distinguished from the Epic as country life is from the Court or City and takes its force and point from the poet's art alone. This is evident in a roll-call of pastoral qualities heavily reminiscent of both Rapin and Fontenelle, wherein the best pastorals are 'sweet, easy and flowing, and simple beyond all others'. Even so, this "simplicity" is not such that it mirrored 'the Characters of poor ignorant shepherds, and the Thoughts of modern Rustics' (p. 174). Indeed the human figure in Trapp's version is hurriedly passed over. The subjects of pastoral are country ones, 'and the Thoughts never contrary to those that are bred there' (p. 180), yet at the same time they are not to be expressed in a style that is redolent of such associations:

---

[1] "Of the Manner, Rules, and Art of Composing Epigrams, Pastorals, Odes, etc.", *Complete Art of Poetry* (London, 1718), p. 160. The style was not, on the other hand to be 'low and base'. One insurance against that was to avoid turning '*Strephon* and *Bess* into *Tom* and *Bess*, which that ingenious Son of the great *Ben. Johnson* did, imagining by that to make it more on a level with his Cotswold Shepherds, but far from those of *Arcadia* and *Sicily*.' He also distrusted Allegory and illustrated his *via media* by recourse to copious illustration from Ambrose Philips's *Pastorals*.

[2] *The Prose Works of Alex. Pope*, 'newly collected and edited by' Norman Ault (Oxford, 1936), p. 106.

[3] *Lectures on Poetry read in the Schools of Natural Philosophy at Oxford ... Translated from the Latin* by William Bowyer and William Clarke (London, 1742), p. 87.

> ... it seems too forced a Prosopopœia to affix to them any Character of Politeness, or to introduce them as Men of Wealth and Education: These Things are contradictory to Truth, and therefore leave no Room for Fiction. The very Foundation, then, of Pastorals, as they are accomodated to the present Times, seems wholly taken away. [p. 186]

No wonder then that Virgil's politer versions of rusticity were both influential for Arcadian pastoralists and lyricists, and yet distrusted by those who required a 'simplicity' to match what was taken to be a real countryman's wants and cares. It is no great distance from the therapy that Steele derived from Virgil, compared to whom there was 'no one writing in so divine, so harmonious, nor so equal a Strain, which leaves the Mind compos'd, and soften'd into an agreeable Melancholy, the Temper in which, of all others, I chuse to close the Day'.[1] This 'agreeable Melancholy' is as distinct from the moral fervour expected by Sidney as it is from the heroics of Dryden's Golden Age, and owes little to classical precedent.

Dryden's own reading of Virgil's pastoral spirit was directly antithetical to this vespertinal pathos. In even the most obvious example of a 'pathetick' Eclogue, Dryden's translation is no pastoral of sentiment. In Addison's introductory rubric to Eclogue 2, the reader is led to expect tenderness and lyrical simplicity: 'The

---

1. The Spectator, edited by Donald F. Bond (Oxford, 1965), 5 vols, 4 : 325 (514, October 20, 1712).

Commentators can by no means agree on the Person of Alexis, but are all of opinion that some Beautiful Youth is meant by him, to whom Virgil here makes Love; in Corydon's Language and Simplicity. His way of Courtship is wholly Pastoral' (2: 877). This 'pastoral' passion, however, has not such soothing balm in Dryden's version. When scanning the landscape for passionate similes, Virgil's Corydon is economical but plaintive too:

> at mecum raucis, tua dum vestigia lustro,
> sole sub ardenti resonant arbusta cicadis. [ll. 12-13][1]

Corydon like the love-sick Bucaeus and the lovers of Latin elegy has been driven to a life 'sine ratione, nullo consilio'.[2] Dryden's Corydon has a heroic passion, on the other hand, one noble in its intensity. Unqualified by pathos or rustic timidity, the shepherd is blessed with some epic gestures:

> While in the Scorching Sun I trace in vain
> Thy flying footsteps o're the burning Plain.
> The creaking Locusts with my Voice conspire,
> They fry'd with Heat, and I with fierce Desire. [ll. 11-14][3]

In this manifestation his passion is as fierce as the burning sun, an emphasis not quite consistent with its source text. There, 'at mecum' is in strong opposition to the preceding four lines; Corydon is alone excluded from the natural behaviour of cattle seeking shade, green lizards hiding in the undergrowth and reapers seeking noontide refreshment. This coupled with the insistent 'sole sub ardenti' forms an attempt to emphasise Corydon's solitariness not the ferocity of his feelings. In 1697, even the neutral description of the close of day is given the grace and power of a simile:

---

1. 'But as I scan your footprints, the copses under the raging Sun ring with the shrill cicada's voice along with mine.'

2. Propertius, I. 1.6.

3. The full text can be found at 2: 877-80.

aspice, aratra iugo referunt suspensa iuvenci,
et sol crescentis decedens duplicat umbros: ... [ll. 66-67][1]

See from afar the Fields no longer smoke,
The sweating Steers unharness'd from the Yoke,
Bring, as in Triumph, back the crooked Plough. [ll. 95-97]

This freedom with the accepted sense of the source is in the interests of capturing the grandeur of Virgil's whole poetic undertaking, a career culminating in the Aeneid. Consequently, the negligible subject-matter must be overcome by Art in a constant attempt to fly free of "low", rustic concerns. Indeed, the difference between the Virgil and Dryden's version was an essential ingredient in the latter's success. This has sometimes led to a residual distrust of Dryden's reading of Virgil on the grounds that it is not faithful enough to an "original" meaning. This has lasted well, for as late as 1962, J.M. Cohen, in his British Council pamphlet: English Translators and Translations, is lukewarm in his admiration for this re-modelling, for although Dryden naturalized Virgil 'in a translation that frequently attained nobility', there was a surrender of elegance for 'it sometimes lapsed into the vulgarity of what was, compared with the eighteenth century, an insensitive age'.[2] In this Cohen is merely repeating Prior and Swift. It is ironic to note, therefore, that both Chetwood and Dryden believed that the 1697 Virgil sought to realize the Eclogues not in their particular expression but in their essentials, recording a representative image that would approximate to a Virgilian English. Consequently, the "Virgil" created by commentary and myth was as much called to witness as the barebones of the Latin text.

To some extent, the alterations to the Latin during translation were forced on Dryden. Therefore, not all of the modifications are

---

1. 'See, the bullocks drag home by the yoke the hanging plough, and the setting sun doubles the gathering shadows.'

2. "Writers and their Work", no. 142 (London, 1962), p. 21.

down to a desire to redefine. The copiousness of Virgil's language, its reference to many alternative conventions, stretch the capacities of English to render them. The translator is often forced to select from several alternatives.[1] Most pervasive, though, is the strong Hellenistic influence on the form Virgil used. His choice of the quantitative hexameter for the more strongly stressed Latin language imposed on the normal stress pronunciation an artificial scheme of scansion according to long and short syllables, creating the potential at every point for either coincidence or conflict of these two rhythms.[2] This forced on the reader the impression that Virgil was deliberately and obviously modifying the Idylls or much of the Greek legacy.

One significant advantage that Virgil's language enjoyed was its power to modulate from "high" to "low" registers. As Latin had no literary dialects, the transition from the pastoral's more figurative passages to its more particular references could be dramatic. For example, in an effort to reproduce something of the effect of Theocritus's Doric Virgil can put into the mouths of his herdsmen colloquial and archaic forms and idioms redolent of rural dialects. These colloquialisms are confined to conversation or in those parts of the formal songs that concern practical husbandry. It is hardly a coincidence that colloquialism is prominent in all the three parodies of the Eclogues cited in Donatus's Vita (174-77)[3] and Servius (on 5.36).[4] Horace's assessment of the Eclogues as 'molle atque facetum' would seem to suggest another viewpoint. In context, these remarks refer to style rather than matter and are meant to imply a register far removed from that of epic. The texture of Virgil's pastoral verse may be ironic at certain junctures but this is not a consistent trait. The combination of Latin rusticity with Greek colour, produced by the frequency of Greek proper names complete with Greek case forms, is the linguistic counterpart of the blend of Greek myth and Latin reality that is the distinctive characteristic of the Eclogues.

---

[1] See the praise heaped on Dryden's attempt by the anonymous contributor of commendatory verses to the Virgil, remarking how he could 'in fetter'd Rhyme inclose, / Which without loss can scarce be told in Prose' (Critical Heritage, p. 218). Dryden himself often remarked on the difficulties, see pp.115-19 and the passage at Essays, 1 : 256-57.

[2] The clearest accounts can be found in W.F. Jackson Knight, Accentual Symmetry in Vergil (Oxford, 1939) and L.P. Wilkinson, Golden Latin Artistry (Cambridge, 1963).

[3] Tiberius Claudius Donatus, Interpretationes Vergilianae, edited by Jacob Brumner (Stuttgart, 1969), 3 vols, 3: 10.

[4] Thilo-Hagen, 3: 58.

If Horace's phrase does not sufficiently describe the full impact of the poems, then it does point to one of their inspirations, the personal poetry of Catullus or the Hellenistic epigrammatists. The affinities between the Greek pastoral and the elegiac treatment of erotic themes are quite noticeable in Eclogues 2, 8 and 10. In Eclogue 2, Corydon's lament, there is a blend of several Theocritean lovers - the comic serenader of Idyll 3, the alienated reaper of Idyll 10 and, most noticeably, the pathetic Polyphemus of Idyll 11. Each of these figures, given a context that is more sympathetic, could come from the Roman elegiac tradition.[1] Damon and Alphesiboeus from Eclogue 8 present a contaminatio of motifs taken from the first two Idylls. Damon's goatherd, jilted by Nysa, contemplates suicide. This mood is broken by the girl in Alphesiboeus's song, a sister of Simaetha from Idyll 2, whose remedy for the faithlessness of her lover: the carmina of magic, is part of an optimistic counterpart to the earlier insistence on love's pains. Finally, in Eclogue 10, Virgil's friend and fellow-poet: Cornelius Gallus, is represented as languishing

---

1. This has been pointed out in both Georg Luck, The Latin Love Elegy (London, 1959),pp. 52-54, and R.O.A.M. Lyne, The Latin Love Poets: From Catullus to Horace (Oxford, 1980), pp. 297, 301.

in Arcady. The opening scene recalls the setting of Daphnis's death in Idyll 1, although Gallus's address to the Arcadians stands out as quite original. It is so through the mixture of non-pastoral motifs from elegy with more bracing Theocritean allusion.[1] In each of these adaptations of the Greek βουκόλος there is a careful engrafting of an elegiac cutting onto a more orthodox pastoral shoot.

Because, taken simply, this lyrical passivity is a quality that is new to pastoral, the Eclogues have frequently been represented as lyrical and passionate only. There are two main objections to this point of view. Firstly, at the same time as he substituted the idyllic Arcadia for the more localized Sicily, Virgil was at pains to introduce into it identifiable contemporary figures either as the singers of love-laments such as Gallus in Eclogue 10 or, alternatively, as reminders of a less introspective public life. Gallus, himself, is not stricken low by love in Eclogue 6, but is the object of a panegyric sung by the choir of Phoebus (64-66). Pollio enters Eclogues 3, 4 and 8[2] and both Varius and Cinna keep their identities as leading poets in Eclogue 9 (34-36). To miss these references is to lose the works' overall complexity. Johnson's comment on Eclogue 6 is very much to the point here: after conceding that it 'rises to the dignity of philosophic sentiment and heroic poetry' he concludes that since 'the compliment paid to Gallus fixes the transaction to his own time, the fiction of Silenus seems injudicious'.[3] This variety of subject and style is a contradiction of the principal assumption that because the pastoral's descriptions are of lowly people its style must reflect certain social assumptions about their simplicity and lack of social grace; if this otherwise seamless illusion is shattered by the intrusion of too much homely detail or philosophical speculation then the fictive process involved in appropriating Arcadia or Sicily is exposed.

---

[1] See especially the passages at 10.44-49, 53-54, with Coleman's commentary in his edition of the Eclogues, pp. 286- 90.

[2] At 3.88-89, 4 passim, 8.6.

[3] Works, 2 : 419 (edited by W.J. Bate, John M. Bullitt and L.F. Powell (New Haven, 1963).

Secondly, the lyrical songs that compose much of the individual *Eclogues* are frequently framed by sections where a narrator, audience or judge insulate the lyric moment from the reader. Even in *Eclogue* 2, Corydon's love-plaint at the loss of Alexis's affections, the intensity of the passion is attenuated in the poem as a whole by two factors. Primarily the song is an imitation of two *Idylls*: 3, in which a slighted lover pours forth his unchecked emotion and 11, in which the Cyclops Polyphemus bewails the cruelty of Galatea. This self-conscious re-casting of Greek bucolic material does not totally sacrifice its lyricism but does place it vulnerable to a critical eye. *Idyll* 11 provides not only the *topos* of the Passionate Shepherd but also much of the pathetic and wry comedy associated with him. Even though the Virgilian Corydon is no monster, there are residual echoes of Polyphemus's *gaucherie*, most noticeably in the naive boasts of lines 20 to 26 and 36 to 39, the jejeune commendations of lines 43-44 and 52 and the clumsy analogy of lines 63 to 65. As this is also reinforced by the retention of the helpless goatherd's self-absorbed meandering of *Idyll* 3, there is much to suggest that the frequent allusions to earlier bucolic material serve to detract from the nobility of the passion.

Indeed, this framing device is given obvious prominence by the scene-setting of the opening lines:

> Formosum pastor Corydon ardebat Alexim,
> delicias domini, nec, quid speraret, habebat.
> tantum inter densas, umbrosa cacumina, fagos
> adsidue veniebat, ibi haec incondita solus
> montibus et silvis studio iactabat inani. [ll. 1-5][1]

Corydon's ardent expressiveness is not granted the immediacy of a direct address to the reader, an intimacy enjoyed by the plain style of this opening. In line 4, veniebat like iactabat indicates that the performance was a repeated one so therefore the full force of incondita is unlikely to suggest an unpremeditated song. Servius had glossed the word by agrestia , implying that this artlessness had more to do with uncultivated rusticity and disjointedness than noble simplicity.[2] This same "low mimetic" approach is also supported by montibus et silvas and inani . Corydon's only audience is not the amenable woods of the more usual pastoral landscape but the more rugged climes of Eclogue 10. This ironic potential is not transmitted in any of the translations of the Augustan period. Nahum Tate's translation in Dryden's 1684 Miscellany may stand as a representative example:

> A Hopeless Flame did Corydon destroy,
> The lov'd Alexis was his Master's Joy.
> No respite from his Grief the Shepherd knew,
> But daily walk'd where shady Beeches grew:
> Where stretcht on Earth, alone he thus complains,
> And in these accents tells the Groves his pains. [p. 331]

Here the groves are free of rocks and are sympathetic. Banished is the reserve encouraged by Virgil's original techniques. Richard Maitland, the fourth Earl of Lauderdale's, Corydon is even able to be 'studious'.[3] Eclogue 2, which appears so unguardedly "pathetick", is streamlined by this form of critical attention. Dryden, by identifying Corydon closely with Virgil himself, is similarly unable to distinguish their separate "voices" until the anti-climax of the poem's conclusion. His first lines are at least neutral:

---

[1] 'Corydon, the shepherd, was on fire for the fair Alexis, his master's delight, and knew no hope. His one consolation was to go daily among the thick beeches with their shady tops, and there alone in fruitless passion fling these rough verses to the hills and woods.'

[2] Thilo-Hagen, 2.4 (3: 18).

[3] The Works of Virgil (London, 1737), 5 vols, 1 : 4.

> Young Corydon, th'unhappy shepherd swain,
> The fair Alexis lov'd, but lov'd in vain;
> And underneath the beechen shade, alone,
> Thus to the woods and mountains made his moan. [ll. 11 -14]

Irony and the Golden Age are difficult to reconcile. At the very least, the Arcadians would be seen as untutored and so unqualified to stand as an example for the present age if the Corydons of the *Eclogues* were too clearly exposed. The full account of Dryden's influence on subsequent readings of Virgil, or the lack of it, can only be adequately illustrated, however, by a larger sample. To this end as great a variety as possible of Virgilian pastoral needs analysing. *Eclogues* 1 and 9 are chosen because they both place lyrical sentiments against a backdrop of contemporary political upheaval. *Eclogue* 4 is a test-case for pastoral "simplicity"; its elevated theme and grand passages divide theorists as to its pastoral status. Finally, the influence of the *Idylls* and their transformation by Virgil is examined with special reference to *Eclogues* 3 and 5.

Eclogues 1 and 9

Both poems lend themselves to an autobiographical interpretation as has already been suggested. *Eclogue* 9 was read as a companion-piece to *Eclogue* 1, a poem which Dryden, Caryll and Trapp all manipulated into a form amenable to the events (as known) of Virgil's own life. *Eclogue* 9 is approached in the same spirit. Addison felt the need to acquaint the reader of Dryden's translation with a *dramatis personae*:

> When *Virgil* by the Favour of *Augustus* had recover'd his Patrimony near *Mantua*, and went in hope to take possession, he was in danger to be slain by *Arius*

> the Centurion, to whom those Lands were assign'd by the Emperour in reward of his Service against Brutus and Cassius. This Pastoral therefore is fill'd with complaints of his hard Usage; and the persons introduc'd are the Bayliff of Virgil, Mœris, and his Friend Lycidas. [2: 906]

Trapp's interpretation is similar. Those elements of the work which do not immediately conduce to this design, he accounts for by labelling them 'an ingenious Tissue of Poetical Fragments neatly inserted, and interwoven' (p. 79). Interpretation, it would seem, could go no further. What is more, Servius had endorsed this view and so granted it a scholarly authority, at the expense, perhaps, of some of the finer points and more truly Virgilian touches of the poem's internal evidence.[1]

There is much doubt as to just how specific the geographical and historical references actually are and so how reliable this autobiographical approach is. Gordon Williams has recently stressed how needlessly ambiguous Virgil was if writing autobiographically. Firstly, unlike Eclogue 4, there is no clear mention of a date in the poems. 'This is important because the relevance of Pollio's consulship to the deciphering of Eclogue 4 is indispensable. Therefore, it may be assumed that Virgil would have been more explicit if precise historical information were essential.'[2] Secondly, with special reference to Eclogue 1, Williams has little confidence in the tradition that the landscape of the poem is Mantuan. On the contrary, if anywhere, it suggests the transfigured Sicily of the Idylls: 'Since he wished to use the land-confiscations as the backcloth to the poem, he had to set it in Italy. But he has simply transferred the whole apparatus of bucolic poetry to Italy, and the landscape that results is Sicily-in-Italy ...' Finally, in both Eclogues, the names are Greek or of Greek origin. Considering

---

1. Thilo-Hagen, 9.1 (3: 108-9).

2. Tradition and Originality in Roman Poetry (Oxford, 1968), p. 308.

this collision between the Hellenistic and the Roman, precise analogues do not alone explain, much less interpret, the poems (p. 309).

Williams's line on these poems is a caveat to the allegory-hunters and suggests an alternative to the dominant interpretation of the years 1680 to 1730 not so as to arraign Dryden or Trapp for critical blindness but to illustrate what their readings of the poems omitted and thus what model of Virgilian pastoral they formed for themselves and their readers. In Eclogue 1, for example, there are several details that serve no obvious political purpose. Prominent among these is Meliboeus's Fortunate senex speech. Its positioning and dramatic particularity lend it an emphasis quite out of keeping with a purely allegorical purpose (46-58). The same could surely be said of Tityrus's magnanimity of his closing speech: the offer of hospitality towards the dispossessed Meliboeus (79-83). In Eclogue 9, there are similar instances such as Moeris's pessimistic exasperation at the ineffectiveness of poetry to change events (11-13), the songs of Menalcas (39-43, 46-50) and the sudden hint of mortality in the encounter with Bianor's tomb (51-60). This has led several modern commentators to develop a pluralist model for interpretation or at least a synthesis of two conflicting possibilities, the most famous being Erwin Panofsky's appreciation of the closing lines of Eclogue 1: 'In Virgil's ideal Arcady human suffering and superhumanly perfect surroundings create a dissonance. This dissonance, once felt, had to be resolved, and it was resolved in that vespertinal mixture of sadness and tranquility which is perhaps Virgil's most personal contribution to poetry ...'[1] This has led to a range of interpretations just as unified as the autobiographically allegorical ones, to the extent that Friedrich Klingner can claim that the conclusion of the poem is where 'the sense of opposites, the union of polarities in tension, changes into a centred, relaxed, static unity'.[1] The two extremes of allegorical polemic and lyrical calm have each attracted their own commentaries on the poems. There is much to suggest that, despite the varied kinds of pastoral found in the *Eclogues*, these alternatives are more opposed in the commentaries on individual poems than in the organization of the collection itself.[2] Throughout the *Eclogues*, Arcady is associated with values that are under threat: simplicity, contentment with little, delight in one's surroundings and the beliefs that have sprung from this pleasure, and finally a tradition of friendly hospitality devoted to both poetry and peace. Within each individual poem the demonstration or praise of these sentiments is more lyrical than in Theocritus, yet taken as a whole, the *Eclogues* are more consistently satirical about contemporary events as well. Urban life is often a destroyer or opponent of the pastoral ideology. In *Eclogue* 2 the urban Alexis despises Corydon's rustic goodness of heart (28-36, 60-62).[3] Alphesiboeus casts charms to call Daphnis home from town in *Eclogue* 8 (68, passim), *Eclogue* 9 provides the reader with a city that is the goal of Moeris's distasteful journey to find his absentee landlord, and, finally, the *ingrata urbs* of *Eclogue* 1 preys on farmers in time of peace and has them at its mercy in war. This satiric

---

[1] Meaning in the Visual Arts : Papers in and on Art History (New York, 1955), p. 300.

---

1. "Virgil's First Eclogue", *Römische Geisteswelt*, 4th edition (Munich, 1961), pp. 325-26.

2. See the account by J.B. van Sickle, "The unity of the Eclogues: Arcadian Forest, Theocritan trees", *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association*, 98 (1967), 491-508.

3. A sentiment not unrecognised by Dryden. See lines 35 to 36 of *Eclogue* 2: 'O leave the noisie town, O come and see / Our Country Cotts, and live content, with me! ...' (2 : 878).

perspective only gradually takes shape but is at the very centre of the Golden Age myth, for walled cities, like heroic wars, are a symptom of priscae vestigia fraudis (4. 31). This hostility to the town is the logical counterpart to the idealism of most pastoral description. In Eclogues 1 and 9 this bifocal perspective is at its clearest.

(a) Eclogue 1

In miniature, the subject of the opening poem in Virgil's bucolic series expresses the tensions that are characteristic of the Eclogues as a whole. Meliboeus encounters Tityrus, piping contentedly by the roadside. The two men's fortunes are dramatically opposed. Meliboeus has had his land confiscated through political manoeuvring in far-off Rome but Tityrus, by taking the bold initiative of accosting and winning the favour of an influential patron there, has saved his patrimony. Tityrus has cause for thankful celebration and indulges in a humble panegyric on the iuvenis (often identified as Octavian) whose chance intercession has prolonged his stay in Arcadia. Meliboeus, on the other hand, is a victim of the impersonal forces of politics and circumstance and expresses this in a melancholic, even elegiac, voice which stands in bold contrast to Tityrus's complaisance. Ultimately, in a quieter coda to the piece, Tityrus offers Meliboeus food and shelter - for just one night, and directs his guest to the idyllic peace of their immediate surroundings of which both singers have been unaware.

As Paul Alpers has argued, the principal watershed for any reading lies in the importance given to characterization.[1] If Tityrus stands in dramatic contrast to Meliboeus, then that involves a set of further assumptions. Both characters must be seen to contend with one another, and Tityrus's self-satisfaction usually gains Meliboeus the Pyrrhic victory of the reader's sympathy. Alternatively, if the Eclogue is read as a lyric, then this self-satisfaction is considered a component of the poem's overall effect, culminating in the conciliatory gesture that marks the close of the poem. Either interpretation cannot hide the fact that the stylistic tenor of the piece is never consistent; indeed the very variation of styles and traditions alerts the reader to identifying and thus placing the poetic in a non-poetic context. The reader is constantly informed of the fictiveness of the poem he is reading.

---

[1] The Singer of the "Eclogues" : A Study of Virgilian Pastoral (Berkeley, Calif., 1979), pp. 68 ff.

This is apparent in the opening lines of the poem: the scene-setting of Meliboeus's opening speech:

> Tityre, tu patulae recubans sub tegmine fagi
> silvestrem tenui musam meditaris avena:
> nos patriae finis et dulcia linguimus arva;
> nos patriam fugimus: tu, Tityre, lentus in umbra
> formosam resonare doces Amaryllida silvas. [ll. 1-5][1]

The Loeb translation of H.R. Fairclough renders 'nos patriam' as 'our country'.[2] There is, however, nothing definite about the reference. Meliboeus feels the attraction of security and continuity, but of where is unresolved. The fagi of the first line and the reference to the hills of line 83 ('de montibus') both suggest that the Mantuan details of the poem are as direct a reference to the Mantua of Virgil's childhood as Gallus's Arcadia of Eclogue 10 is to its geographical namesake. Neither beeches nor hills are indigenous to the Mantuan plain and to help this effect of disorientation, Virgil's naming emphasises the

---

1. 'You, Tityrus, at ease beneath the spreading, sheltering beech, tune woodland musings on a delicate reed. We are exiles but you, Tityrus, stretched in the shade, teach the woods to resound with "fair Amaryllis".'

2. Virgil, translated by H. Rushton Fairclough (Cambridge, Mass., revised edition, 1934-35), 2 vols, 1 : 3.

Greek element. Tityrus is plucked out of *Idylls* 3 and 7, Meliboeus is derived from μελει αυτων των βοων ('he who has care of the cattle'), and Amaryllis means 'sparkling one' from the Greek αμαρυσσειν. The personification of 'resonare doces' caps this. Be the landscape Mantua or Arcadia, it will in any case be transformed by pastoral song.

Running counter to this is the powerful particularity of the references to the 'tenui avena', and the political unit of the country that Meliboeus is leaving at 'patriae finis'. *Avena* in its literal sense would mean 'oaten straw' or 'stalk' and coupled with *tenui* which Servius claimed expressed the *humilitas* of the genre,[1] could not only indicate a generic usage but also a very humble realism. 'Patriae finis' like *nobem* (19), *milo* (70) and the non-pastoral suggestions of *libertas* (27), *peculium* (32), *servitium* (40) and *limas* (53) break up this abstract grandeur and reminds the reader of the "real" conditions and limitations that life, untransfigured by the pastoral imagination, brings to bear on the herdsman or shepherd.

This at times dramatic alternation between the more idealized landscapes with primarily Hellenistic allusions and the strident immediacy of Latin political or technical vocabulary is usually initiated by Meliboeus, who constantly reverts from the fervour of his desires to the despair of his immediate prospects. The contrast between the two companions is best exemplified by the exchange of views on Tityrus's absence in Rome:

Tit.: quamvis multa meis exiret victima saepis,
pinguis et ingratae premeretur caseus urbi,
non umquam gravis aere domum mihi dextra redibat.

Mel.: Mirabar, quid maesta deos, Amarylli, vocares,
Cui pendere sua patereris in arbore poma:

---

[1] Thilo-Hagen, 4.2 (3: 44).

> Tityrus hinc aberat. ipsae te, Tityre, pinus,
> ipsi te fontes, ipsa haec arbusta vocabant. [ll. 33-39][1]

Tityrus uses his surroundings and moulds it to make money in the city. It is invariably from his lips that the technical phrases of the urban world enter the poem. Meliboeus, in contrast, surveys Nature as a spectacle, untransformed except by imagination. The poma (any 'stone- or seed-fruit') hung on their native trees in Tityrus's absence; Nature was whole and undisturbed; indeed, Meliboeus indulges himself in the bucolic commonplace of the pathetic fallacy to express absence. Even at the close of the poem, that lyrical equipoise of Klingner and Panofsky, there are discordant details:

> Hic tamen hanc mecum poteras requiescere noctem
> fronde super viridi: sunt nobis mitia poma,
> castaneae molles et pressi copia lactis;
> et iam summa procul villarum culmina fumant
> maioresque cadunt altis de montibus umbrae. [ll. 79-83][2]

In normal usage, the imperfect poteras implies an unreal condition: 'you could have, had you wished'.[3] Like many details in the Eclogues, care is taken to express ambivalence. villarum, a prosaic detail at the best of times, suggests a more substantial dwelling than the tuguria (68) that Meliboeus inhabited. Even at the close of the poem the reader is reminded of the disparities in fortune enjoyed by both men.

---

1. 'Tit.: Though many victims left my stalls, and many cheeses pressed for the thankless town, never were my hands weighed down with money. Mel.: I used to wonder, Amaryllis, why so sadly you called on the gods and for whom you allowed the apples to remain on their native trees. Tityrus was absent. The very pines, Tityrus, the very springs, the very orchards were here calling for you!'

2. 'However this night you could have rested here with me on the green leaves. We have ripe apples, soft roasted chestnuts and plenty of pressed cheeses. Already the rooftops in the distance are smoking and lofty hills let fall their lengthening shade.'

3. The invitation could be apologetic. Precedents for this can be found in Horace, Satires 2.1.16 or Ovid, Metamorphoses 1.679. Eclogues 2, 6, 9 and 10 all conclude with nightfall. The form of this invitation is perhaps an allusion to Polyphemus's offer to Galatea in Idyll 11.44.

Eclogue 1 is therefore a carefully calculated alloy of prosaic or realistic details amongst idealized contexts. Meliboeus's power to imagine a world different from the one he will have to tread in exile brings not solace, but pain. Tityrus supplies the pragmatism that resists such fruitless yearnings and which involves the crystalline decisiveness of boundaries, frontiers and the judicial faculty in general. Both protagonists may be said to contrast with one another and yet, due to their common concern and topics for conversation, they are yoked by the all-embracing processes of politics and Roman influence. The mere whim of the *iuvenis* has transformed their relation to one another, not any further distinction of humour or type.

The Renaissance legacy of searching for a historical analogue to Meliboeus's plight is clearly represented in Ogilby's translation. Prefixed to the translation is the motto:

> Sad *Meliboeus* banished declares
> Those miseries attend on civill Wars,
> But happy *Tityrus*, the safe defence
> People enjoy, under a setled Prince.[1]

Sidney's reading of *Eclogue* 1 is very near to this[2] and is here given a royalist nuance. The confiscations of 41-40 B.C. here parallel the appropriation of Royalist land by the Protectorate.[3] This identification

---

[1] *The Works of Virgil* (London, 1654), p. 1.

[2] See p. 16.

[3] Here, too, a victorious army rewarded its prominent members by land on easy terms. From 1649-53 the republican government produced over £7 million from confiscated lands and fines on Royalists. The estates of all substantial Royalists were sequestrated, that is, taken over by county committees, which collected rents and fines and then assigned leases. For a fuller account, see Christopher Hill, *The Century of Revolution, 1603-1714* (London, 1961), pp. 113-14, 125-28, and J.P. Cooper "Social and Economic Policies under the Commonwealth", pp. 140-42, and David Underdown, "Settlement in the Counties 1653-1658", pp. 168-82, both essays from *The Interregnum : The Quest for Settlement, 1646-1660*, edited by G.E.Aylmer (London, 1972). The lasting effect of this appropriation of land has been recently questioned by Joan Thirsk, "The Restoration land settlement", *Journal of Modern History* (1954), 315-24, 326, and

(Continued on p.167)

is helped by the choice of 'Sequestrations' to translate the phrase 'undique totis / usque adeo turbatur agris'.[1] As has already been noted, the translators later in the century could also read Virgil's work allegorically but restrict its terms of reference to Virgil's own life. This pre-empts any attempt to modernize the themes of the poetry. In place of Ogilby's appropriation of the source text for contemporary political comment, Dryden, as read by Addison, represses this "textualizing" of the work.[2] Therefore, Eclogue 1 becomes an 'Instance' of Virgil's gratitude, 'where he sets out his own Good Fortune in the person of Tityrus, and the Calamities of his Mantuan Neighbours in the Character of Meliboeus' (2: 873). Recent readings of Dryden's later work have stressed the neutrality of his translations.[3] The Protestant revolution of 1688 had left the author of such virulent anti-Whig satires as The Medal (1682) both without influential patronage and a laureateship. In turning to translation, Dryden was effectively turning to his reverence for certain eternal values for

---

(3 continued)
H.J. Habakkuk, "Landowners and the Civil War", Economic History Review, 2nd series, 18 (1965), 130-31, 143-44, 147-48. Ogilby, in 1654, however, would have noted only a tremendous upheaval in what had been a time-honoured and coherent community. For the Roman confiscations, see M. Winterbottom, "Virgil and the Confiscations", Greece and Rome, 2nd series, 23 (1976), 55-59, and Lawrence Keppie, "Vergil, the Confiscations, and Caesar's Tenth Legion", The Classical Quarterly, N.S. 31 (1981), 367-70.

[1] '... such unrest is there all over the land.'

[2] I here use the distinctions found in Roland Barthes, "From Work to Text", Image - Music - Text, Essays selected and translated by Stephen Heath (London, 1977), pp. 155-64. A 'work' may exist in a Newtonian sense, 'a fragment of substance, occupying a part of the space of books (in a library for example), the Text is a methodological field ..., the one is displayed, the other demonstrated' (156-57).

[3] See especially, William Myers, Dryden (London, 1973), pp. 150-69.

inspiration, those not tarnished by temporal disturbances. Virgil would speak standard English, but his patrons and exemplary protagonists were stubbornly Roman. It is in the interests of discovering what values were inscribed in the form rather than in the topics for poetry that Dryden should be read in his later years. Eclogue 1, as indeed Eclogue 9, contains no lubricious material, the kind of libertine expansiveness with which he associates the pastoral in his translation of Idyll 3 or "A Pastoral Dialogue betwixt Thyrsis and Iris" from Amphitryon (1690). On the contrary, both poems portray a lack of possession with a carefully elegiac grace.

A glance, however, at the "Dedication to the Aeneis" establishes the fact that Dryden appreciated both the moral qualities of Aeneas and the political acumen of his author, who, cherishing 'republican principles' (2 : 170), had to obey passively under a monarchical system. The identification with Dryden himself becomes clear even if implicit. In acknowledging the advantages of Augustus's rule, 'he concluded it to be the interest of his country to be so governed; to infuse an awful respect into the people towards such a prince; by that respect to confirm their obedience to him, and by that obedience to make them happy. This was the moral of his divine poem.' (2 : 171-72)[1] Eclogues 1 and 9 are so near to this sentiment in the resigned grief of Meliboeus or the battle-weariness of both Moeris and Lycidas that there is an added significance to the autobiographical allegory that Addison felt

---

1. R.D. Williams points out in his "Changing Attitudes to Virgil", Virgil, edited by D.R. Dudley (London, 1969), Studies in Latin Literature and its Influence No. 5, pp. 119-38, that both Dryden and Virgil were 'deeply interested in the processes and problems of political order, and the nature of true authority. Many pages of the dedication are taken up with a defence of the moral virtues of Aeneas against those critics who had detracted from them' (p.125). In the Dedication to the Examen Poeticum (1693), Dryden denigrates the Homeric hero in favour of Aeneas, despising that 'race of men who can never enjoy quiet in themselves, till they have taken it from all the world'. In contrast appear the 'lovers of peace, or at least of more moderate heroism' (2: 13-14).

Dryden had represented: the identification of Virgil's own predicament with Dryden's increasingly pacifist stance. What appears to be a step back from the fray in the retirement both from the stage and the writing of contemporary satire for the relative neutrality of translation is a return to it in Attic garb. What has often been passed over as redundant rhetoric in his dedication "To the Right Honourable Hugh Lord Clifford, Baron of Chudleigh" which is prefixed to the "Pastorals" is indeed the construction of a *persona* that is more fully elaborated in the poems themselves. Thomas, Lord Clifford, Hugh's father, had been Dryden's patron and had relinquished the Treasureship because of the 1673 Test Act and his continued support for the more absolutist and so "Catholic" policies that Charles II sporadically endorsed.[1] 'He was that Pollio, or that Varus, who introduced me to Augustus;' claimed Dryden in 1697, an influence that 'ripened the fruits of poetry in a cold climate; and gave me wherewithal to subsist at least, in the long winter which succeeded.' The new Lord Clifford ensures not only continued sustenance for Dryden but also for his father's values.[2] The very first sentences of the 'Dedication' emphasise this fact cogently:

> I have found it not more difficult to translate Virgil, than to find such patrons as I desire for my translation. For though England is not wanting in a learned nobility, yet such are my unhappy circumstances, that

---

1. Two months later, Dryden was to dedicate his propaganda play *Amboyna* (1673) to him, a performance designed to sustain patriotism during the Third Dutch War. The *Prologue* to the play begins:
   As needy Gallants in the Scriv'ners hands,
   Court the rich Knave that gripes their Mortgag'd Lands,
   The first fat Buck of all the Season's sent
   And Keeper takes no Fee in Complement: (1 : 150).
   In the *Epilogue* (1 : 152), the Dutch 'Common-wealth' is seen to have 'set 'em free, / Onely from Honour and Civility' (11-12). It is unlikely, therefore, that the dedicating of the translations of the *Eclogues* to Clifford's son was anything other than a political gesture.

2. *Selected Criticism*, p. 283.

> they have confined me to a narrow choice. To the greater part, I have not the honour to be known; and to some of them I cannot show at present, by any public act, that grateful respect which I shall ever bear in my heart. [p. 279]

It appears Dryden had as much in common with Meliboeus as with Tityrus.

In Dryden's Eclogue 1, the contrasts exploited in the Virgilian text are emphasised by several additions. Private otium yields to universal discordia, private libertas to universal servitium. Myth is a vulnerable luxury, beset by the exigencies of economic and political survival. Meliboeus announces his exile by opining that he will 'Round the wide World in Banishment ... rome' (3). Whilst Tityrus observes the general unrest, Dryden's imagination supplies details: 'while the raging Sword and wasteful Fire / Destroy the wretched Neighbourhood around' (14-15) and Meliboeus's renunciation of his 'tuneful Pipe' means that 'No more [his] Song shall please the Rural Crue' (111), showing a worldly wisdom more conducive to the assumptions of writer or reader than to consistency of character. The passage that is most indicative of the transformation that Dryden undertakes is that of Meliboeus's description of exile (67-72). Forgotten are the self-ironies and humilities of the Virgil who provides him with a humble cottage and turf-clad roof, a kingdom composed of a few ears of corn and the unhappiness at the prevalence of strife.[1] Dryden' alternative could have stepped out of the pages of his experiments in Heroic drama:

> O, must the wretched Exiles ever mourn,
> Nor after length of rowl'ing Years return?
> Are we condemn'd by Fates unjust Decree,
> No more our Houses and our Homes to see?
> Or shall we mount again the Rural Throne,
> And rule the Country Kingdoms, once our own!
> Did we for these Barbarians plant and sow,
> Good Heav'n, what dire Effects from Civil Discord flow!
> [ll. 91-99][2]

---

[1] Tuguri (68) was used to denote a temporary shelter or crude hut such as slaves occupied, several degrees lower than Dryden's 'houses' (94).

[2] Poems, 2 : 876.

Meliboeus's otherwise pathetic acceptance of his lot is given epic scope and a tragic grandeur, sacrificing the interest in Tityrus's character which might have been possible to portray in a more subdued key but never in these sounding lines. What is gained, however, is a view of Meliboeus's vehemence and emotional involvement which is surely there in the Latin alliteration in line 68 or the frequent homodynes (impius, haec, culta) which reinforce the metrical rhythms of lines 70 and 71. What would have hindered Dryden's broad sweep would have been an attempt to render faithfully the technical or prosaic details such as tuguri (68) reinforced by aliquot (69) or novalia (70). This energy is also not checked by the elegiac conclusion to the poem. Whereas Virgil had left the reader with the "pleasance" of shadows falling from the mountain-top, Dryden inverts the last couple of lines to sound a much more optimistic note: 'For see yon sunny Hill the Shade extends; / And curling Smoke from Cottages ascends' (117-18).[1] In so doing, he is intent in communicating the Golden Age shepherd "aristocrats", rulers of their own flocks, unconstrained by superior power. Such hubris can even transform the louring shadows to mere breaks in a bright sunset. Such a dramatic contrast between these two readings points to the adoption of two alternative pastoral myths. One could be characterized by the Meliboean complaint (46-58): an idealized appreciation of the landscape motivated by the prospect of losing it. The other is selected from the indignant Meliboeus's outburst (64-78) portraying an epic manner, undegenerate and negligent of the demeaning particulars of labour.

---

1. There is no hint of the hill being 'sunny' in Virgil. Dryden "borrowed" these two lines from John Caryll's translation for the 1684 Miscellany.

The contrast with Lauderdale's version is both instructive and consistent. In the "Preface" to the translation, there is praise for Virgil's 'Easie, Plain, Natural, and Unaffected' pastoral style.[1] What, in effect, this encourages is a "Retirement" poem. This is evident in Tityrus's opening speech, where line 6 of Virgil: 'O Meliboee, deus nobis haec otia fecit'[2] is rendered as 'This soft Retirement some kind God bestow'd' (8). For Tityrus in the source text, the struggle still continues but it can be born in familiar surroundings; in the Lauderdale, the intervention of the _iuvenis_ has procured rest and content. Furthermore, the careful choice of _calamo ... agresti_ (10)[3] is represented by the conventional 'tender Reed' (15). Tityrus's woodland muse becomes soft and tender, associated quite explicitly with the tradition of contemplative retirement. As he has not been a town-dweller on anything other than a market-day, this wording involves a decisive re-moulding of the terms of the poem. If Meliboeus is merely bemoaning his exile from some _locus amoenus_, however near the terms may seem in the _fortunate senex_ passage (46ff), then the immediacy of his plight is mitigated and his lyrical evocations of his past life mere gesturing.

It is indicative of this "passionate" _Eclogue_ that Lauderdale excises the uncertainty inherent in Tityrus's closing offer of hospitality:

> With me this Night a homely Lodging take,
> A leafy Carpet for your Bed I'll make;
> New Cheese and Chestnuts are our Country Fare,
> With mellow Apples for your welcome Chear.

---

[1] _Works_, 1 : xi-x.

[2] 'O Meliboeus, a god created this peace for us ...'

[3] 'Rustic pipe.'

See from those Shepherds Cots the Smoke arise;
The length'ning Shades of younder Hill descries
The Night's approach, as light forsakes the Skies. [1 : 4]

Here is that vespertinal balance identified by Panofsky. Villarum become 'Shepherds Cots' and, in so doing, Lauderdale defines the dwellings for us. The same could be said of 'Country Fare' or 'homely Lodging' in that the adjectives provide us with spectators' categories. Country dwellers should not be aware, through lack of contrast, that their dwellings are 'homely'. In each case, the change has come about by embellishment not an inability to come to terms with the original complexity.

(b) Eclogue 9

The translations of Eclogue 9 confront problems also associated with the first. This is in part due to the shared subject-matter. Lycidas meets Moeris on his way to town and is told how, contrary to common belief, the songs of Menalcas had not saved the confiscation of their property. Indeed, Moeris is doubtful about the potency of Art to affect life and alter history. This leads to both the wayfarers trying to remember Menalcas's songs. What they can recall comes only in snatches; the inspiration of Menalcas's example and presence is wanting. Although reminiscent of Idyll 7, the analogy demonstrates how Eclogue 9 differs from the Greek in its conclusion and style.[1] The encounter between Lycidas and Simichidas leads to a virtuoso display of song, a prelude to the description of the harvest-feast at the Idyll's conclusion. Here the meeting leads to the exchange of sad news and wistful memories celebrated unsuccessfully by fragments from the past. There is only the pious hope that Menalcas will return to sustain inspiration. Absent is the sustained

---

1. There is much that is meant to recall Idyll 7, namely the presence of Lycidas, the encounter on a journey and numerous echoes in detail, for example, at lines 1, 32-36, 42, 59-61, 64.

energy of Meliboeus's indignation and Tityrus's self-satisfaction. As in *Eclogue* 1, however, the stern reality of the possession of land signalled by the prosaic, even legal vocabulary is often juxtaposed with the abstracted and idealistic passages where Art has allowed Man to soar free of more basic matters. The result could serve not only to render the lyricism more vulnerable and tender but also, if not alternatively, to place it in perspective by suggesting its merely relative validity.

As is the case with most classical pastoral, the landscape seems to be identifiable and yet on closer inspection it fades into abstraction. The explicit mention of Mantua (28) seems to allow an autobiographical reading. Certainly this was already accepted by Quintillian (VIII.6.46) and assumed by Donatus and Servius.[1] The mention of *colles* (7) and *fagos* (9) is inconsistent with the Mantuan terrain, and, most significantly, the interpretation of *Aequor* (57) (from *aequus*) should suggest the presence of the sea.[2] If strictly interpreted as personal allegory, then the land-locked Mantuan landscape must be sacrificed, or rescued only by the most ingenious sophistry.[3] A particularized Roman landscape would not have accommodated such Greek names as Lycidas and Moeris very easily either. The most striking aspect of the landscape is that it is a potential pastoral setting. What is also evident is that this abstraction is studded with references to particular locations and also more prosaic surroundings. This is illustrated by the opening lines:

---

1. *Vita*, 262-80; Thilo-Hagen, 9.1 (3: 108-9).

2. It has been suggested that this water is from Lake Garda or the Sicilian sea of Theocritus (*Virgil : The Eclogues and Georgics*, translated by R.D. Williams (New York, 1979), p. 128). Both Williams and Coleman (p. 270) take issue with Servius's claim that *stratum ... aequor* refers to a flat plain: *spatium campi* (9.57, 3: 117).

3. The sense of 'sea-water' is perhaps strengthened by the obvious Theocritean source: *Idyll* 2. 38.

> *Lycidas*
> Quo te, Moeri, pedes? an, quo via ducit, in urbem?
>
> *Moeris*
> O Lycida, vivi pervenimus, advena nostri
> (quod numquam veriti sumus) ut possessor agelli
> diceret: 'haec mea sunt; veteres migrate coloni.' [ll.1-4][1]

This is by no means an Arcadian opening. Unlike *Eclogue* 1, it is the secure herdsman who speaks first and locates the poem somewhere between country and town. Moeris's answer has connotations of contempt and disturbance, both emotional and physical. The unArcadian realism of *advena*, *possessor*, and *migrate coloni* sets a pattern only temporarily transformed by the Menalcan fragments which supply a glimmering light amidst more pervasive gloom. Indeed, the most pleasant evocation of Arcadia is immediately followed by a Theocritean allusion that dispels it:

> quis canaret Nymphas? quis humum florentibus herbis
> spangeret aut viridi fontis induceret umbra?
> vel quae sublegi tacitus tibi carmina nuper,
> cum te ad delicias ferres, Amaryllida, nostras?
> 'Tityre, dum redeo (brevis est via) pesce capellas,
> et potum pastes age, Tityre, et inter agendum
> occusare capo (cornu ferit ille) caveto.' [ll. 19-25][2]

The consolations of Art in soothing grief are represented by a clear allusion to the first lines of *Idyll* 3. The disparity, however, indicates the debased inspiration of the present on the one hand and on the other, by interpolating a Theocritean passage, the literary critic can compliment himself in noting a most prosaic aspect of an earlier

---

1. '*Lyc.*: Where are you walking to, Moeris? To town, where the path leads?
   Moe.: O, Lycidas, that we should have lived to see the day - an evil never dreamed of - when an invader, owner of our little farm, could say: "This is mine; off with you, old ploughmen!"'

2. 'Who would hymn the Nymphs? Who would strew the ground with flowers and herbs, or curtain the springs with green shade? Or those songs I craftily caught thee singing the other day, when you were travelling to our darling Amaryllis? "Tityrus, till I return - the way is short - feed my goats; and then drive them, Tityrus, to water, and whilst you are doing that, careful not to get in the goat's way - he butts with that horn of his."'

tradition. However, as Putnam among others has pointed out, this allusion is not chosen simply for contrast of a stylistic nature.[1] The most trouble that Menalcas could expect in his serenading of Amaryllis would be to return to find Tityrus exasperated at a familiar bucolic hazard: the goat's horns. This simplicity contrasts with the interrupted rhythm of life outside the song.

As with Eclogue 1, the translator has two central issues to consider. Firstly, there is the problem posed by the obvious lack of awareness and discipline of the herdsmen which is instantly dismissed when they come to sing. This in its turn demands some flexible characterization. Secondly, Lycidas and Moeris are placed outside Arcadia both spatially and temporally. In Menalcas's absence, that vivid communion with their surroundings hymned by him has deserted them both. It must be suggested, therefore, that Arcadia is only a memory recaptured in Menalcas's songs. Once again, Lauderdale's translation offers a clear contrast to Dryden's handling. Heavily influenced by the desire in French neo-classicism to find a *locus amoenus* whenever pastoral song is attempted, Lauderdale softens Virgil's more *chiaroscuro* effects. His Moeris is not so wounded by the confiscation as Virgil's. Indeed the bitter, rather precipitate delivery of his first speech becomes orderly and cultivated in Lauderdale's translation:

> 'Tis much we have escap'd thus far alive;
> This Day I thought not, *Shepherd*, to survive:
> When I shou'd hear a Stranger say; This Ground,
> And all these fertile Fields by me are own'd:
> Be gone, you Rascals, from this pleasant Farm;
> Discons'late we depart, for fear of Harm. [ll. 3-8][2]

---

1. *Virgil's Pastoral Art : Studies in the Eclogues* (Princeton, N.J., 1970), pp. 307-8; see also William Berg, *Early Virgil* (London, 1974), p. 135: '... the atmosphere of dark foreboding is quickly dispelled with a quotation from Menalcas' poetry, through which Virgil shows how thoughts can be led away from the brutality of real events into a peaceful, idyllic world.'

2. *Eclogue* 9 is found at *Works*, 1: 27-29.

In Virgil there is no mention of the fertile fields or the pleasant ambience of the smallholding. The only detail is conveyed by the diminutive form: agelli, which helps express a sense of personal loss. This is only one of the several modifications that Lauderdale includes in his translation. In Virgil, there is great disparity between Lycidas and Moeris, conveyed as much by rhythm as their topics for conversation.[1] The homogeneity of the poem, as is the case with Eclogue 1, is frequently threatened. To some extent, this is due to the amoebaean structure which allows alternative characteristics of speech-pattern or perspective a loose enough framework. Lauderdale frequently blunts the edges of these differences until Lycidas and Moeris are both Arcadians. This is why when there is some lyric opportunity, it is emphasised:

> Lyc. Who of the Nymphs wou'd then bright Songs have made,
> The fruitful Soil with fragrant Flow'rs have spread,
> Or shelter Fountains with a leafy Shade?
>
> Compose such Songs as late from thee I took,
> When on our Amaryllis thou didst look,
> And with her Beauty charm'd, cast down thy Hook, [ll.27-32]

The triplets allow the moments to linger. Carefully censored is the suggestion that Lycidas stole the songs from Menalcas which is implicit in the verb sublegi ('I caught by stealth') (21) which is of colloquial usage.

The amoebaean structure is further splintered by the explicit quoting of Menalcas by both Lycidas and Moeris. In order to achieve as seamless an appearance as possible Lauderdale has both companions report Menalcas on his own behalf, and thereby removes mention of Tityrus, a detail that would have summoned up a parallel with Eclogue 1

---

1. For a fuller account, see Charles Segal's distinction between the enthusiastic Lycidas and the more sombre and stolid Moeris. "Tamen cantabitis, Arcades - Exile and Arcadia in Eclogues One and Nine", Arion 4, no. 2 (1965), 244ff.

and, most significantly, Idyll 3. This modification obliges several other changes. If both Moeris and Lycidas are quoting Menalcas from memory, then the passionate and Arcadian details thus introduced are a function only of that memory and now not directly present either in the lives of the singers or through their waning creative talents. Lycidas's claim at lines 32 to 36 that he is a poet is undercut by an accompanying modesty, that, when compared with Varius or Cinna, he but cackles as a goose among melodious swans. Lauderdale would fill the present tense of his lyric with the songs inspired by Menalcas not Menalcas's songs themselves. In so doing, he suggests that inspiration has not departed with Menalcas but that it still exists even if generated by his example. The analogy with the current debate between the Ancients and Moderns is unmistakable. It is not, however, Virgilian. This choice forces Lauderdale to modify several details, the most prominent being his omission in Moeris's penultimate speech, of the intense regret felt at loss of memory:

> Omnia fert aetas, animum quoque; saepe ego longos
> cantando puerum memini me condere soles:
> nunc oblita mihi tot carmina: vox quoque Moerim
> iam fugit ipsa; lupi Moerim videre priores
> sed tamen ista satis referet tibi saepe Menalcas. [ll. 51-55][1]

Lauderdale's version is significantly silent about Menalcas and also does not try to reproduce the abruptness of Virgil's disconnected syntax, namely the expressive pauses at the bucolic diaeresis in lines 51, 53, and after the third-foot trochee in 54 which divide the passage into stark unconnected phrases. Indeed, besides the quoque of line 53, there are no grammatical connections in the source text. Lauderdale's Moeris seems positively sociable by comparison:

---

1. 'Time robs us of all, even our memory; I would often when a boy lay the long summer days to rest with a song. Now I have forgotten them all. Even my voice now fails me, Moeris; wolves have seen me first. Still Menalcas will repeat them for you when you like.'

'Tis Time brings all things forth, we all decay;
I when a Boy consum'd a Summers Day
In singing; but my Voice, alas! is gone;
My Voice and tuneful Notes fled with my Song,
As if I'd seen a Woolf; but yet you can,
If you're requir'd, repeat them o'er again. [ll. 71-76][1]

This sober cheerfulness is even more evident if the preceding two lines are quoted which share the 'decay/Day' rhyme: 'Graft Pears for Daphnis; After-Ages may / Be glad to crop, and bless the joyful day' (ll. 69-70). As these are the last lines of a Menalcan fragment, then it is fair to suppose that Lauderdale is compromising the despair expressed by Moeris by including a formal continuity between the optimistic praise of Caesar and the following intimations of mortality. This continuity is helped by a textual interpretation not now shared by editors of the Eclogues. One of the Codices Palatinus (P^2) (4th-5th century) includes the praise of Caesar in Moeris's speech on mortality. The two other texts then known to translators, namely the Codex Mediceus (5th century) (M) and another Codex Palatinus (P^1) give the praise of Caesar to the consistently more optimistic Lycidas to which the elegiac lines on the loss of one's faculties given to Moeris stand in stark contrast. The distribution of P^2 is accepted by Ogilby, Dryden and Trapp so it is not a characteristic of Lauderdale's translation alone. However, the effect of this choice of text is to blend the characters of Moeris and Lycidas and thus mitigate the sharp alternation of mood found in the rest of the poem.

Lauderdale's interpretation appears more tendentious if it is remembered that Ogilby viewed Eclogue 9 as a political allegory.

---

[1] Ogilby's version is neither as regular as this nor as acquiescent:
Age all things wasts; the minde too; I a boy
With song have often tir'd the summers sun,
Now all those straines are lost, and my voyce gone; (p. 36)
The sense of animum (51) also suggests that there is a weakness in the will or desire to sing.

His Argument to the poem runs:

> Best Princes Peace affect, and more delight
> Their Subjects to preserve, than their own right;
> But those who follow War no power can awe,
> Swords make oppression just, and madness Law. [p. 34]

Lauderdale's depoliticization of the Eclogue is, seen in this light, all the more remarkable.

Dryden's version for the 1684 Miscellany and the Virgil are very much the same poem. It has only occasionally the epic bravura of Eclogue 1. Furthermore, as suggested in the headnote, an autobiographical interpretation led him to emphasise the darker elements introduced by Moeris, who as Virgil's bailiff cuts a less exalted figure than Tityrus/Virgil of Eclogue 1. The grand gesture of Lycidas when he hears of the threat to Menalcas's life, is when seen in context, less direct than most of Meliboeus's bravado:

> Now Heaven defend! could barbarous rage induce
> The Brutal son of Mars, t'insult the sacred Muse!
> Who then shou'd sing the Nymphs, or who rehearse
> The waters gliding in a smoother Verse! [ll. 23-26][1]

Lycidas tries the heroic voice and then a smoother cadence, casting doubt as to which would be the more valid and direct a reflection of his own character. Indeed, Dryden's translation is mindful of the various "voices" heard in the poem. Lycidas and Moeris quote Menalcas, not adapt him. Even the 'grim captain' is given a conversational delivery:

> When the grim Captain in a surly tone
> Cries out, pack up ye Rascals and be gone.
> Kick'd out, we set the best face on't we cou'd, [ll. 6-8]

The result of this is that the lyricism of Menalcas's songs is obvious and differentiated from the "reality" of the road to town. These fragments provide Dryden the opportunity for a license he does not

---

1. The full text of Dryden's translation can be found in Poems, 2: 906-9.

often indulge elsewhere. The lyrical invitation to Galatea that Moeris remembers (39-43) is introduced in a most tentative spirit:

> 'Tis what I have been conning in my mind:
> Nor are they Verses of a Vulgar kind.
> Come Galatea, come, the Seas forsake,
> What pleasures can the Tides with their hoarse murmurs make?
> See on the Shore inhabits purple spring;
> Where Nightingales their Love-sick ditty sing;
> See Meads with purling Streams, with Flow'rs the ground,
> The Grottoes cool, with shady Poplars crown'd,
> And creeping Vines on Arbours weav'd around.
> Come then and leave the Waves' tumultuous roar,
> Let the wild surges vainly beat the shore. [ll. 49-59]

What is enhanced by this self-conscious performance is the disparity between the iron time and the golden lines. Dryden, aware of the untidy join between the song of Caesar's stellification and the evidence of Moeris's failing memory, does not attempt to conceal it. The spell once cast is easily broken, if not by the decay of the body, then by the forces of war. The invitation to Galatea in Virgil had no equivalent for several details: the 'hoarse murmurs', the poeticism of the literal translation of purpureum by 'purple', nightingales singing love-songs, 'purling' streams and the 'tumultuous roar' of the waves. This has two effects: Firstly, through the phonic and descriptive additions, Dryden accentuates the visual delights painted by Menalcas. In the original, the tone is more imploring through the repetition of hic (40-41). Secondly, the poem-within-the-poem is longer and more finished than Virgil's. Hence the return to prosaic affairs is more sudden and the effort to fabricate this descriptive opulence more manifest.

That Dryden is consistently highlighting the effort of composition is most evident when he translates the anti-climactic concluding couplet spoken by Moeris. Lycidas has asked his companion to bide awhile by Bianor's tomb and to swap songs with him. Moeris declines the offer in a conversational and easy manner: 'Desine plura, puer, et quod nunc instat agamus; / carmina tum melius, cum venerit ipse, canemus' (66-67).[1] Dryden ascribes a most unpastoral sentiment to Moeris:

> Cease to request me, let us mind our way;
> Another Song requires another day.
> When good Menalcas comes, if he rejoyce,
> And find a friend at Court, I'le find a voice. [ll. 92-95]

It is the influence of the 'friend at Court' not the divinity of Menalcas's talent alone that sanctions the persistence of the shady bowers where nymphs disport themselves.[2] Just as in Tityrus's case, the slender reed needs powerful sponsors.

Dryden's predilection for the heroic gesture adds a defiance to Menalcas or the two herdsmen of Eclogue 9 that inevitably foregrounds the satiric contrasts between city bureaucracy and rustic powerlessness and between those in place and those out. His recent translations of Juvenal and Persius (1693) had not been afraid to dilute some of the close-packed contemporary details of the source-texts in order to universalise their 'Rome' and their age.[3] Attempts, however, to make Juvenal 'express the Customs and Manners of our Native Country, rather than of Rome' were ill-conceived for 'the Manners of Nations and Ages, are not to be confounded: We shou'd either make them English or leave them Roman' (Poems, 2: 669-70). The real enemy is the redundant perpetuation of classical detail, which obscures the drawing 'of Analogy, betwixt their Customes and ours' (Poems, 2: 670).[4] If, as

---

1. 'Let's cut it short, lad and attend to business. Our songs we will perform better, when the master himself is come.'

2. The Virgil suggests a different emphasis, where Moeris rather painfully has to turn to the matter in hand and perhaps renounce song altogether.

3. Dryden is clear on this in his "Argument of the First Satyr" of Juvenal. He admits to having 'omitted most of the Proper Names, because I thought they wou'd not much edifie the Reader'. This has led to the omission of a 'borrow'd Learning of Marginal Notes and Illustrations' (Poems 2: 671).

4. For further examples, see Michael Wilding, "Dryden and Satire", Writers and their Background : John Dryden, edited by Earl Miner (London, 1972), pp. 218- 28.

Ogilby had done, Virgil's work had been given too native a feel, then the power of the pastoral muse to point to universal faults applicable to every metropolis would be lessened. As William Frost has noted, the Heroic and the Satiric were rarely divorced from one another either as powerful opposites or complementary modes in Dryden's translations.[1] In the "Discourse Concerning Satire" preceding the 1693 translations, satire is honoured as a fully-fledged branch of epic poetry.[2] In less localized models such as the Eclogues Dryden felt freer to widen their terms of reference, to supply an heroic flavour to the satire implicit in Virgil's original work. The "English Virgilian" style was enough to indicate current abuses without straying into a literal obviousness. When Dryden's Moeris points out that

> ... Songs and Rhimes
> Prevail, as much in these hard iron times,
> As would a plump or trembling Fowl, that rise
> Against an Eagle sousing from the Skies. [ll. 15-18]

he is reflecting, temporarily, his translator's situation as well. The Latin runs '... sed carmina tantum / nostra valent, Lycida, tela inter Martia, quantum / Chaonias dicunt aquila veniente columbas' (11-13).[3] The tela ... Martia refer less to times of war ('these hard iron times') and the Chaonias ... columbas are any 'plump of trembling Fowl' not specifically those from Chaonia.[4] Dryden's hands are not as free

---

1. Dryden and The Art of Translation (New Haven, 1955), pp. 67-68.

2. Satire is regarded there as a 'species' of heroic poetry (2: 108), and the most suitable form: 'the verse of ten syllables, which we call the English heroic' (2: 106).

3. 'But Lycidas, such songs avail as much when amidst the weapons of war as, they say, the doves of Chaonia when an eagle comes.'

4. tela inter Martia is emphatically isolated by rhythmic pauses on either side. Chaonia is a district of Epirus in north-west Greece and was the site of an ancient oracle (at Dodona) whose patrons were Zeus and Dione. Dodona declined with the rise of Delphi and was eventually sacked by the Aetolians in 219 B.C.. Its vulnerability to the eagle of the Roman army is thematically congruent with the sentiments of the poem as a whole.

with more famous pastoral poetry such as Eclogue 4. There the Christianizing of the sentiments expressed had already emptied the poem of some of its obvious capacity to refer to contemporary events. However, as Walsh and others were to show, it could still be enlisted for either mock-heroic satire or heroic optimism. The real test for Dryden's Virgil was its suitability as pastoral poetry, a decorum demanding a proximity to the education of a shepherd as well as a courtier.

Eclogue 4

Concluding Absalom and Achitophel (1681), Dryden had conceived the lasting value of Charles's restoration to the throne as another instance of Virgil's inspired prophecy:

> Henceforth a Series of new time began,
> The mighty Years in long Procession ran:
> Once more the Godlike David was Restor'd,
> And willing Nations knew their Lawfull Lord. [ll. 1028-31][1]

By 1700 the Sybilline prophecy is all but considered useless for an accurate description of the age. In the "Secular Masque" from The Pilgrim Momus sums up Dryden's sense of the futility that had accompanied most of the radical changes of the closing century:

> All, all, of a piece throughout;
> Thy Chase had a Beast in View:
> Thy Wars brought nothing about;
> Thy lovers were all untrue.
> 'Tis well an Old Age is out,
> And time to begin a New. [ll. 92-97][2]

The God of carping mockery is given the last word in this anti-Pollio.

This disillusionment or, at best, resignation, stands in stark contrast to the optimistic colouring Eclogue 4 usually projects in imitation or allusion. Earl Miner has noted the probability that

---

1. The full text is found at Poems, 1 : 215- 43.

2. The full text is found at Poems, 4 : 1762- 65.

Dryden's translation of the Pollio was a panegyric on the future birth of Princess, later Queen, Anne's first child not a covert satire.[1] As the child was stillborn on April 30, 1684, the immediate context for the poem altered drastically. It first appeared in the 1684 Miscellany, stripped of none of its occasional characteristics, such as the greater focus on the mother and the omission of the first half of line 6: 'iam redit et Virgo' - a Virgilian reference to the Goddess Astraea or Justice, but grossly inappropriate when applied to an expectant mother. The original gesture behind the translation, however, was not just a gracious compliment to a possible future monarch but also an acknowledgement that the birth might provide a regular Stuart succession which would, after James's death, promote a national unity acceptable to the moderate men of both parties.[2] This political motive did not pass unnoticed by the editors of the Poems on Affairs of State ... to this Present Year 1703, for amidst the Tory and Whig versions mentioned on page 132 they printed Dryden's Pollio as well. Not only did the Golden Age myth exploited by Virgil in Eclogue 4 recur in Dryden's work but it frequently appeared to reinforce an ecumenical political position, stressing the need for conciliation and tolerance in the face of anarchy and self-seeking ambition.

---

1. "Dryden's Messianic Eclogue", Review of English Studies, n.s. 11 (1960), 299-302.

2. Dryden's fear of faction in 1684 is noticeable. In 1683, the long-delayed staging of The Duke of Guise, written in collaboration with Lee, was finally allowed by Tory sheriffs in London. The Vindication of the play is a manifesto of Tory interests, designed to 'discover the original and root of the practices and principles' of his political opponents'(Scott-Saintsbury, 7: 151). In the Dedication to his translation of Maimbourg's History of the League (1684), Dryden warns the King that 'pardon's are grown dangerous to your safety, and consequently to the welfare of your loyal subjects' (S-S, 17: 83). The Tory victory at Charles's last Parliament (1681) had led him to believe he could do without consulting the Commons whose insistence on presenting Exclusion Bills for debate had been consistent and well-planned. Such Tory oligarchy was, however, financed by French money, and the Rye House Plot (1683) and the Popish Plot (1678) suggested that constitutional monarchy was not as secure as was believed at court.

Eclogue 4 suggests this political reading. Indeed, one of the difficulties that surrounds the poem is its non-pastoral details. The first three lines (quoted p.125) announce the work's departure not only from the 'arbusta ... humilesque myricae' (2) but also the Sicelides Musae (1) of Theocritus. A higher decorum is appealed to, that of the public world. Servius found it an honourable exception in the pastoral canon from the humble style expected of rustic description.[1] Furthermore, the canonical taste of the period, from Ogilby to Trapp delighted in a poem that was a pagan prophecy of the coming of Christ. In either case, the rustic references seem hard to assimilate. Ogilby's Argument to the poem suggests a standard form in antiquity:

> Here Sibill is appli'de to Pollio's son,
> Her Prophesies his Gnethliacon,
> But Christs birth he by happie error sings.
> The Prince of Poets crowns the King of Kings. [p. 14]

The genethliacon (birthday poem) such as Statius's Silvae 2.7 celebrated the birth of new hope along with the birth of a new child. What is peculiar to Virgil's version is the political colouring of the prophecy and the specific date that the Golden Age might gradually return:

> teque adeo decus hoc aevi, te consule, inibit,
> Pollio, et incipient magni procedere menses; [ll. 11-12][2]

This would indicate the start of Pollio's office in 40 B.C., and also fit the circumstances surrounding his consulship, namely his leading role in the negotiations that sealed the peace of the Treaty of Brundisium between Antony and Octavian.

This does not quite explain why Virgil should have been interested in framing his genethliacon in approximately the same locality, amongst

---

1. Thilo-Hagen, 4.1, 4.4, 3 : 44-45.

2. 'And it will be in your consulship, Pollio, yes yours, that this glorious age will commence, and the mighty months begin their march.'

the humble briars and tamarisks, as the other Eclogues. One answer is not hard to find. In addressing C. Asinius Pollio, Virgil is also hailing his patron and fellow poet. In Eclogue 3 Pollio is directly associated with the rustic muse: 'DAM.: Pollio amat nostram, quamvis est rustica, Musam' (84).[1] Pollio's patronage is both a political and a bucolic detail, a creation of literary mood as well as historical comment. Pollio's forthcoming consulship is the only political or historical reference in the poem, so it is more likely that the pastoral details are not excrescences but rather essential ingredients by which the plea for peace during the coming months is rendered persuasive and vital.

What is more, on closer inspection, the welcoming of the Golden Age becomes less unified and coherent. A rhapsodic panorama of apocalyptic ideas flow effortlessly through the main body of the poem: the Etruscan doctrine of Saecula, 'ages', which was the basis of Rome's ludi saeculares; the astronomical concept of the magnus annus, the 'great year', stemming from Pythagorean and Stoic thought; the image of the virgin Astraea whose return to the earth presages a new age of justice and a new race of golden men sent down from heaven, and perhaps in the successive regencies of Apollo and Saturn, some Orphic doctrine of world-ages, each with its president deity. These varied sub-myths are by no means mutually compatible. Their serendipitous association is an emotional, not a philosophical, one. Each of them has some close links with the ideal world of pastoral as well as an elevated local heroism. This is especially noticeable when Virgil depicts the gift of inspiration:

---

[1] 'Pollio appreciates my Muse, homely though she be ...'

> Pan etiam, Arcadia mecum si iudice certet,
> Pan etiam Arcadia dicat se iudice victum. [ll. 58-59][1]

This mellifluous parallelism modulates smoothly into the more intimate lyricism of the closing tableau: the smiling new-born child with mother. To represent the whole poem in terms of its rhapsodic prophecies is to simplify dangerously and to the detriment of the pastoral content.

This suppression of the pastoral elements is not obvious in Ogilby's translation. Indeed, the rhythmical regularity of the opening lines and the contrived rhymes point to a "lower", less elevated form:

> *Sicilian* Muses, sing me one note higher,
> All like not *tamarisk*, nor the humble *brier*:
> If *Woods* we sing, *Woods* worthy *Consuls* be,
> Last times are come, *Cumea's* Prophesie, ... [p. 14]

To render 'silvae sint consule dignae' as the positive '*Woods* worthy Consuls be' is a partial reading, one that assumes no inherent disparity between bucolic and political values. Indeed, the overall effect is to frame the Sibylline prophecy in a simple form with the odd local heroic ingredient. The portrayal of the Golden Age is devoid of studied elegance and sub-Virgilian golden lines. In its place is a more homely image:

> The *Goats* themselves shall home full udders bear,
> Nor shall the herds the mighty *Lyons* fear.
> Flowers shall thy cradle sprout, the *Serpent* shall
> And the deceitfull herb of venome, fall;
> In each place *Roses* of *Assyria* grow. ...
> The fields shall mellow wax with golden grain:
> The blushing *Grape* shall hang on thorns unset,
> And boystrous *Oke*, with dewy hony sweat. [p. 15]

Ogilby provided, for nearly fifty years, a version of the Golden Age that was merely one note higher than the Theocritean Doric, not a melody played on a different instrument altogether. In this passage the opening two rhymes are manifestly contrived. 'Bear' and 'shall' are weak words to accentuate and the enjambement after 'shall' is clumsy and rustic. The last three lines illustrate the view that Ogilby could manipulate rhyme to good effect.

---

[1] 'Even Pan, were he to contend with me and Arcady were judge, even Pan, with Arcady for judge, would admit defeat.'

Lauderdale's translation betrays the influence of Ogilby but only as a memory, or some version to fall back onto if inspiration fails.[1] What Lauderdale accomplishes is a hazy, less distinct (and faithful) translation. Given his care in the opening line to transform his more normally pathetic and lyrical bucolic setting into a sacred vision, he appropriates the poem by explaining what were felt to be more properly Christian details that Virgil, being a pagan, was unable to interpret. This is obvious in two sections where, although the alterations in each case are subtle, their overall effect is to limit the suggestiveness and heritage of the original. The first example is the opening of the prophecy:

> Now a great Progeny from Heav'n descends,
> The sacred Babe is born, Mankind defends;
> From the old iron Age of Sin makes free,
> And gives again the golden one of liberty. [ll. 8-11][2]

Virgil's lines are from a quite different tradition:

> iam nova progenies caelo demittitur alto.
> tu modo nascenti puero, quo ferrea primum
> desinet ac tote surget gens aurea mundo,
> cesta fave Lucina: ... [ll. 7-10][3]

Such phrases as nova progenies and gens aurea are consistent with the Hesiodic tradition, where each new age is marked by a newly-created race of men.[4] Ogilby, as well as Lauderdale, renders progenies as the

---

1. Compare Ogilby, ll. 31-40 and Lauderdale, ll. 39-50.

2. The full text is found at Works, 1 : 12-14.

3. 'Pure Lucina, please smile on the birth of the child, under whom the iron brood shall first cease, and a golden race emerge throughout the world!'

4. See Works and Days, 109-10, 128, 143-44, 158.

neutral 'progeny', yet in the later translation, the idea of a golden generation is dropped and made to refer to Christ, the 'sacred Babe'. In his effort to claim the nova progenies as a Christian detail, the reference is transformed from part of an invocation to Lucina to a clumsy restatement or clarification of the first line and a redundant and vague phrase to provide the rhyme in 'Mankind defends'. Similarly, Lauderdale identifies the Iron Age as Man's fallen state. 'Iron' is not granted a capitalized initial letter and the idea of Sin is introduced gratuitously. This substitution does affect the main assumption behind the re-appearance of the Golden Age: that it will be a gradual process.[1] Indeed, the birth of this new order is to be a painful one, involving a second race of heroes at war.[2] To support the Christian reading, Lauderdale provides a conflicting suggestion not found in Virgil to the effect that the new age will, by divine fiat, instantaneously replace Chaos:

> And now behold the unfix'd tott'ring World,
> Seas, Earth and Heav'n into Confusion hurl'd: [ll. 61-62]

These lines translate and 'explain' the phrase 'convesco nutantem pondere' (50). The strong vibration suggested by the use of nutare could imply imminent collapse,[3] but, given the context, this is extremely unlikely, for the verb can also be used to announce the advent of a god to his temple, whereupon the perturbation of the elements, although fearful to those living at that time, could not appear so in the context of a prophecy. It must also be noted that the very next line suggests that this disturbance is a joyous exultation: 'aspice venturo laetentur ut omnia saedo!' (52).[4] Furthermore, convesco ... pondere implies not

---

1. See lines 31 to 36 for Virgil's account.

2. See Aeneid, 2.629.

3. Virgil uses nutare in this sense at Aeneid, 3.90-92.

4. 'Look, how everything exults at the age that is at hand!'

confusion or giddiness but a massive globe, although swaying, maintaining its position despite this.[1]

The result of this Christian reading is the diminution of what pastoral references there are in the poem, as if the possibility of a less portentous treatment put the devotion of the whole in doubt. It has often come to critical notice how consistent is the intimacy between poet and nature in the poem.[2] This is evident in the concluding passages which modulate into the final tableau of baby smiling at mother. At times the details suggesting this identification can be quiet and unemphasised. When foreseeing a time when the Golden Age will finally arrive, Virgil sees traders quitting the seas:

> cedet et ipse mari vector, nec nautica pinus
> mutabit merces; ... [ll. 38-39][3]

Nautica pinus is no decorative periphrasis but expresses economically how the pursuit of trade could despoil the land by deforestation. This passage demonstrates how carefully-chosen Virgil's words appear:

> non rastros patietur humus, non vinea falcem;
> robustus quoque iam tauris iuga solvet arator; [ll. 40-41][4]

---

1. This biased reading also leads Lauderdale to render lines 24 to 25 of his source in Biblical terms:
   Around thy Cradle fragrant Flow'rs shall spring,
   And the old Serpent lose his fatal Sting.
   No poisnous Juice the treach'rous Plant shall bear,
   But Myrrh and Frankincense be scatter'd ev'rywhere. [ll.29-32].
   The original merely had serpens for 'old Serpent' and Assyrium ... amomum for 'Myrrh and Frankincense'.

2. See Paul Alpers, "The Eclogue Tradition and the Nature of Pastoralism", College English, 34 (1972), 355ff.; Michael J.K. O'Loughlin, "'Words Worthy of a Consul' : Pastoral and the Sense of History", in Literary Studies : Essays in Memory of Francis A. Drumm, edited by John H. Dorenkamp (Worcester, Mass., 1973), p.146, and William Berg, Early Virgil (London, 1974), pp. 166-67.

3. '... even the trader will no longer set sail, or the ship of pine exchange commodities; every land shall bear all fruits.' The ornate periphrasis: nautica pinus, emphasises the unnatural character of sea-travel. In Horace, Satires 1.4. 25-32, he who mutat merces in foreign climes proves an example of those who 'aut ob avaritiam aut misera ambitione laborat'.

4. 'The earth shall not feel the harrow, nor the vine the pruning-hook; the sturdy ploughman, too, shall be able to release his oxen from the yoke.'

Man's interference with the spontaneous beauties of Nature is not only suggested by the harshness of *rastros*, *falcem* and *iuga* but also the use of *patietur* where the earth is personified and is thus transformed into a vulnerable, long-suffering thing, enduring the rape of tillage. In this context, the ploughman is distinguished from the object of his work as being robust and hard. Come the Golden Age, the pastoral Arcadia of leisure and obedience to Nature's bounds will come to pass. Seen in this light, the pastoral nature of *Eclogue* 4 is unmistakeable. It is not even necessary to plead this reading from the one obvious bucolic reference in the concluding movement of the poem at lines 58 to 59, where the poet-figure claims greater inspiration than even Pan with Arcady for judge.

Given the considerable debate over the pastoral nature of *Eclogue* 4 already discussed,[1] it is significant how carefully Lauderdale excises these homely details from his version. This procedure commences with the rendering of the opening lines:

> The Pastoral Muse takes now a nobler Flight,
> All don't in humble Country Cotts delight;
> If *Sylvan* Shades we praise in Rustick Strain,
> Ought not those Shades to fit a Consul's Reign? [ll. 1-4]

The distinction between the *Sicelides Musae* of the original and the 'Pastoral Muse' points to the real heart of the matter. Virgil is conscious merely of providing an alternative to the Theocritean model, not of departing completely from pastoral forms and attitudes. Lauderdale hardens this distinction and the poem's uncanonical nature further by choosing 'nobler Flight' for *paulo maiora*. The Latin, as Gotoff points out, confirms the pastoral perspective not only through its primary meaning (matters *somewhat* greater) but also by the fact that *paulo* with a comparative is a colloquial usage.[2] The connotations provided by 'nobler flight' supply a quite different commentary on the poem: that Virgil here chooses to fly clear of the demeaning contamination of rustic affairs and treat 'nobler' and therefore unpastoral subjects. This reading is given a social dimension by 'Country Cotts' for *arbusta* and *humilesque myricae* (2). This superior language apparently sanctioned by the poem's opening makes great play of forsaking such humble inhabitants. Therefore the more intimate details of the Golden Age description are dropped. The density of Virgil's description of the Golden Age might well be inimitable, but it is at least significant that what is transmitted by Lauderdale is an *Eclogue* with reduced pastoral content. For example, the earth that feels its rape by cultivation loses such sensitivity as does the Sturdy ploughman:

---

[1] 1. See pp. 129-30.

[2] 2. "On the Fourth Eclogue of Virgil", *Philologus*, 3 (1967), 67.

> The Ground unharrow'd lies, unprun'd the Vines,
> And Bullocks rest unyok'd by able Hinds. [ll. 51-52]

Lauderdale's translation takes Virgil's opening lines in a literal spirit and suggests the bucolic *persona* of an ambitious poet not the humility of Virgil's lines 53 to 54.

> o mihi tum longae maneat pars ultima vitae,
> spiritus et, quantum sat erit tua dicere facta:[1]
>
> O that such length were added to my Days,
> Songs worthy of thy glorious Deeds to raise.
> And render me Immortal as thy Praise. [ll. 65-67]

The spirit of the *Pollio* as that of Isaiah would not permit such pride.

There is therefore a concerted effort on Lauderdale's part to christianize the *Eclogue* and so implicitly deny its pastoral details a central role. This has in its turn two major effects. Firstly, it ignores the obvious political references to Pollio's consulship and secondly creates a stylistically unified poem where the 'Country Cotts', 'able Hinds' or 'Race Divine' (59) of Heroes are placed in a similar

---

1. 'O that there may still remain for me the last days of a long life, with inspiration enough to recount your deeds!'

perspective. This is the easiness and plainness that renders the Virgilian pastoral 'natural' in Lauderdale's formulaic phrase. Servius had found the inclusion of Paulo in the first line good for it was allowed to depart from bucolic, a critical judgement that proved authoritative for those who defined the pastoral as a "lower" kind, incapable of describing the country and its inhabitants in anything other than decorously appropriate fashion.[1] Lauderdale departs from bucolic in its Theocritean sense by providing an elevated "poetic" version, a testament to virtuoso craftsmanship.

Dryden's translation is a significant contrast to Lauderdale's. What the earlier version demonstrates is its commitment to an idealist Christian reading. The renewal of the Golden Age and the return of Justice is by divine not temporal sanction. Miner's thesis is persuasive in its historical accuracy concerning the immediate context in 1684. The 1697 publication was introduced by a headnote that refuses to commit the poem to either a Christian or secular reading: 'The Poet celebrates the Birth-day of Saloninus, the Son of Pollio, born in the Consulship of his Father, after the taking of Salonae, a City in Dalmatia. Many of the Verses are translated from one of the Sybils, who prophesies of our Saviour's Birth' (2: 887).[2] Dryden had distrusted both the unpastoral sentiments and form of Eclogue 4.[3] Here Addison does not introduce the poem as a divine prophecy but rather as a birthday-poem that alludes to and appropriates inspired material. The possible political implications of the translation are highlighted by a partial rendering of Servius's account of the poem,

---

1. Thilo-Hagen, 4.1 (3: 44).

2. The full text of the poem can be found at 2: 887-89.

3. See pp. 144-45.

who had mentioned two sons, both Saloninus and Asinius Gallus.[1] The commemorative nature of Saloninus's naming might well have commended itself to Dryden, for the victory at Salonae had ensured a temporary stability in the eastern empire, a vital foundation for the pax Augusta.[2]

Dryden's poem is not only a prophecy of a Golden Age but of a Golden Age of peace. As such, he is not afraid to lose some of the more pastoral details but for quite different motives from Lauderdale. Dryden's prophetic countryside is a hunting-ground for witty anthropomorphisms, where the new age is introduced as more worthy a consul's care than mere 'lowly Shrubs and Trees' (2) would provide. This is evident from the 'strutting Duggs' (25) of the goats, the 'cluster'd' grapes blushing on every thorn (34) and the rendering of 'in pratis aries' (43)[3] as the mock-heroic 'luxurious Father of the Fold' (52) who 'Beneath his pompous Fleece shall proudly sweat:' (54). Sometimes the profusion of the transformed landscape inspires Dryden to imitate the lush mellifluousness of the Latin with embellishments of his own. This is especially noticeable when faced with ' durae quercus sudabunt roscida mella' (30):[4] 'The knotted Oaks shall show'rs of Honey weep,/ And through the matted Grass the liquid Gold shall creep' (35-36). This Pollio is given a hubris quite foreign to a more normal pastoral poem, and also an energy which is brought to a crescendo at the conclusion, foregoing the tenderness of baby and mother but gaining in dignity and grandeur by the occasional alexandrine or fourteener:

---

1. Thilo-Hagen, 4.1, 3 (3:44).

2. Virgil's veneration for Augustus's peace-keeping is best demonstrated by Aeneid 6. 792-95.

3. 'The ram in the meadows ...'

4. '... the sturdy oak shall ooze streams of honey.'

> See to their Base restor'd, Earth, Seas, and Air,
> And joyful Ages from behind, in crowding Ranks appear ...
> Begin, auspicious Boy, to cast about
> Thy Infant Eyes, and with a smile, thy Mother single out;
> Thy Mother well deserves that short delight,
> The nauseous Qualms of ten long Months and Travail to requite.
> Then smile; the frowning Infants Doom is read,
> No God shall crown the Board, nor Goddess bless the Bed.
> [ll. 62-63, 72-77]

What Dryden does catch is the incantatory rhythms of lines 60 to 63 with its high proportion of homodynes and the repetition of 'incipe, parve puer' in lines 60 and 62. This, however, is more properly indicative of an intimate, almost lyric, mood, not the power and elevation of Dryden.[1]

The scope that Eclogue 4 assumes in Dryden's hands is nearer to his epic mood in the Aeneid than the other Eclogues. Such a Golden Age reflects the ancient heroic order of spontaneous and honourable heroism, nearer to the model found in Turnus or outlined in Numanus's defiance to the more "civilised" Trojans in Book 9.[2] The one ingredient that characterizes this return to such primitivism is the peace that will accompany it. This restoration will not be immediately peaceful for 'of old fraud some footsteps shall remain' (37); however, the desire for peace when fearful of James II's succession in 1684 was just as fervent in 1697 anticipating the Peace of Ryswick. Either by design or good fortune, Eclogue 4, with its optimistic celebration of forthcoming peace, its recognition that the birth of this hope is due to good political management and its distrust of the mercantile adventurism that had fuelled the war, exactly parallels the Whig pacifism that guided William's hand during the concluding stages of the Nine Years

---

[1] Williams in his edition believes it is an imitation of Catullus 61. 216 ff. (p.109).

[2] Lines 833 to 38 emphasise the heroism of the husbandmen:
> We plow, and till in Arms; our Oxen feel
> Instead of Goads, the Spur, and pointed Steel:
> Th'inverted Lance makes Furrows in the Plain; [ll. 833-35].

War (1688-97).[1] Dryden's distrust of William's court and the new order it endorsed was, on the other hand, enough to prevent more than a token praise for William's role in the peacemaking. In the 1697 "*Alexander's Feast*; or the Power of Musique. An Ode, In Honour of St. Cecilia's Day", what appears as an uncomplicated celebratory ode addressed to William and Mary in the guise of Alexander and Thais, introduces some reservations in stanzas 4 and 5, especially as concerns William's bellicose tendencies:

> Sooth'd with the Sound the King grew vain;
> Fought all his Battails o'er again;
> And thrice He routed all his Foes: and thrice He slew the slain.
> The Master [Timotheus] saw the Madness rise;
> His glowing Cheeks, his ardent Eyes;
> And while He Heav'n and Earth defy'd,
> Chang'd his hand, and check'd his Pride. [ll. 66-72][2]

The Artist's role is to soothe savage breasts and turn them to a pleasure that might ensure the perpetuation of the Arts. Consequently, Dryden/ Timotheus must define war as 'Toil and Trouble' (99) and

> Honour but an empty Bubble.
> Never ending, still beginning,
> Fighting still, and still destroying, . . . [ll. 100-2]

Given a different context, Dryden could suggest the threat of conflict from a different direction. In "To Mr *Granville*, on his Excellent Tragedy, call'd *Heroick Love*" (1698), there is much comment on the decay of English theatre during the nineties.[1] However, Dryden's choice of Granville is given a political twist when he compares himself to 'an Ancient Chief' (7) and the dedicatee to the young prince to whom he yields the 'Honours of the Field' (8). This seems acceptable enough to court tastes until it is remembered that Granville was the schoolboy Prince of Wales, who, now grown to maturity, is the rose in the Jacobite pretensions to the crown. Therefore, the association of young prince and aged monarch, seen one way as William and James II, could, given this detail, more properly be regarded as Granville and William himself:

---

[1] In retrospect, the Peace of Ryswick appears dubious and troubled. One of the major enticements for William to make a peace was the opportunity to ensure Anne's succession through French recognition of William's claim to the throne, an insurance Dryden hoped might be produced in 1684. For a fuller explanation, see Henri and Barbara van der Zee, *William and Mary* (London, 1973), pp. 406, 425-26, 430-32; *The Rise of Great Britain and Russia, 1688-1725*, edited by J.S. Bromley, The New Cambridge Modern History, Vol. 6 (Cambridge, 1971), pp. 381-85, and G.C. Gibbs, "The Revolution in Foreign Policy", in *Britain After the Glorious Revolution, 1689-1714*, edited by Geoffrey Holmes (London, 1969), pp. 64-69. Ironically, this same peaceful act ensured the impossibility of James's return.

[2] *Poems*, 3 : 1428-33.

> Young Princes Obstinate to win the Prize,
> Tho' Yearly beaten, Yearly yet they rise:
> Old Monarchs though successful, still in Doubt,
> Catch at a Peace; and wisely turn Devout. [ll. 11-14]

This passive, and tacit, resistance to the new order had, in the years spent on translating Virgil (1695-97), manifested itself in a desire for prudence in foreign policy that would lead to peace. The Peace at Ryswick signed by William in September of 1697 obscures the antagonistic posture of Dryden's Virgil, published in the same year, and revised as early as September, 1696, when William was still the Heroic victor from his success in taking Namur a year earlier.[2]

In more specifically aesthetic terms, Dryden's Pollio shows an understated appreciation of the political content of both Virgil's and Ogilby's versions. In the more orthodox Christian readings of Lauderdale and Trapp each rural detail is part of the chorus of praise. This imposed coherence of mood and theme conflates the several distinct accents assumed by Virgil. The Pollio, alone out of the ten Eclogues,

---

1. Poems, 3 : 1433-34.

2. The country opposition had frequently voiced the ideology that the army was a foreign-dominated "trade" with an interest in prolonging the war for its own advantage, similarly the conduct of the war at sea which had almost enabled James to return. See J.R. Jones, Country and Court : England, 1658-1714, The New History of England, vol. 5 (London, 1978), pp. 280-85.

dispenses with the dramatis personae of amoebaean pastoral. This does not necessarily, however, ensure a more contained and tightly-organized expressive unit. As already noted, the representation of this Golden Age is, at times, a motley aggregation of discrete, expressive gestures.[1] The utterance of the Fates is culled from Catullus 64, an epithalamion for Peleus and Thetis. The climactic pastoral vision (38-39) is a hybrid from Hesiod's Works and Days (236-37) and Lucretius's De Rerum Natura 1.166. These multiple sources do not, of themselves, ensure heterogeneous terms of reference. It is still possible to synthesize similar prophetic sentiments into a unified mood. What it does expose is the coercive Christian appropriation of a Golden Age rooted in several traditions quite apart from the Hebraic. Dryden's occasional amused and detached hyperboles are not sacrilege but very much a central component of a poem nearer in inspiration to the graciously executed conceits of Alexandrine panegyric than devotional prophecy.

The most obvious test-case occurs in the concluding passage of the Golden Age description:

> hinc, ubi iam firmata virum te fecerit aetas,
> cedet et ipse mari vector, nec nautica pinus
> mutabit merces: omnis feret omnia tellus.
> non rastros patietur humus, non vinea falcem;
> robustus quoque iam tauris iuga solvet arator.
> nec varios discet mentiri lana colores,
> ipse sed in pratis aries iam suave rubenti
> murice, iam croceo mutabit vellera luto;
> sponte sua sandyx pascentis vestiet agnos. [ll. 37-45][2]

---

[1] See pp. 187-88.

[2] 'Then, when the strength that comes with years has made you a man, even the trader will no longer set sail, or the ship of pine exchange commodities; every land shall bear all fruits. The earth shall not feel the harrow, nor the vine the pruning-hook; the sturdy ploughman, too, shall be able to release his oxen from the yoke. Wool will no longer learn to feign varied hues, but of himself the ram in the meadows will change his fleece, now to sweetly blushing purple, now to a saffron yellow; on its own will scarlet clothe the grazing lambs.'

The very extravagance of these instances is both humorous and joyful, a display of playful wit. Sublimity is here, if not deflated, then domesticated and given a more approachable face. To the reader anticipating devotional wonder or non-pastoral grandiloquence, such a contrast might appear a lack of judgement. Williams, for example, calls these lines 'fantastic and somewhat tasteless, lacking judgement'.[1] Page is more forthright, declaring that 'There is only a step from the sublime to the ridiculous and Virgil has here decidedly taken it'.[2] Alpers does not condone this stylistic flexibility at all, distrusting the sudden infusion of the exotic with vocabulary such as murice, luto or sandyx or the whimsy produced by the phrase sponte sua.[3] His reason is worth quoting in full: In holding that this contrast is problematic in *Eclogue* 4, he states that it is:

> Because the shifts of voice and mode here are, uniquely in the *Eclogues*, separate from the fiction of shepherds singing within their own human community and with a defined relation to nature and the greater world of affairs. The shifts of voice in the last fifteen lines of *Eclogue* 4 show ... Virgil's intention to make the poem a pastoral. But whereas in other poems such shifts occur in response to other voices (of nature and men), everything here occurs by means of the speaker's own commands, assertions, wishes, and claims. (p. 188)

What Alpers and, by implication, both Page and Williams feel is most worrying is the lack of a consistent "voice" corresponding to such a coherence in their experience of speakers in the real world.

If, on the other hand, the *Pollio* is indeed the '*Gnethliacon*' identified by Ogilby and Dryden and designed to praise not to describe

---

1. Gordon Williams, *Tradition and Originality in Roman Poetry* (Oxford, 1968), pp. 279-80.

2. T.E. Page (ed.), *P. Vergili Maronis Bucolica* (London, 1891), p.70.

3. *The Singer of the "Eclogues"*, p. 185.

consistently or express with unvaried emotional commitment, then such objections are largely met. The main unifying factor is the exemplariness of Pollio himself and what he represents not the Golden Age rhetoric alone. It is a drastic curtailment of the possible readings of pastoral poetry to claim that it is always to explore lyric possibilities and not the public modes, where rhetorical display inevitably invites a flexible judgement as well as a modicum of detachment. From this perspective, the 'luxurious Father of the Fold' and his 'pompous Fleece', the bleating lamb 'under Tyrian Robes' (54-55) and the 'strutting Duggs' (25) of goats are all details more, not less, in line with the sentiments of the original and, therefore, demonstrate an urbanity often denied the pastoral form. By the time Trapp came to translate Virgil (c. 1720-24), the apparent epic scope of Eclogue 4 needed a great deal of accommodating. One of the few possibilities was to conclude that its sublimity was the result of a private act of witness to Christian truth, not the more public and political motives. Glossing the opening lines, he holds the non-controversial view that the subject is 'sublime', 'more sublime than the Poet imagin'd'. Consequently, the 'Thoughts and Diction' must appear so too, even if this forces the poem 'far beyond the ordinary Strain of Pastoral'.[1] Conscious, perhaps, of the strong epic current to his argument, he then changes course abruptly:

> Yet that here is nothing contrary to the Nature of Pastoral, tho' Much above the ordinary Strain of it, and therefore that Virgil is unjustly accus'd of Impropriety for being so sublime in a Poem call'd Bucolical, I have elsewhere shewn : and shall not now repeat it. (p. 40)

The 'proof' is to be found in the Praelectiones Poeticae quoted above.[2]

---

1. Virgil, p. 40.

2. See p. 149.

There Trapp found it possible to write a Pastoral Sublime as well as a more elevated variety. In order to drive the point home, he provides a prosaic explanation of lines 2 to 4, bending the lines quite conveniently into pastoral shapes:

> All delight not in the common low Strain of Pastoral. We can write even upon high Subjects in a Pastoral way: And if we do so; let it be in such a manner, that our Thoughts and Style may equal the Dignity of our Subject; Which is the Birth of a Consul's Son. [p.40]

The stylistic register as well as the range of acceptable pastoral subjects is consequently much extended. If it is that obvious from the text, however, then Trapp weakens his case by also quoting the opening lines as an excuse for its "epic" gestures.

Trapp's translation is an attempt to excuse a pastoral sublimity. It accomplishes this by claiming that Virgil was unaware of the inspired nature of his subject-matter and his borrowing from the Sibylline books. Therefore Virgil can both be pastoral and devotional, the one a conscious structure, the other an unconscious inspiration. As with the Lauderdale version, the Christian appropriation of the poem creates problems when classifying the poem. Ogilby and Dryden find the Pollio primarily a political text where the elevated subject-matter was not from a country life or its people but from urban affairs and a specific historical event. The Christian Pollio introduces an abstract frame of reference imposed on a text that will not completely sustain it. Arguing the divinity of the poem makes it far harder to maintain it in the bucolic canon and, if imposed on the actual wording of Virgil, falsifies its clear emphasis on both delicacy of sentiment and political rhetoric.

Eclogues 3 and 5

It is not hard to trace clear allusions to Theocritus in most of the Eclogues but they are most frequent in two in particular: 3 and 5. Where difficulties arise it is primarily because the precise nature and status of the references to the Idylls is in doubt and so the degree to which Virgil accepted Theocritus as his model is unproven. What is obvious, be the allusions affectionate or parodic in purpose, is that the Eclogues recast some of the Idyllic material in a self-conscious way. In Eclogue 3, the amoebaean contest between Menalcas and Damoetas begins with a paraphrase of the opening of Idyll 4: the acrimonious exchange between Battus and Corydon.[1] Its form - a conversation leading to a singing-match - recalls Comatas and Lacon in Idyll 5.[2] However, there is also much to suggest that Virgil was re-working Theocritean pastoral in a more wholesale fashion than in just two examples. Both Damoetas, in Idyll 6, and Menalcas in Idyll 8 are Daphnis's singing-partners, and the Daphnis-myth is further commemorated by the echoes of the cup promised to Thyrsis in Idyll 1 found in the two cups offered as a stake by both the shepherds in Eclogue 3.

Daphnis and the elegiac tradition associated with the name lie behind the two hymns of Eclogue 5.[3] These clear allusions to Theocritus and the Hellenistic elegiac pastoral bring the original to mind only to alter its emphases and style. Eclogue 3 has been described as being 'in places ... little more than a pastiche of Theocritean reminiscences,'[4] and yet these memories do not so much

---

1. See Coleman's comments at 1-2n., 100n..

2. Coleman, 25n., 62n., 64n., 69n., 89n..

3. The fullest account of the Daphnis cult is found at Berg, pp.121-31.

4. Boyle, p. 59.

excite homage as provide a convenient bench-mark by which to measure the transformation of the form. Even those lines that allude to the Idylls are significantly self-conscious about the "borrowing". The opening lines of Virgil suggest Idyll 4 and yet the Latin version emphasises the element of boasting and abuse, perhaps to signal the use of Theocritus's "low" voice. This racy colloquialism ceases abruptly with the appearance of Palaemon who is to act as judge. Berg would have this third shepherd a seer, a symbol of 'the voice of literary tradition ... the representative of the bucolic genre itself, presiding over the attempt of two new pastoral poets to match their songs with the song of nature.'[1] Whatever the status of this adjudicator, Palaemon's first speech gives a new direction to the poem and ushers in a highly poetic and literary style. This transformation is even more sudden than in Idyll 5:

> MEN: Numquam hodie effugies; veniam, quocumque vocaris...
> efficiam, posthac ne quemquam voce lacessas.
>
> DAM: Quin age, si quid habes; in me mora non erit ulla,
> nec quemquam fugio: ...
>
> PAL: Dicite, quandoquidem in molli consedimus herba.
> et nunc omnis ager, nunc omnis perturit arbos,
> nunc frondent silvae, nunc formosissimus annus.
> incipe, Damoeta; tu deinde sequere, Menalca:
> alternis dicetis; amant alterna Camenae.
>
> DAM: Ab Iove principium, Musae: Iuvos omnia plena;
> ille colit terras, illi mea carmina curae. [ll. 49, 51-53, 55-61][2]

The disparity between the shepherds and shepherds-as-poets is glaringly

---

1. Berg, p. 192.

2. 'MEN: You shall never, never ignore me! Wherever you call me, I will meet you ... I will see to it that from now on you challenge nobody to sing. DAM: Now, now, come, if you have any song; I'm not the one to delay. No umpire do I reject ... PAL: Sing on, now that we are seated on the soft grass. Even now every field, every tree is in bud; now the woods are green, and the year at its fairest. Begin, Damoetas; then you, Menalcas, must respond. You shall sing in turns; alternate song is loved by the Muses.
DAM: I begin, Muses, with Jove; everything is filled with Jove. He makes the earth fruitful and pays heed to my songs.'

obvious and contrived. The vivid colloquialisms redolent of comedy are replaced by the elegance of Palaemon's opening words and Damoetas's opening couplet quartered by two repetitions in the Alexandrian style: Iove ... Iove; ille ... ille. However, this is not to say that the transition is clumsy. The discontinuity of Theocritus's amoebaean contests provides a dramatic interest in the confrontation which indirectly exploits the formal opportunity to represent different areas of experience and perspective. In the Idylls this can provide a certain comic badinage and the framework of each poem is so composed of elegant artifice extending from rustic foundations that the total effect is rarely unironic. For example, Comatas and Lacon in Idyll 5 can indulge in the most primitive and racy dialogue and yet still claim the aid of Daphnis or Apollo respectively in the composition of their songs.[1] Far from the partsong mellowing into a concerted chorus, the poem rejects such unity. Morson awards victory to Comatas who crows with triumph and then concludes the proceedings by threatening to geld a particularly potent goat of his flock. Similarly, Idyll 10 has no homogeneity of design where anxieties are resolved or balanced. In Eclogue 3, however, such humour is greatly reduced. The singing contest is more elevated and crafted than in most, if not all, of the Idylls and does not dissolve into renewed argument. This conscious modification of the Theocritean model is further pointed by the conclusion of the poem. Unlike in Idyll 5, Palaemon suspends judgement and calms the competitive tension that is thus allowed greater scope between Comatas and Lacon. Virgil ends the poem with Palaemon's accents which serve to universalize the themes of the contest and suggest that it may have had a symbolic pertinence not merely a dramatic circumstantiality:

---

[1] See ll. 1-19 compared with ll. 80-84.

PALAEMON
Non nostrum inter vos tantas componere lites:
et vitula tu dignis et hic – et quisquis amores
aut metuet dulcis aut experietur amaros.
claudite iam rivos, pueri: sat prata biberunt. [ll. 108–11][1]

There is little here to suggest that tantas componere lites is anything other than a straightforward description; in Idyll 5 it would have been ironic. Given the enhanced function of Palaemon as judge, his parting instructions about irrigation take on a metaphorical centrality, implying that the stream of pastoral poetry has flowed for long enough. This more sophisticated interpretation is reminiscent of the conclusion to Eclogue 10 (77) and Catullus 61: 'claudite ostia virginas; / lusimus satis ...' (231–32).[2] That the metaphorical reading was dominant in medieval theory is evident from Servius's gloss: 'iam cantare desinite, satiati enim audiendo sumus'.[3] Whilst Palaemon's advice could mark a return to the workaday world much as Comatas's concern for his goats did, the full significance of Virgil's version is quite different. In Idyll 5 the shepherds return to the realistic contingencies that usually beset them and leave behind the poetic interlude that has constituted the central focus of the poem. In the Virgil this restatement of a realistic foreground is only nominal, where the poem's conclusion is at one with the metaphorical stance of the whole poem. Comatas and Lacon are both shepherds who can sing; Menalcas and Damoetas are not as dramatically distinct and so allow the poem to be always about poetry not individual character.[4] It is

---

1. 'PAL: It is not up to me to adjudicate so high a competition between you. You merit the heifer, and he also – and whoever fears the sweets or tastes the bitters of love. Close the rills now lads; the meadows have drunk enough.'

2. 'Close the door now, virgins; that's enough of idle song.'

3. Thilo-Hagen, 3.111 (3: 44).

4. See D.E.W. Wormell, "The Originality of the Eclogues" in Dudley, p. 25.

to this end that Pollio, Bavius and Mævius are all mentioned in Eclogue 3 (84-91). Pollio is mentioned less for his political career than his literary patronage of Gallus, Horace, even Virgil himself: 'DAM: Pollio amat nostram, quamvis est rustica, Musam: ...' (84).[1] Bavius and Maevius seem to have been proverbial for inept poetry and were also criticized by the young Horace in Epode 10.[2] Virgil is here interested in them solely as poets: 'MEN: Qui Bavium non adit, amat tua carmina, Maevi, / atque idem iungat vulpes et mulgeat hircos' (90-91).[3] For all that, they are historical not mythical figures. Coleman may feel that this 'intrusion is clumsy and abrupt', but as he earlier points out, this could be an attempt 'to relate the pastoral conventions more closely to contemporary realities'.[4] Whereas Theocritus is frequently realistic in his diction and discontinuous form, Virgil tries to accommodate realistic details to an Arcadian setting. This is true of not only Eclogues 1 and 9 where the whole frame of the poem is determined by historical events but even in those Eclogues such as 8 where the realistic detail is limited to only a few lines.[5] Although the clash between these two orders of reference is striking, it is arguable whether they are unassimilable, for references to Pollio, for example, merely extend themes already initiated by mention of the Cumaean Sibyl or Astraea in Eclogue 4 or by the self-consciousness of a singing-contest itself in Eclogue 3. What is quite evident is that the ironic humour at the disparity between orders of experience in Theocritus gives place to a more consistent cohesion in the Eclogues where even realistic references prove to reflect the preoccupations of the poetic material and do not challenge the integrity of Arcadia at all. This concern to create a unified plot for the pastoral poem can be observed when the single cup promised as a prize to Thyrsis in Idyll 1 is compared to the two cups offered as a stake in Eclogue 3. The goatherd's cup complete with scenes from the non-pastoral world can only square with the rest of the poem by the most ingenious interpretative effort. The scenes on the two cups in Eclogue 3, though less elaborate and picturesque, have a symbolic significance that links them with the opening dedications (60-62) and even the closing riddles in the contest (104-7).[1] This attempt at a unity is a distinctive quality and signals a growing self-consciousness about not only the Arcadian setting but also the figures that inhabit it.

---

[1] 'Pollio appreciates my Muse, as homely as she is.'

[2] For instance, see the reference to olentem Mevium (2).

[3] 'Let he who does not hate Bavius love your songs, Maevius; and so let him yoke foxes and milk he-goats as well!'

[4] Eclogues, p. 129.

[5] Especially 8. 6-13.

Eclogue 3 afforded Virgil the opportunity to depict a less pathetic landscape than in Eclogue 1 and in a less sublime turn of phrase than in Eclogue 4. There are several problems for the translator, therefore, as what signifies rusticity may well be lost in translation. Furthermore, these "shepherds" can perform extempore highly involved songs whilst still busying themselves with the mundane tasks of husbandry. The rusticity of the Theocritean allusions is implicitly negated by the retention of Greek names and inflections. Consequently, the roughness is conventional and so within the canon of acceptably literate writing; it is never a threatening provinciality as in Idylls 4, 5 or 10.

In Eclogue 5, the hymns to Daphnis are perpetuations of Idyll 1 with a liberal helping of ingredients from Idyll 7. This idealism is by no means as rough-hewn as in Theocritus. Indeed, Eclogue 5's allusions to Theocritus are conspicuously cursory, enough to suggest he admired but had decided to do otherwise. By contrast, Eclogue 5's image of art stresses its fragility. This is insistent in the choice of venue for the songs: the protected environment of a cave as opposed to the incertas umbras outside (1-7, 19). Menalcas's poetic pipe is consequently not rustic or even homely but fragile, a fragili cicuta (85). From this perspective, the discords of Eclogue 3 seem anarchic, even naturalistic, for Eclogue 5 demonstrates few of the amoebaean characteristics of 3. Mopsus and Menalcas meet, the one a skilled piper, the other a trained singer, and both provide songs of praise, commemorating Daphnis's death and eventual transcendence. The songs are complementary and each singer praises his companion and donates to him an object with personal associations. Virgil's Daphnis stands apart from Eclogue 3 not only in content but also in style, for the frequent patterning of lines is self-consciously willed - not an attempt to enact a competition, but to create something disinterestedly beautiful with which to commemorate Daphnis's death. Free of expediency, the singing display can take in details from the landscape and blend them into a carefully selected image of pastoral Nature, an offering in art for the departed Daphnis. The dialogue between the singers is constantly punctuated by references to the natural beauty that surrounds them. In Eclogue 3 it was only with the arrival of Palaemon that the natural surroundings were noticed at all. In Eclogue 5, they are spectacular: 'MEN: hic corylis mixtas inter consedimus ulmos?' (3) or 'MOP: ... aspice, ut antrum / silvestris raris sparsit labrusca racenis' (6-7).[1] This visual power is matched by similar interludes at line 17 and line 31, where the golden line word-order imitates the enfolding and encompassing quality of the "Nature" expressed in the poem. However, as is customary in the Eclogues, this descriptive force is rarely direct and unmediated. In line 3, the invitation to sit and sing in the cool shade is heavily reminiscent of similar preambles in Theocritus.[1] Nature seems untamed in lines 6 to 7 yet the word order suggests the intertwining of the vines and the latent homogeneity of pastoral nature. This impression is reinforced by the mention of a 'wild vine' (labrusca) clustering around the cave-mouth, a characteristic of Calypso's cave in the Odyssey,[2] the prototype of all classical loci amoeni. This complementarity is best exemplified in line 31, a detail taken from Mopsus's elegy for Daphnis:

---

[1] The fullest account can be found at Putnam, pp. 124-26, 128, 133-34.

---

[1] 'MEN: ... why don't we seat ourselves amongst these elms, blended with hazels. ... MOP: See, how the wild vine with its stray bunches has overrun the cave.'

> Daphnis et Armenias curru subiungere tigris
> instituit, Daphnis thiasos inducere Bacchi
> et foliis lentes intexere mollibus hastas. [ll. 29-31][3]

The line describes the Bacchic thyrsus, which consisted of a fennel staff crowned by a bunch of ivy and in Hellenistic times by a pine-cone with ivy and vine leaves curled around the stem (foliis ... mollibus). The interest in the line is drawn to the agreement: lentas ... hastas, which literally means 'supple or languid spears'. As Coleman demonstrates, the description has the force of a metaphor,[4] where the otherwise stiff military symbol oxymoronically is granted the quality of the pastoral decoration. In such a way does the line

---

1. See Idyll 1. 21 or 5. 31-33.

2. See Odyssey 5. 68-69.

3. '"Daphnis taught men to yoke Armenian tigers beneath the car, to encourage Bacchic dances and to entwine tough spears with soft leaves."'

4. Eclogues, pp. 161-62.

encapsulate Daphnis's influence who as the lover of peace has the power to convert the weapons of war to symbols of peace. The very words are as mingled as the qualities they denote.

This complex patterning is most obvious in the many rustic analogies which fill the poem, the most pervasive and dominant being the identification of the Sicilian cult-hero Daphnis with Julius Caesar. As it is principally only through these analogies that the pastoral landscape is mentioned at all, then it is evident how questionable the status of such description is. Such details seem always to be serving some other end than to impress the reader by their calming influence. What seem like particularized details frequently have associations that deflect attention from their visual appearance. The implicit significance of Menalcas's introduction to Mopsus's elegy on Daphnis is crucial:

> Lenta salix quantum pallenti cedit olivae,
> puniceis humilis quantum saliunca rosetis,
> iudicio nostro tantum tibi cedit Amyntas. [ll. 16-18][1]

Not only do these details suggest a life led in close conjunction with the countryside but they demonstrate a difference between two artists and their respective arts: Amyntas's Lenta salix and humilis ... saliunca compared with the precious olive and the rich, red blooms of the rose-beds associated with Mopsus. Maintaining the focus on art, Menalcas's testimonial for the forthcoming elegy advertises it as overreaching the normal pastoral strain suggested by humilis or lenta. In its place will be a special decoration and rhetoric. Putnam comments that 'Bending osier and lowly viburnum are no match in character or value for the glimmering, festive, practical olive or the brightly decorative rose. Colour triumphs over shape.'(pp.170-71).

---

1. 'As much as the slim willow yields to the pale olive, as far as the lowly Celtic reed yields to crimson rosebeds, so far, in my opinion, does Amyntas yield to you.'

To some extent, this is a comment prepared for in the amoebaean structure of the poem, for Menalcas acclaims Mopsus's contribution, re-introduces the more normal pastoral note of rustic analogies and thereby emphasises the unaccustomed power of the preceding lines:

> Tale tuum carmen nobis, divina poeta,
> quale sopor fessis in gramine, quale per aestum
> dulcis aquae saliente sitim restinguere rivo. [ll. 45-47][1]

Mopsus is no longer the countryman with a care of sheep or goats; indeed, no direct mention of such pastoral pursuits is made throughout the poem. Instead, he is the divine poeta, inspired by and lending supra-pastoral excitement to the Daphnis-figure he is describing.

A similar frame surrounds the other contribution: an apotheosis of Daphnis. A certain Stimichon is recorded by Mopus as praising Menalcas before the hymn and after the religiosity that grips the poem during this performance, Mopsus expresses his agitated appreciation in terms that have little to do with the more conventional bucolic position: 'lentus in umbra':

> nam neque me tantum venientis sibilus Austri
> nec percussa iuvant fluctu tam litora, nec quae
> saxosas inter decurrunt flumina vallis. [ll. 82-84][2]

The terms used to depict Mopsus's mood that results from the performance are redolent of that awesome and lively joy that seized the woods and the rest of the countryside recorded in the apotheosis (58-59). It stands as quite distinct from the elegiac wistfulness of Mopsus's lament heard earlier, and so provides an alternative mood and style. This bipartite division of labour is further emphasised by the gifts exchanged at the poem's conclusion, a conclusion unqualified by any

---

1. 'Your song, heavenly bard, is to me like sleep on the grass is to the weary, as in summer's heat the quenching of thirst in a dancing brook of sweet water.'

2. 'For no such charm for me has the rustle of the rising South, or the beach hit by surf, or streams tumbling down in rocky glens.'

gesture towards a return to work or reality. Mopsus receives for his elegy a fragili ... cicuta, a frail, single pipe, on which Menalcas had composed Eclogues 2 and 3. Menalcas is presented with a 'redum ... formosum paribus modis ... aere' (a 'goodly crook, with even knots and ring of bronze'). Coleman's note on these gifts suggests that it is through the concluding mention of such an object that the reader is brought 'back to the workaday world of the herdsmen. The two gifts sum up the ludus and seria of Arcady.' (p. 171). This reading neglects two factors. Firstly, when Virgil has suggested this in other Eclogues, the reader has been reminded of the singers as shepherds,[1] in that they are called away from their songs to attend to more pressing and less leisurely activity. Secondly, to claim that the crook is a functional object alone or even primarily so is to ignore the care taken in the poem to express its form as distinct from its use. The full text illustrates this forcibly:

> At tu sume pedum, quod, me cum saepe rogaret,
> non tulit Antigenes (et erat tum dignus amari),
> formosum paribus nodis atque aere, Menalca. [ll. 88-90][2]

The crook has little of the numinous significance Theocritus plainly attributes to Lycidas's staff in Idyll 7 (129), a token of friendship amongst poets. That the reader is obliged to make such a comparison is intimated by the otherwise gratuitous appearance of Antigenes, the name of the host of the harvest celebration towards which Simichidas is journeying. In the Virgilian version what is stressed is the deliberation of such a transformation: the humble crook ceases to be merely literal and instead assumes a ritualistic, even aesthetic significance. Given this development, therefore, the award of a fragili ... cicuta to Mopsus and the decorated crook to Menalcas may be indicative of the songs themselves. Mopsus's elegy brings to mind a tenacious bucolic tradition: that of Daphnis, the Sicilian shepherd-poet and the inventor of pastoral music. The mythic inhabitants of the countryside draw together to mourn his death as do the elements themselves, for the very ground itself is left barren. In this, Virgil's lament is little different from the Theocritean precedent in Idyll 1. However, there are significant omissions. Mopsus sings of a Daphnis already dead and so the verse is more plaintive and lyrical, culminating in the significantly literary epitaph inscribed on his tomb. Gone too are all traces of the erotic background to his suffering and the Theocritean detail of his hostility to Venus. Rosenmeyer dwells in his account on the attention paid to the 'tranquilizing and enveloping powers of [the] silvan setting' (p. 121), and takes as his text 'inducite fontibus umbras, ...' (40) ('Curtain the springs with shade ...'). Although this is a command original to Virgil, it is hardly a representative image for the dirge as a whole. It by no means conjures up a locus amoenus; on the contrary, 'grandia saepe quibus mendavimus hordea sulcis, / infelix lolium et steriles nascuntur avenae;' (36-37).[1]

---

[1] For example, see the details at 3. 94-101, 8. 105-9, 9. 60-67, 10. 75-77.

[2] 'MOP: But please, Menalcas, accept this crook, which even Antigenes failed to win, as often as he begged it of me - and he was worth my love then - a good crook, with even knots and a ring of bronze.'

As a complement to these emblems of loss and futility, Menalcas's pastoral voice is celebratory, not only at Daphnis's deification, but also at the fact that '... amat bonus otia Daphnis' (61) ('... kindly Daphnis loves peace'), a diction that has as many socio-political as pastoral connotations. Both songs use bucolic references to image public concerns and it is frequently difficult to claim that a pastoral detail is either literal or conventional; it is simpler to say that it is both.

---

1. 'Often in the furrows where we cast the big barley-grains, luckless darnel springs up and sterile oat-straws.'

There are strong suggestions that the *Eclogue* could be allegorical and indicate by Daphnis's death the assassination of Julius Caesar in March 44 B.C.. The evidence for this is never direct but it does seem probable that the pattern of details surrounding Daphnis's passing matches those apocryphal but traditional circumstances of Caesar's murder. Four months after there appeared in the northern skies a comet widely believed to portend his deification. This could be the *Caesaris astrum* that Daphnis contemplates as a sign of rural prosperity in *Eclogue* 9. 46-49.[1] Even if this parallel is refuted, there is still little doubt that the pastoral concerns of *Eclogue* 5 do not exclude the wider, political perspectives that Servius in particular found there.[2] That the pastoral might embrace public concerns is a position foreign to the theorists of the genre who attempt to homogenize the varied voices in the *Eclogues*. *Eclogue* 5 demonstrates how frequently Virgil found that political and dramatic concerns could be embodied in an occasionally precise rural setting. This bifocal perspective, evident in most of the *Eclogues*, is no aberration but a major condition of Virgil's own 'fragile reed'. The desire in criticism to simplify the form and divorce pastoral from historical interests is pervasive. Even Coleman can conclude his comments on *Eclogue* 5 with a tacit denial of much of his preceding argument:

> In short there are no adequate grounds for seeing the poem as a detailed allegory. Indeed its distinctive quality is that while clearly alluding to contemporary history and revealing unequivocally the poet's political sympathies, it preserves throughout its pastoral integrity. [p. 174]

'Detailed allegory' or not, Coleman seems tentative in proposing that pastorals could maintain their own 'integrity' and still involve allusions to 'contemporary history' or 'political sympathies'. Clearly, the pastoral form in this view is purely Arcadian.

---

[1] A fuller account of the evidence for the identification can be found at Servius, Thilo-Hagen, 5. 20 (3: 56-57).

[2] Thilo-Hagen, 5. 10, 11, 20, 34, 48; (3: 55-56, 58-59).

Both Eclogues 3 and 5 allude to Theocritean themes but self-consciously amend them in line with a new canon of taste, one prone to turn all the discontinuities of reality into material for song. This is not to say, however, that both poems are escapist. When Snell says that 'Virgil has ceased to see anything but what is important to him: tenderness and warmth and delicacy of feeling',[1] the diversity of style and the frequently unresolved "public" references of both poems are conveniently forgotten. It must be remembered that the collection concludes with Gallus's obstinate longing to become an Arcadian and yet his passion drives his imagination to roam amongst icy wastes and wildernesses, those same deserts trod by the Roman military forces. For Dryden, this spiritual exile had a political force and, in his translations of Eclogues 3 and 5, both the rustic dissension of Damoetas and Menalcas and its alternative: the mutual support of Menalcas and Mopsus are both aspects of a heroic rustic image. Ogilby had suggested the application of this veneration for Virgil and the consequent aggrandizement of the countryside to political matters. His Argument to Eclogue 3 stresses the necessity of a centre that can hold, an effective mediation:

> These Swains present, how vertue and the arts
> Still emulation breed in men of parts.
> But grave Palaemon doth their passions calme,
> Both praising, yet to neither gives the Palme. [p. 8]

The need for a 'grave Palaemon' to bring peace to contentious 'men of parts', given the unpropitious historical context for a Royalist perspective, is susceptible to a political interpretation.[1] This is especially the case in Eclogue 5. References to Virgil's own practice and context are markedly absent:

---

[1] Snell, p. 288.
Compare Alpers, pp. 197 ff.

> Since Kings as common Fathers cherish all,
> Subjects like children should lament their fall;
> But learned men of grief should have more sense,
> When violent death seizes a gracious Prince. [p. 17]

Daphnis becomes Charles I and, following the logic of the Virgil, the example of his martyrdom is a consolation as well as a cause of grief.[2]

If Dryden's own translations show little obvious evidence of this partnership, then it does not necessarily follow that he was oblivious of their contemporary relevance. The need to provide a reliable English Virgil and a regard for the stylistic refinements of the style were considerations that obliged such political comment as there is in the 1697 Virgil to be more closely integrated. The Argument to Eclogue 3 is gently ironic: Damoetas and Menalcas indulge in 'some smart strokes of Country Railery'. Palaemon, their 'Neighbour', 'after a full hearing of both Parties, declares himself unfit for the Decision of so weighty a Controversie, and leaves the Victory undetermin'd'.[3] Addison, and by implication, Dryden, seem more aware

---

1. With the fall of the Rump (1653), the Protectorate was formed. However, both the Barebones Parliament and the Instrument of Government (1653) sought to exclude Roman Catholics and declared Royalists. The First Parliament called on the authority of the Instrument (1654) was dissolved after five months due to contentions between Cromwell and the leader of the Republican party, Sir Henry Vane. For want of a strong ruler, the Royalists emphasised the anarchy of the situation. Ogilby, himself, had lost a modest living as deputy-master of the revels in Ireland on the outbreak of war in 1641, and had only recently turned his hand to other work, tutoring and translating in Cambridge. See P. Hardacre, The Royalists during the Puritan Revolution (The Hague, 1956), pp. 86-105; J.P. Cooper, "Social and Economic Policies under the Commonwealth" (pp. 139-42) and Ivan Roots, "Cromwell's Ordinances : The Early Legislation of the Protectorate" (pp. 143-58), both in The Interregnum : The Quest for Settlement, 1646-1660, edited by G.E. Aylmer (London, 1972).

2. Eclogue 5 had appeared in a miscellaneous series of translations by Ogilby as early as 1649, the year of Charles I's execution.

3. The full text can be found at Poems, 2 : 880- 87.

of the particularized context of Virgil's Eclogue 5. Menalcas and Mopsus, 'two very expert Shepherds at a Song', perform alternately in a commemorative performance for Daphnis, 'who is suppos'd by the best Criticks to represent Julius Caesar'. It is, however, a mixed mode, as the eclogue consists of both 'an Elegie and an Apotheosis'.[1] Dryden, indeed, is aware of two matters. Firstly, he is more alive, especially in Eclogue 3, to the suggestion of the Latin, that a "low" subject-matter is granted the dramatic and expansive gesturing of more "public" and formal genres. The emphasis is firmly on the Art that can rise above both the chosen model (Theocritean Doric) and the unpropitious rustic figures of pastoral song. This further involves a recognition of the mixed mode of Virgil's pastorals, especially in these more amoebaean examples.

The distinctiveness of these conclusions is particularly evident considering the most recent translations Dryden could have consulted. The 1684 Miscellanist for Eclogue 3 was Thomas Creech and for Eclogue 5, Richard Duke, and Lauderdale's pastorals were also doubtless available.[2] None of these versions cultivates the interest in variety of characterization of Dryden's, and consequently their less lyrical cadences and details. Conscious of the rustica Musa mentioned by Damoetas (84), Creech, for example, interprets this as a value-judgement and not merely as a taxonomic label. In the Argument to his translation, he carefully ignores Palaemon's praise for the rustic Muse (108):

> Menalcas and Dametas upbraid each other with their faults ... Palemon coming that way by chance, is chosen Judge; he hears them pipe, but cannot determine the Controversie ... [p. 341]

This is not accidental as Palaemon's closing words, whilst praising the songs, are diluted by two interpretative changes. Firstly, Creech

---

1. The full text can be found at Poems, 2 : 889- 94.

2. See C.E. Ward, The Life of John Dryden (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1961), p. 273.

emphasises the youthfulness of the singers and possibly their lack of maturity and secondly, introduces, with no hint from Virgil, a reference to the work that Palaemon has waiting for him which works against a symbolic reading both of his role in the poem and of the last line:

> PAL: I cannot judge which Youth does most excel,
> For you deserve the Steer, and he as well.
> Rest equal happy both; and all that prove
> A bitter, or else fear a pleasing love:
> But my work calls, let's break the Meeting off,
> Boys shut your streams, the Fields have drunk enough. [p.349]

The pueri of the last line of Eclogue 3 need not indicate iuvenes but could be a colloquial rendering such as 'lads'. The mention of 'Youth' has no equivalent in Virgil either.

This perspective is a consequence of Creech's frequently resorting to his version of "simple" pastoral translation, one degree away from doggerel. In order to prepare the way for this decorous accommodation of style to status of speaker, he anglicizes several details. This means that Menalcas plucks for his ignis: Amyntas, ten pears (p.346) instead of ten golden apples ('aurea mala decem', 71); Galatea leads Damoetas 'o'er the Green' (p.346); there is no mention of the sacrifice of a heifer found at line 77; Pollio is taken to be writing 'at the King's command' (p. 347); and, lastly, instead of the shepherds' palms pressing the teats at milking-time (99) Creech provides a Milk-maid (p. 348). This modification does have one clear advantage: it allows Creech to indulge in a native colloquialism equivalent to Virgil's Latin. If such "lower" voices were immediately annexed to Arcadia, then the confusion over the idealized status of the term might be counterproductive. Thus Menalcas and Damoetas can take on a rustic, even clownish, mantle:

> MEN: Did not I see, not I, you pilfering Sot,
> When you lay close, and snapt rich Damon's Goat?
> His Spoch-Dog barkt, I cry'd, the Robber, see,
> Guard well your Flock, you skulkt behind a Tree. ...

> You pipe with him! thou never hadst a Pipe,
> Well joyn'd with Wax, and fitted to the lip,
> But under Hedges to the long-ear'd Rout,
> Wert Wont, dull Fool, to toot a schreeching Note: [pp.342-43]

However, Virgil's demotic dialect did not include a reference to the coarse audience, 'the long-ear'd Rout', who are attracted by Menalcas's piping. Creech's version is so committed to a contemporary English setting that opportunities to develop a more detached appreciation of Virgil's artifice are limited. This is especially noticeable at the point where Menalcas and Damoetas describe their cups. Menalcas offers his as a rare and precious stake; Damoetas answers him with a skilful deflation, claiming to possess such cups at home (35-47). The contrast is effective only if Menalcas's description is reminiscent of the Goatherd's in _Idyll_ 1, lines 27 to 56 and imitates its loving reverence.[1]

> ... pocula ponam
> fagina, caelatum divini opus Alcimedontis;
> lenta quibus torno facili superaddita vitis
> diffusos hedera vestit pallente corymbos. [ll. 36-39][2]

With the introduction of this _ecphrasis_, much as was attempted in _Idyll_ 1, the poetic quality of the lines and thus the sheer artifice of the object is emphasised. Indeed, line 39 is a variant form of the golden line and places the 'pliant vine' and 'spreading clusters' in a balanced complementarity. A possibly exotic and time-honoured Greek influence is suggested by the polysyllabic cadence of _Alcimedontos_ and also the use of the Greek loan-word _torno_ from _tornos_ ('with a chisel'). It is noteworthy, granting this, that Creech should not attempt to transmit such obviously unrustic cadences at this point:

> But yet I'll lay what you must grant as good,
> (Since you will lose) two Cups of Beechen wood,
> _Alcimedon_ made them, 'tis a work Divine,

---

[1] See pp. 64-65.

[2] 'I will wager two beechen cups, the carving is the work of the inspired Alcimedon. On these a creeping vine, laid on by the engraver's skill, is entwined with spreading clusters of pale ivy.'

And round the brim ripe Grapes and Ivy twine;
So curiously he hits the various Shapes,
And with pale Ivy cloaths the blushing Grapes;
It doth my Eyes, and all my Friends delight,
I'm sure your Mouth must water at the sight: [p. 344]

This passage suggests none of the symbolic grandeur of the original; indeed, by dwelling so much on its physical appearance and adding two lines of sales-talk, Creech secularizes the objects. Virgil dispels some of the magic when the reader is reminded of the unlearned shepherd who is speaking the lines and who forgets the name of one of the inlaid figures at lines 40-41. In the 1684 version there is no spell in the first place. Furthermore, when Damoetas replies, Virgil has him imitate and complement Menalcas's boast by repeating the name of the craftsman and his artefact: pocula; 'Et nobis idem Alcimedon duo pocula fecit', (44).[1] Creech takes this as a cue for "straightforward" rusticity: 'Alcimedon too made me two Beechen Pots,' (p. 344). Absent is any hint at their ritualistic function.

To pass from the idiomatic simplicities of Creech's version to the careful neutrality of Lauderdale's third Pastoral is to discover an alternative style and consequently a different conception of the genre. Creech is successful in suggesting the rough-hewn power of rustic speech but not so much in representing the dramatic change of style begun by Palaemon and the contest. Lauderdale is as consistent as Creech as regards his level of style, for he chooses throughout a plain unadorned medium. Unfortunately, the ruggedness of the opening exchanges is forsaken as is its opposite: the highly reverential artifice. In its place Lauderdale finds a passion that is near neighbour to Eclogue 2 or Idyll 11 rather than the Virgil. The process starts early in the poem. When Menalcas boasts of his influence with Damoetas's master's Neaera, he is made to dwell on the jealousy this will cause: '*MEN*: Infelix o semper, ovis, pecus! ipse Neaeram / dum fovet ac, ne me sibi praeferat illa, veretur,' (3-4).[1]

---

[1] 'I also have a couple of cups, made for me by this same Alcimedon...'

> Unhappy Flock! that never can be blest,
> Whilst he *Neaera* harbours in his Breast,
> Burns with a restless Fire of Jealousie,
> And fears more favours are bestow'd on me. [ll. 3-6][2]

This heightened passion is not suggested by the humorous "flyting" of Virgil's shepherds - a craftsman-like objectivity which exists intensified in the song-contest. Palaemon's introduction, in Lauderdale's account, leads the reader to expect a duet rather than a contest:

> *Damaetas* then, I'd have you first begin,
> And you Menalcas follow ev'ry Strain;
> Alternate each your moving Lines reherse,
> The gentle Muses love alternate Verse. [ll. 78-81]

The 'gentle Muses' manifest themselves in a series of soothing gestures towards the rustic that Virgil originally appreciated in Theocritus. Thus, in terms reminiscent of the Restoration love-lyric, Galatea becomes Damoetas's 'wanton Jade' (87), Menalcas sends not ten golden apples, but 'Ten Golden Pippins' (95). Damoetas lingers lovingly in recounting the progress of his love for Galatea: 'How oft have we clasp'd in each other's Arms, / Made the Grove resound fair *Galatea's* Charms' (97-98) and yet this is embroidery-work for Virgil draws a veil over this soft eroticism.[3] However, the most obvious manipulation of the *Eclogues* occurs in Palaemon's summing-up and judgement where Lauderdale enervates and localizes his comments:

> I don't pretend this difference to decide
> You both deserve the Calf you can't divide,
> Though each alike to other fairly prove,

---

1. 'Poor sheep, always unlucky! While your master cuddles Neaera and worries that she prefers me to him.'

2. The full text is found at *Works*, 1 : 7-11.

3. 'O quotiens et quae nobis Galatea locuta est.' (72) ('What words, and how often, has Galatea spoken to me!).

You both have felt the Pangs and Sweets of Love,
'Tis high time now, ye Swains, your Strife to cease,
The fated Meads desire to be at peace. [ll. 150- 55]

There are some crucial omissions here, the most striking being no reference to 'tantas componere lites' and the universalizing comment opening out the references of the contest to everyone's experience of love. What the reader is left with is a "difference" not a contest, an interruption in a desired peace.

As a development in the critical reception of the Eclogues, Lauderdale's interpretation of the poem is particularly significant for two principal reasons. Firstly, in common with most attempts to render the poems anew, the stylistic levels are conflated. In Lauderdale's case, this pushes the amoebaean quality of the pastoral towards the lyric and away from drama. A consistent perspective is established which, in its turn, provides a filter and a coercive norm by which the singers and their songs are to be judged and appreciated. It could be argued that translation-work, to a lesser or greater degree, necessarily involves principles of selection. What is remarkable about not only Lauderdale's work but most of the lyrical pastoralists is how prone they are to fabricate evidence in their own defence. Secondly, post-Virgilian Arcadias lose the repeated allusions to Theocritus, and even though Virgil is self-consciously remoulding Greek material, this supplies a perspective on the Eclogues which claims them as unequivocal, highly-wrought artefacts and as victories over rustic material. To some extent, the immediacy of the intractable material of contemporary references, historical or otherwise, is destined to be lost en route to Lauderdale's Britain. The mention of Gallus, therefore, is already transfigured by time; his position in the Arcadia of Eclogue 10 is more acceptable and less anomalous than it would be to Virgil's contemporaries. For Gallus, read Maevius or Pollio. Even if these qualifications are granted, however, the self-consciousness of Lauderdale's Virgil is a mode of appropriation. The twists and turns that prove most fascinating about the Eclogue are smoothed out and an urbane worldly wisdom is visited on both singers until their distinctiveness is drastically reduced.

Eclogue 3 is streamlined not so much by the censoring of recalcitrant details but in adding some further phrases which alter and assimilate them, providing a context in which their rusticity is attenuated and their realistic touches denied. This is particularly difficult at the transition to the Palaemon passages. In the Virgil his appearance is a chance occurrence, suggesting spontaneity and a contact with another "uncreated" order of existence which impinges on the more fictional and expressive world of the emotions. Lauderdale's Palaemon is very much a part of the lyrical moment, not only there on cue but not even having to make his entry:

> Don't fly me now, I'll meet you where you will,
> And let the next Man judge of either's Skill.
> Here stands Palaemon ready to decide,
> I'll make a Tryal lest thou shou'dst deride. [ll. 70-73]

It is not surprising that those ingredients that suggest artifice are selected by Lauderdale to provide the flavour of the whole. Menalcas's racy derision of Damoetas's piping included a reference to his 'murdering a sorry tune on a scrannel straw'. Here, the sound of the Latin is particularly imitative of this lack of art: '... non tu in triviis, indocte, solebas / stridenti miserum stipula disperdere carmen?' (26-27). In the Lauderdale, even this screeching is muted: 'Some Ballad Tunes perhaps thou might'st compose, / Or else some dismal Verse far worse than Prose.' (40-41). Eclogue 3 in these hands becomes orderly and, for its pains, so unified in diction and metre that the power of the Virgilian contrasts passes away and the shepherds are constantly nominal.

This form of interpretation is more predictable where Eclogue 5 is concerned. There Virgil's artistry is less Theocritean and more amenable to an idealist reading. Duke's 1684 text is very much in line with the tender elegiacs of his Floriana, a Pastoral, Upon the Death of Her Grace Mary Dutchess of Southampton, 1680 (1681), a distant relation of Eclogue 5 and Idyll 1 but minus the consolation of an apotheosis.[1] The same degree of grief that mixed Damon and Thyrsis's tears mingles the more powerful sentiments of Mopsus and Menalcas. Even their singing-contest is staged in a private locality, chosen not for its mystic significance but because of its capacity to inspire a mood of gentle regret. Menalcas's first suggestion, that they seat themselves amongst mixed elms and hazel-trees (3) becomes a 'Secret Shade' with Duke. Mopsus, indeed, calls it a 'lonely Copse' (p. 355). When they finally decide on the cave-mouth, garlanded with vines, Duke finds it 'silent'. Each of these details are, at most, extensions of hints found in the text, but when both shepherds turn to praise each other's songs, then Duke constructs a reading that tends to harmonize and soften the disjunctive contrasts found in the original.

The introduction to Mopsus's elegy conflates two distinct personae: that of the self-conscious performer who experiments with the grand style and that of the lyrical elegist who is portrayed as feeling sincerely the emotions out of which he writes. One of the characteristics of classical pastoral is the dramatic emphasis placed on the singer's artfulness rather than his sincerity. The dramatic occasion for the contest between Menalcas and Mopsus is for them to display their talent at framing songs not primarily to emphasise

---

[1] Published separately. Reprinted in Poems on Several Occasions (1717), British Museum General Catalogue No. 11626.ee.14., pp. 74-76.

Daphnis's divinity. This formalist enterprise is ostensibly for Mopsus to show how superior his skills are to those of Amyntas (8). This divorce between the emotions of the singer and the song is not hidden away but very clearly presented:

> MEN: Incipe, Mopse, prior, si quos aut Phyllidis ignis
> aut Alconis habes laudes aut iurgia Codri.
> incipe; pascentis servabit Tityrus haedos.
>
> MOP: Immo haec, in viridi nuper quae cortice fagi
> carmina descripsi et modulans alterna notavi,
> experior: tu deinde iubeto ut certet Amyntas. [ll. 10-15][1]

Duke's preamble to the elegy fits the passionate complexion of the inserted song:

> MEN: Begin, begin, whether the mournful flame
> Of dying Phillis, whether Alcon's fame,
> Or Codru's Brawls thy willing Muse provoke;
> Begin, young Tityrus will tend the Flock.
>
> MOP: Yes, I'll begin, and the sad Song repeat,
> That on the Beech's Bark I lately writ,
> And set to sweetest Notes; yes, I'll begin,
> And after that bid you Amyntas sing. [p. 356]

Menalcas's enquiry in the source-text requires Mopsus to declare in which genre he will frame his song, either a love lyric to Phyllis, a panegyric on Alcon or satiric invective against Codrus. There is little point in discovering contemporary equivalents for these references or even to see them all as companions on the same fictional plane as the singers. Even the allegorizing Servius took all three characters as mythological and conventional.[2] Mopsus is being asked about what he will sing from an already formed repertoire. Neither is the reader left in any doubt about his pastoral duties thanks to

---

1. 'MEN: You go first, Mopsus: sing of your heart's desire, Phyllis or praise Alcon or abuse Codrus. Go on: let Tityrus watch the grazing kids.
MOP: No, I'll try out some verses which I recently carved on the green bark of a beech. Listen, then let Amyntas challenge me!'

2. Thilo-Hagen, 5. 10, 11 (3 : 55). Phyllis also appears at 3.76ff., 7.59, Codrus at 7.26.

Menalcas's reassurance that the flock will be cared for by Tityrus. Mopsus announces how new these verses will be but also how artful they are, 'modulans alterna notavi' (14). By glimpsing the efforts of composition the reader is in little doubt that the spectacle will not be of Daphnis dying but of the necessary contrivances required by such an opportunity.

Duke's poem does not recognize such classical restraint. Phyllis's name is unilaterally converted to a pathetic image and Mopsus agrees that his song will be not only sad but sweet which is approximately what is there in his original but in the blurring of the rendition a crucial but consistent alteration has taken place. Absent is the practitioner's detail, emphasising his pleasure in the poem's construction, and in its place is an appeal for a passionate reading. Formation gives place to pathos.

However, in the song itself, Duke wraps the grief of Nature in a swaddling of decorous form. The potential of the heroic couplet to lend a rhetorical resolution and achieved order to powerful feeling is not unrecognized:

> When the sad fate of Daphnis reach'd their Ears,
> The pitying Nymphs dissolv'd in pious Tears.
> Witness, you Hazels, for you heard their Cries;
> Witness, you Floods, swoln with their weeping Eyes.
> The mournful Mother (on his body cast)
> The sad remains of her cold Son embrac'd,
> And of th' unequal Tyranny they us'd,
> The cruel Gods and cruel Stars accus'd. [p. 357]

This sepulchral lamenting, full of fluid images, is yet checked by the verbal and rhythmical patterning. Hazel-trees become sentient and sympathize. The Gods and stars are cruel but not indifferent. The Virgilian Mopsus commences his lament with a melancholy that is altogether grimmer and less resolved:

> "Exstinctum Nymphae crudeli funere Daphnim
> flebant (vos coryli testes et flumina Nymphis),

> cum complexa sui corpus miserabile nati
> atque deos atque astra vocat crudelia mater." [ll. 20-23][1]

The shock of the first word is intensified once the Theocritean model is remembered which was a poetic record of Daphnis's last moments. It also cuts through the tone of idiomatic familiarity with which Menalcas announces their arrival in the cave and his abrupt but friendly announcement of the song: 'sed tu desine plura, puer:' (19).[2] Although the spondaics of the opening are heavy, even funereal, the heavy pause after the first spondee in line 21, and strong alliteration in line 22 disturb the regularity, and lend a dramatic fervour to the lines. No such attempt is noticeable in Duke's version. It is no surprise to find Menalcas appreciating the 'sweet numbers of thy [Mopsus's] mournful Verse; ...' (p. 359). In Virgil, the cruelty of the Gods and the finality of death exclude sweetness.

Menalcas's hymn, on the other hand, displays a power that stands in marked contrast. Duke adopts the sublime style of elevated plainness to represent Daphnis's position above this vale of tears:

> *Daphnis* now wondring at the glorious show,
> Through Heavens bright Pavement does triumphant go,
> And sees the moving Clouds, and the fixt Stars below: ...
> ... Hark! the glad Mountains raise to Heaven their Voice!
> Hark! the hard Rocks in mystick tunes rejoyce!
> Hark! through the Thickets wondrous Songs resound. [p. 360]

Duke paints an almost Baroque triumph for Daphnis, full of ecstatic energy. Virgil's kindly Daphnis had loved peace (61) whereas Duke's figure is imperial: '*Daphnis* a general Peace commands, and Nature does obey' (p. 360). Notwithstanding this grandiosity, Duke has Mopsus perhaps rather tentatively praise the hymn in more timorous accents than Virgil:

---

[1] 'Snuffed out by cruel death, Daphnis was mourned by the nymphs - you streams and hazels knew their grief - while, clasping her son's pitiable corpse, his mother reproached both the gods and the cruel stars.'

[2] 'But now no more, my boy.'

Not the soft whispers of the Southern Wind
So much delight my Ear, or charm my Mind;
Not sounding shores beat by the murmuring tide,
Nor Rivers that through stony Valleys glide. [p. 362]

There is little that is soft or whispering about Mopsus in the original Eclogue who likens the hymn to a beach lashed by the surf and streams tumbling down rocks. With this modification, Duke risks being contradictory, for there is a sharp difference in how the two songs are received in the Eclogue; here Mopsus remembers Menalcas's praise rather than the song he has just heard.

Lauderdale's fifth Pastoral is similarly preoccupied with the soft and gentle passions and at some pains to mitigate the signs of construction. This is obvious from the first speech. Menalcas praises the 'harmonious Verse' and 'moving poetry' that he is about to hear from Mopsus, who also hopes his lines will be 'pleasing' (p. 14).[1] The most obvious change is observed in his rendering of Menalcas's apotheosis of Daphnis. Lauderdale's Daphnis becomes less a sign of wonder and grandeur and more the inaugurator of joy and harmony:

Daphnis with wonder viewing Jove's high seat
Saw Clouds and starry Orbs beneath his Feet.
Pan fills the Swains and Dryads with the Sight,
The Woods with Joy, the Country with Delight ...
Kind Daphnis loves a rural cool Retreat;
The rugged Hills cast out loud Sounds of Joy,
That with their rocky Tops just kiss the Sky;
The humble Shrubs echo to them again,
And cry Menalcas, he's the God of Men. [p. 16]

The otium that Daphnis appreciates in Virgil is here localized and becomes a way to describe a locus amoenus, a 'rural cool Retreat'. Once again the frenzy of the alacris ... voluptas (58) is diluted and Mopsus endorses this quieter mood:

What shall I give thee for thy grateful Song,
Soft as the murm'ring South wind, as his Blowing strong,
Pleasant as Waves that play upon the Shore,
Or a swift Rill, the Pebbles gliding o'er. [p. 17]

---

1. The full text is found at Works, 1 : 14-17.

Obviously, the system of contrasts that Virgil exploits in the Eclogues is forsaken in the interests of a more homogeneous work, where the pathetic fallacy represents a feeling and sensitive nature not so much an artful display of poetic talent.

It is clear from Dryden's 'Preface' to the Pastorals that Virgil's own brand of rusticity, although inevitably more polished than the 'boorish dialect' of Theocritus due to the felicities of the Latin language, was still considered to be an attempt at imitating a positive alternative for the literate and cultivated. Creech's rustics are a spectacle of pleasurable simplicity retaining few of their provincial characteristics untarnished by a gentle irony. There is no note of this apology in the 'Preface', as Dryden's conception of Virgil's own career includes a provincial, non-Roman heritage:

> They seem to me [the Pollio and the Silenus] to represent our poet betwixt a farmer, and a courtier, when he left Mantua for Rome, and dressed himself in his best habit to appear before his patron, somewhat too fine for the place from whence he came, and yet retaining part of its simplicity.

If this is true of Eclogues 4 and 6, then the more bucolic poems must necessarily exhibit their "low" origins even more, not as in Duke or Lauderdale, as regrettable vestiges of the Theocritean Doric, but as a major ingredient in their composition. Indeed, the real danger is to sin against decorum and describe country people as 'too learned for their profession' as in Eclogue 8. As an example of the 'just decorum' Virgil learnt from Theocritus, 'both of the subject, and the persons', Dryden cites lines 40 to 41 of Eclogue 3, wherein Menalcas is made to forget the name of one of the embossed figures on his bowl: 'He remembers only the name of Conon, and forgets the other on set purpose (whether he means Anaximander or Eudoxus I dispute not), but he was certainly forgotten to show his country swain was no great scholar' (p. 281). This ignorance does not invite as much indulgence from a learned reader as it did in other translations, for there is an implicit recognition here that a degree of local verisimilitude is desirable in order to exploit its beauty, the satisfactions of the merum rus. Indeed, it is necessary to stress the Mantuan connection as it is one of the virtues of Virgil's bucolic writing that it 'transplanted pastoral into his own country; and brought it there to bear as happily as the cherry trees which Lucullus brought from Pontus' (p. 282). The shepherds, therefore, of Eclogues 3 and 5 are Mantuan and, as such, are projections of the residual "simplicity" that underlies the self-advertisement necessary to win a patron.

This is the context in which the "Argument" to Eclogue 3 is to be understood and, without which, it could either be considered an Addisonian opinion alone or a complicit piece of mock-heroic irony at the shepherds' expense from Dryden as well. Creech's "simplicity" belonged to a careful regularity of cadence, expressing an awkwardness in the very form itself. Dryden's shepherds, on the contrary, are skilled poets. An early example of the ' smart strokes of Country Railery' occurs when Damoetas is striving to embarrass his companion on the subject of his blasphemous sexual habits:

> DAM: Good words, young Catamite, at least to Men:
> We know who did your Business, how, and when.
> And in what Chappel too you plaid your prize;
> And what the Goats observ'd with leering Eyes:
> The Nymphs were kind, and laught, and there your safety lies.
> [ll. 10-14]

The Latin supplies several hints that Dryden takes up and vivifies:

> Parcius ista viris tamen obicienda memento.
> novimus et qui te, transversa tuentibus hircis,
> et quo (sed faciles Nymphae risere) sacello. [ll. 7-9][1]

As Coleman points out, the implied emphasis of the insult in the opening line is not to contrast viris with boys but with passive homosexuals.[1] Dryden manages to retain this association by inserting the reference to Catamite and keeps the knowing reticence by the couplet plus rhyming Alexandrine in lines 12 to 14. Although transversa tuentibus means either 'looking askance' or 'peeping', Dryden's 'leering' intensifies the feeling of unhealthy libidinousness that is certainly there in the original, though not literally so, the joke being that the act was too strong for even the goats but not it would seem for the easy-going nymphs of the shrine. Dryden here, by not reproducing the original in a literal way, represents it more adeptly.[2]

---

[1] 'Watch what you say, when you're accusing men! I know what you did (as the he-goats looked askance) in the shrine - but the merry nymphs all laughed.'

What is striking about Dryden's Eclogue is his power of allowing the early rusticity its head, perhaps even intensifying it, and yet effecting the transition from this mood to one of grander seriousness. The answer to the problem of retaining a dramatic unity is not to subtract from either atmosphere its excesses for this attenuates the energy which feeds the whole poem. Crucial to this bridging is the description of Menalcas's stake: the beechen cups of divine Alcimedon. The insult and counter-insult must cease for a short interlude whilst this 'divine' object takes descriptive shape. The opportunity to introduce this "higher" note is accepted gradually by Dryden:

> The lids are ivy; grapes in clusters lurk
> Beneath the carving of the curious work.
> Two figures on the sides embossed appear -
> Conon, and what's his name who made the sphere,
> And showed the seasons of the sliding year,
> Instructed in his trade the labouring swain,
> And when to reap, and when to sow the grain? [ll. 58-64]

---

1. Eclogues, p. 110, nn. 7-8.

2. The same accuracy of mood, if not of literal sense, is shown at lines 34 to 37.

MEN: Thou sing with him, thou Booby; never Pipe
Was so profan'd to touch that blubber'd Lip:
Dunce at the best; in Streets but scarce allow'd
To tickle, on thy Straw, the stupid Crowd.

Compare its source at 3. 25-27.

It is interesting that Dryden does not limit the range of significance in this description by including at this point the sentence that describes its pristine quality that follows next in Virgil. That detail was included immediately before the set-piece: 'To neither of them yet the lip is laid' (57). This means that Menalcas's speech does not conclude with a potentially anti-climactic and functional reference.

This is consistent with Damoetas's counsel to Palaemon to judge acutely 'For 'tis a business of a high debate' (80). Palaemon's mediation is of a different order from the give-and-take of the singers:

> Sing then; the Shade affords a proper place;
> The Trees are cloath'd with Leaves, the Fields with Grass;
> The Blossoms blow; the Birds on bushes sing;
> And Nature has accomplish'd all the Spring ...
> Each in his turn your tuneful numbers bring;
> By turns the tuneful Muses love to sing. [ll. 81-84, 87-88]

Lauderdale's 'moving lines' and 'gentle Muses' have become 'tuneful'. This is a significant and suitable change. The contest gives little occasion for even the gentlest of melancholies; indeed, the seasonal re-birth of Nature (formosissimus annus) is also a resurrection of potent energy not elegiac reflection. This does not result in a single idiom of heroic heightening, but a binary association of the erotic with the unadorned plainness of the untutored. The erotic has nothing of the despair of unrequited love and its pains. Menalcas can boast that Amyntas offers him love 'and sits upon my knee' (101), Damoetas addresses Galatea as 'the dear Mistress of my Love-sick Mind' (103), and then dwells on the physical contact when they meet: 'The lovely Maid lay panting in my arms; / And all she said and did was full of Charms' (111- 12). These details do not occur in Virgil.

Juxtaposed to these erotic suggestions, Dryden endeavours to suggest the simplified concerns of the singers. Hence, there are idiomatic touches: Menalcas describes his ten golden apples presented to Amyntas as 'Ten ruddy Wildings' (107) whereas Damoetas can advise: 'From Rivers drive the Kids, and sling your Hook; / Anon I'll wash 'em in the shallow Brook' (150- 51). However, this simplicity can be sonorous and inspired:

> *DAM:* The Nightly Wolf is baneful to the Fold,
> Storms to the Wheat, to Budds the bitter Cold;
> But from my frowning Fair, more Ills I find,
> Than from the Wolves, and Storms, and Winter wind.
> [ll. 124- 27]

To characterize Virgil's *Eclogue* as following one turn of phrase would be to narrow the range of interest. By allying the erotic-lyrical to rustic dialect, Dryden has the reader appreciate both the artifice implicit in 'tuneful' numbers and the obtrusive circumstances of a shepherd's life. William Myers has described the translation as being as '"lyrical" as the best of Dryden's songs'.[1] This view should be qualified more than by Myers's own hesitation, suggested by the speech-marks on '"lyrical"'. Although there are changes to the original *Eclogue* and they in the direction of erotic explicitness, this cannot stand for the whole poem, especially the crucial opening exchange which exposes the lyricism - where it occurs in the song-contest - as a constructed displacement of conflict over much more material and basic matters.

This "lower", more realistic, frame for the song-contest shows the reader how pressing proprietorial claims are for both singers. The opening lines are clear in introducing this: '*MEN:* Ho, Swain! what Shepherd owns those ragged Sheep? / *DAM:* *Aegon's* they are, he gave 'em me to keep' (1-2).[2] Although Menalcas may be triumphant here, it is not long before he himself is forced to make a similar admission:[3]

---

1. *John Dryden*, p. 160.

2. 'Ragged' is an addition, a gesture towards the idiomatic *cuium pecus* (1).

3. Compare the uncomplicated and relatively gentle cadences of 3.32-34.

> You know too well I feed my Father's Flock:
> What can I wager from the common Stock?
> A Stepdame too I have, a cursed she,
> Who rules my Hen-peck'd Sire, and orders me. [ll. 46-49]

Furthermore, singing is the only talent that either shepherd can exploit to better such a position. Defending himself from a charge of theft, Damoetas equates art and life in an unexpected way: 'An honest Man may freely take his own; / The Goat was mine, by singing fairly won' (29-30). Debts are directly incurred from singing-contests. Therefore, to claim that Dryden's Eclogue 3 ignores or mitigates these connections in the interests of "lyricism" is misleading.

Eclogue 3 invites a roughness of style and diction, but Eclogue 5 moves from the elegiac to the panegyrical, framed by the mutual admiration of the singers. If, as Addison described them, both Mopsus and Menalcas are 'expert shepherds at a song', some of this expertise should be obvious. Some, however, have been disappointed with Dryden's actual performance. A reading that anticipates Arcadian calm, all passion spent, will be more satisfied with Duke or Lauderdale. William Myers, for example, finds the translation of Eclogue 5 a particularly apt example of 'the unpleasant clash between idyllic values and manners on the one hand, and Dryden's diction on the other' (p. 160). In this case, the "normal" Arcadian mode is not disturbed by a "low" realism but by the heroic energy Dryden found irresistible in both songs. This choice of diction and metre is to some extent determined by the heroic couplet, but the translation shows signs of formal heightening over and above its obvious metrical weight. There is a parallelism between each of the speeches, Mopsus answering Menalcas, a formal symmetry perhaps suggested by Menalcas's claim in the opening lines that his voice could match Mopsus's 'tuneful Reed' (2). This melodiousness is a quality noted by Menalcas in introducing Mopsus's song:

> Such as the Shrub to the tall Olive shows,
> Or the pale Sallow to the blushing Rose;
> Such is his Voice, if I can judge aright,
> Compar'd to thine, in sweetness and in height. [ll. 21-24][1]

This combination of a high with a nonetheless pleasant speech register is borne out by the dramatic content (the death of Daphnis and the subsequent desperation of his funeral) plus the formal check on the floodgates of grief. This assuagement of grief is best exemplified by the closing lines of the elegy:

> Come, Shepherds, come, and strow with Leaves the Plain;
> Such Funeral Rites your Daphnis did ordain.
> With Cypress Boughs the Crystal Fountains hide,
> And softly let the running Waters glide; [ll. 59-62]

This sculptured conclusion changes the order of the Latin and lends it a plangent grace only suggested in the original: 'Spargite humum foliis, inducite fontibus umbras, / pastores (mandat fieri sibi talia Daphnis), ...' (40-41).[2] This is not the prevailing note of the elegy; indeed Dryden is anxious to portray this concluding calm as an attitude which has been achieved after a highly dramatic opening to the song, full of gestures firmly in the heroic not the acknowledged pastoral idiom:

> At length the rumour reach'd his Mother's Ears
> The wretched Parent, with a pious haste,
> Came running, and his lifeless Limbs embrac'd.
> She sigh'd, she sob'd, and, furious with despair,
> She rent her Garments, and she tore her Hair:
> Accusing all the Gods and every Star. [ll. 30-35]

This amplification misrepresents the brevity of the human detail in this chorus of mourning but is in effect only an extension of the emotive references of the Virgil. This does involve the translation in a slight contradiction. Menalcas's languorous appreciation of the performance is retained, indeed, embellished, whilst Dryden still

---

1. The full text can be found at Poems, 2 : 889- 94.

2. 'Cover the turf with leaves, shepherds, and shade the springs - Daphnis calls for rites like these.'

recognizes the vigour of his version:

> O Heavenly Poet! such thy Verse appears,
> So sweet, so charming to my ravish'd Ears, ...
> As to the feavorish Traveller, when first
> He finds a Crystal Stream to quench his thirst.
> [ll. 69-70, 73-74]

The poet's heroic divinity and power to ravish has also to act as a healthful balm to the 'feavorish Traveller', hence the sweetness, charm and the translucence of the 'Crystal Stream'. Given Dryden's obvious inclination towards an heroic heightening of the pastoral, Menalcas's apotheosis is more amenable to this declamatory vein and forms more of a parallel rather than an antithesis to the elegy.

It is significant that this power is not sustained in those sections that lie outside the artifice of song. This is most evident in the erotic details that take its place. Mopsus confers the sheep-crook on Menalcas ('The Handle Brass; the Knobs in equal range' (138)) with a bravado quite absent from Virgil's ritualistic conclusion:

> Antigenes, with Kisses, often try'd
> To beg this Present in his Beauty's Pride;
> When Youth and Love are hard to be deny'd. [ll. 139-41]

This same complement to the grand gestures of the songs is suggested in Dryden's version of the possible themes enumerated by Menalcas for Mopsus's opening song:

> Begin you first; if either Alcon's Praise,
> Or dying Phillis have inspir'd your Lays:
> If her you mourn, or Codrus you commend,
> Begin ... [ll. 13-16]

The innuendo of 'dying', even if helped by the elegiac note of mourning, is given its full sexual association if the original is consulted where Phyllis is Mopsus's ignis (10). The free love enjoyed by the shepherds and shepherdesses is thus distinguished from their heroic imaginations when Daphnis is commemorated in verse.

Eclogues 3 and 5 both demonstrate the resources of the amoebaean pastoral, its dichotomies and varieties at the same time as its pleasing complementarity. In Eclogue 5, the variety is a method by which both grief and its consolation may be highlighted and given dramatic immediacy. At the same time, the shepherds perform their songs; there is always at least one auditor. In Duke's and Lauderdale's hands the poem is more evenly lyrical, an evocation of stingless death and appropriate rejoicing. The competitiveness of both Damoetas and Menalcas of Eclogue 3 is similarly softened. Creech implies that this country controversy touches no raw nerve or empty pocket. The loss of Daphnis for Duke's Mopsus and Menalcas is an opportunity for song. The virtues of Dryden's version, however prone to a declamatory hubris not often found in the original Eclogues, lie in its determination to represent the contention of Eclogue 3 and both the loss and transcendence of Eclogue 5 in vivid terms. Indeed, his Eclogue 5, a near relative to 9 in its lament for the loss of a leader, is more an ancestor of some of the racier Doric touches of Idyll 1 than Virgil's Daphnis. This translator's decision frequently forgoes the finer graces of the Virgilian Latin, its golden lines and softer cadences, but, in return, demonstrates the self-conscious artifice that impels the dialogues or contests. By 1731, and from Trapp's scholarly perspective, Eclogue 5 inspired a rather condescending judgement. This pastoral is 'sweet and most elegant' (p. 47) and consequently, the more elevated and rhapsodic passages are etiolated to follow this stylistic pattern. It is necessary, therefore, for Trapp to suppress some of the diviner attributes of Daphnis. Indeed, the only hint of such prominence is found in the note to lines 48 to 49, a comment on 'Inducite fontibus umbras': 'A Funeral Ceremony to their Great Men, and Heroes' (p. 50). Similarly, Eclogue 3 is described as containing 'an elegant Trial of Skill in Musick and Poetry ...' (p. 23), quite far from the 'smart Strokes of Country Railery' appreciated by Addison in reference to

Dryden's version.[1] The 1697 version must be seen as distinct from not only the more Augustan forms of Trapp but also its more Arcadian companion translations.

Conclusion

In 1726, Samuel Johnson, whilst probably at Stourbridge School, turned his hand to several translation exercises, two of which were from the Eclogues: the opening speeches of Eclogue 1 and both the songs from Eclogue 5.[2] As both sets of verses were not formally published,[3] it might suggest their traditional rather than personal emphases. As their transmission seems dubious, little firm evidence is suggested by the choice of extracts. However, even in this small compass, they exemplify the melodiousness expected of the Virgilian pastoral, with little of the discomforting jerks of style or "voice" actually present in the Eclogues. For Daphnis 'The limpid streams with ruefull murmurs flow / And all the withering woods confess their woe ...' (3-4). 'Sympathising' cattle 'hang their heads' and refuse to graze the 'tasteful herb' or roam the 'verdant meads' (9-10). Instead of the joyous panic of Menalcas's account of Daphnis's translation to a higher plane, Johnson places a poetically decorous phrase:

---

1. Trapp's version avoids any dramatic colouring. A glaring example is his version of the sexual word-play of 3.10-11: 'Twas then belike; when Me they saw for Spight, / Bark Mycon's Trees, and cut his tender Vines' (p. 25). In his notes, Trapp compensates for his literal, piecemeal accuracy: 'Ver. 12 ... These Ironical Repartees ... are exceeding sharp and satyrical' (p. 25). 3.25-27 is rendered without the colloquial vigour as well: 'Ver. 30 ... The extraordinary satyrical Smartness of These Lines, ... is known almost to a Proverb; and we need say no more of it' (p. 26). Trapp's translation is at lines 30 to 33.

2. See Samuel Johnson: The Complete English Poems, edited by J.D. Fleeman (Harmondsworth, 1971), pp. 40-42.

3. The lines were transmitted by James Ross's transcript and found in the Johnson Birthplace Museum, Lichfield (Pastoral 1) and the Hornby Library, Liverpool (Pastoral 5). The fullest MSS. are at Yale.

'Pleasure in ev'ry Nymph and Shepherd reigns, / And banish'd Sorrow flies the joyous Plains' (36-37). The even temper of Johnson's translation, albeit work of the left hand, points forward to the Arcadian and highly selective pastorals of the mid-century.

This desire for the undidactic and non-allegorical pastoral emphasises or constructs a unity of emotional associations free from the disordering contradictions of realism. Eclogues 1 and 9 were therefore autobiographical rather than universal political comment. Eclogue 4 became Christian revelation rather than political homage, and in both Eclogues 3 and 5 the discontinuities of voice and style melted into more easily digestible portions.

The one exception to this consensus lies in Dryden's work. This does not immediately commit his translations to contrived clumsiness in line with its bucolic setting, for there is evidence to suggest that he was acutely aware of the inadequacies of the English language in rendering a Virgilian turn of phrase. Towards the end of the "Preface" to the Pastorals, he graciously attempts to exculpate Virgil from the inadequacies of his translation: 'Be pleased therefore to accept the rudiments of Virgil's poetry, coarsely translated I confess, but which yet retains some beauties of the author, which neither the barbarity of our language, nor my unskilfulness could so much sully' (p. 283). This diminutio may well be part of a dedicator's role in addressing a patron, but it forms part of a more insistent distrust of contemporary culture as a whole,[1] where, using Virgil as his touchstone, the values of Williamite England were placed in an unflattering perspective.

This habit of allowing historical parallels to be drawn up alongside his own age Dryden had frequently exploited, notably in Absalom

---

[1] See pp. 110-22.

and Achitophel. It is clear from his 'Dedication to the *Aeneis*' that this was no different where the 1697 Virgil was concerned. In defending Virgil's moral in the *Aeneid*, Dryden sketches a heavily tendentious review of its historical context and thereby highlights his own position. Virgil was writing 'when the old form of government was subverted, and a new one just established by Octavius Caesar, in effect by force of arms, but seemingly by the consent of the Roman people'. In this unrest which had preceded the institution of this new regime, the 'former civil wars betwixt Marius and Sylla', the victor: Sylla, in the cause of 'liberty and reformation', is charged with having taken the estates and lives of his enemies, 'to gratify those who brought him into power' (2: 168). The likelihood that Octavius could bring to mind not only Charles II in 1660 but William in 1688-89 would not have been lost on the 1697 reader. On the one hand, Octavius is the strong man at the helm, wielding a necessary 'despotic power' quite appropriate considering the 'first and second Caesar's' abilities. Julius Caesar as well as Charles I had been murdered by his own people. However, in reference to the identification of Virgil with Dryden in 1697, the references to Octavius are less complimentary. Indeed, Dryden takes upon himself the mantle of Cato, whispering to Augustus about the dangers of arbitrary power and then forming himself upon the principles of Montaigne, 'that an honest man ought to be contented with that form of government, and with those fundamental constitutions of it, which he received from his ancestors, and under which himself was born ...' (2: 170-71).[1] This conservatism is all the more evident when it is remembered that Aeneas undergoes a period of exile before returning to regain power, his own dominion left in trust during his voyaging.

---

[1] This is one of the themes of the 'Dedication' throughout. See *Essays*, 2: 168-69, where Dryden elaborates on his fear of strife and its ensuing intolerance. Sylla, who 'had nothing but liberty and reformation in his mouth' is frequently Cromwell in Roman garb, especially for Dryden when he describes how he 'sacrificed the lives, and took the estates, of all his enemies, to gratify those who brought him into power'. Given the context of 1697, it could (more imperfectly) be taken by Williamite supporters to mean James II. The whole tenor of the passage, however, is otherwise. The consequent strife of Senate versus Commons 'comes of altering fundamental laws and constitutions ...'

The choice of Hugh, Lord Clifford as dedicatee of the Pastorals is similarly determined by specifically religious and political considerations. Lest this choice be taken at face value, Dryden spells out his reasons in the 'Preface' and, in so doing, is able to articulate a passively obedient stance. Commencing with what seems like a formulaic gesture of intimate companionship: 'My lord, I know to whom I dedicate; and could not have been induced by any motive to put this part of Virgil, or any other, into unlearned hands ...'. Clifford's learning is very much a part of a wider qualification for eminence, namely 'Courage, probity and humanity' which 'are inherent in you' (p. 282). This continuity of virtue has two principal analogues: the survival of a Catholic family, the 'ancient house of Cumberland, from whence you are descended', and the proven survival of embattled virtue:

> Your forefathers have asserted the party which they chose till death, and died for its defence in the fields of battle. You have besides the fresh rememberance of your noble father, from whom you never can degenerate.
>
> — Nec imbellem, feroces
> progenerant aquilae columbam.[1]
>
> It being almost morally impossible for you to be other than you are by kind, I need neither praise nor incite your virtue. You are acquainted with the Roman history, and know without my information that patronage and clientship always descended from the fathers to the sons; and that the same plebeian houses, had recourse to the same patrician line, which had formerly protected them, and followed their principles and fortunes to the last. So that I am your Lordship's by descent, and part of your inheritance. [pp. 282-83]

Dryden does not need to even mention Jacobite Catholicism, as he deftly establishes references to Clifford's inheritance as an allusion to matters of belief and embattled rectitude.[1] This covert defiance was pursued in his choice of patron for both the Georgics and Aeneid. The Earl of Chesterfield, not a noted patron of the Arts, had been chosen as dedicatee for the Georgics. Charles E. Ward has explained the relevance of this gesture.[2] Chesterfield had, by his first and third marriages, associated himself with the Ormond and Halifax families, both sympathetic to Dryden's beliefs and art. Furthermore, although an early supporter of William, Chesterfield had been a Non-Juror, refusing to take an oath of allegiance and supremacy to William in 1689. The choice of Mulgrave, now Marquis of Normanby, for the Aeneid is of a more secular cast, commemorating a long association of patron and poet. However, it should be remembered that the choice must have revived memories of Mulgrave's original attempts to pave the way for Charles II's patronage of Dryden's proposed epic (1673-74), and consequently recognize the value of a more tolerant age.

---

[1] From Horace, Odes, IV. 4. 31-2 ('nor do fierce eagles beget a timid dove').

The vexed question of whom to choose as a sufficiently representative figurehead for the enterprize is further illuminated by referring to Dryden's correspondence at the time. In the same letter in which he solicits Chesterfield's patronage, he offers a particularly direct religious and political excuse: 'I have hinder'd it thus long in hopes of his return, for whom, and for my Conscience I have suffered, that I might have layd my Authour at his feet: But now finding that Gods time for ending our miseries is not yet, I have been advis'd to make three severall Dedications, of the Eclogues, the Georgics, and the Eneis.'[3] This Jacobite fervour builds a myth of the Georgics and fits

---

1. For further evidence of Dryden's passive obedience, see Life, pp. 247-48.

2. Life, p. 280.

3. Letters, No. 41 (Feb. 17, 1696/7), pp. 85-86.

such pious hopes of peace and expressions of rural content and industry to Chesterfield's own political position, as being 'suitable to the retir'd life which you have chosen, and to your studies of Philosophy: ...' (p. 86). This analogy was not lost on Chesterfield. In his answer by return (Feb. 18), he graciously accepts and, by the way, mentions that 'It looks as if you were tired with the Court, and would now think of a Hermitage or of a country Gentleman, who being in no post whereby he may merit such a favour, must value it the more, ...' (No. 42, p. 87). This contemporary context for the Virgil may not have been a motivating factor in his attempting the translation initially, but certainly, by the final stages of preparation for Jacob Tonson, the parallels were more prominent and pressing. Finally, in a letter dated September 3 to his sons, Dryden offers some insight into the role Tonson played in the final appearance of the work, by noting that, although 'he has missd of his design in the Dedication: though He had prepard the Book for it', it was otherwise with the 'sculptures', many of which had been re-used from Ogilby's 1654 translation and his 1658 Latin edition. There every figure of Aeneas had been drawn 'like K. William, with a hookd Nose' (Letter 47, pp. 93-94). Therefore, the imposing cross-section of Court and country life represented in Tonson's subscription-lists and the understated compliment of the graphics formed no part of Dryden's own design.[1] The one concession that he had wrung out of his publisher was a free hand in choosing his dedicatees.

The 1697 Virgil, therefore, celebrated a disenfranchised heroism in Dryden's own view. The effect Dryden's bucolic images had on the writing of original pastoral poetry, although a more faithful trans-

---

1. See also his determination to 'keep in my just resentments against that degenerate Order' of government (p. 93).

scription of the occasionally grand Virgilian gestures in the Eclogues than the lyrical twilight worlds of most Arcadias of the age, sinned perhaps too much against another strand of neo-classic idealism: Horatian decorum. Dryden's own obsession with the heroic idiom has been adequately analysed already.[1] Its frequent deployment in the Eclogues as well as the Georgics and Aeneid point to one significant reason for attempting the work: the assumption of an epic poet's role to demonstrate the survival of principles and a poetic standard, a series of time-honoured codes and conventions to contrast with debased contemporary equivalents. This submerged satire needs the image of the noble shepherd and actively discourages the pathos of the sentimental man of feeling.

---

[1] See J. McG. Bottkol, "Dryden's Latin Scholarship", Modern Philology, 40 (1953), 241- 55; R. Brower, "Dryden's Epic Manner and Virgil", PMLA, 55 (1940), 113-38; A.B. Parsons, "The English Heroic Play", Modern Language Review, 33 (1938), 9; H.T. Swedenberg, Jr., "Dryden's Obsessive Concern with the Heroic", Studies in Philology, e.s. 4 (1967), 12-26; Mary Thale, "Dryden's Unwritten Epic", Papers on Language and Literature, 5 (1969), 423-33.

CHAPTER 3

The Taste For Simplicity and its Effect on Pastoral Poetry, 1680-1730

Frederick Keener has claimed that 'Pope's are the last real pastorals written in English. They are the last, that is, to which the poet could seriously hope reality might attach itself ... wherein Renaissance myth and convention may not seem patently unnatural.'[1] Published in 1709, Pope's attempts at a bucolic idiom have been often read as anachronistic diploma-pieces calculated to impress his literary advisers in the Kit-Kat Club. Having successfully gained their imprimatur, so this critical line runs, he felt free to progress to other, more exacting, work.[2] Pope, himself, seems to testify to this conclusion when he looks back from 1734 and finds that the decorous productions of his youth were little more than an excursion in Fancy's maze.[3] This excursion, however, proved at the time to be something of a cause, a critical battleground fought in the name of critical principles particularly significant for the survival of the whole genre. Pope, himself, confessed to Spence later in life that there was scarcely a work 'in which the versification was more laboured' than in the pastorals.[4] In examining the terms of

---

1. An Essay On Pope, Frederick M. Keener (New York, 1974), p. 19.

2. For example, see Georgio Melchiori, "Pope in Arcady", English Miscellany, 14 (1963) pp. 84-85, where the Pastorals are found to be like 'rococo vignettes enclosed in gilt scrollwork'; Robert Kilburn Root, The Poetical Career of Alexander Pope (Gloucester, Mass., 1962), pp. 51-53: 'These poems have the quality of exquisite music and an unmistakable competence in literary craftsmanship - but little more' (p. 52); Pat Rogers, An Introduction to Pope (London, 1975), p. 20: 'They were a diploma piece, setting out their author's credentials to the cultivated world.'

3. Pope hopes then that it will be known 'That not in Fancy's Maze he wander'd long / But stooped to Truth, and moraliz'd his song' (Epistle to Dr Arbuthnot, ll. 340-41; TE, 4 : 120).

4. Joseph Spence, Observations, Anecdotes, And Characters of Books and Men, collected from conversation, edited by James M. Osborn (Oxford, 1966), 2 vols, 1 : 175 (April 5-7, 1744).

the Pope – Ambrose Philips controversy over pastoral compositions, it becomes clear that Keener's elegy for the "real" pastoral and its Renaissance heritage is misplaced and that the mimetic foundation for the form had already crumbled, but that in its place there flourished alternative lyrical forms, depoliticized and formally unified.

Although the pastoral form is frequently said to be both escapist and unmimetic, the very quiescence of the form has its own significance within wider terms of reference, a context that inevitably calls into question the apparent literary traditions that underpin such semiosis, the process whereby a happy rural life and its inhabitants are manifestly constructed and a nostalgic political ideology endorsed. This political context is best approached with reference to the taste for "simplicity" in the period. It has already been noted that translations of both Theocritus and Virgil presented an image of the pastoral genre as both significantly simplified and stylistically consistent. This formal streamlining presupposes a corresponding simplification of the shepherd and his landscape; indeed, in some respects, this results in pastoral subjects, once the dramatic antagonists of Idylls 10 or 4 or Eclogues 1 and 3, becoming an expression of form.

Whilst it can be of no surprise to find rusticity and the referential function of pastoral metaphor heavily qualified, there are degrees of abstraction. There is a clear difference between the shepherds of Theocritus and those of Pope. The Doric ruggedness of the Idylls constructs a virtuous "simplicity" out of its provinciality. Conversely, the "simplicity" of Pope's Pastorals is of a highly cultivated order, where his shepherd-voices obey the conventional necessities of lyric unity and so do not disturb the literary landscape. However much the "simplicity" of the one denies the "simplicity" of the other, the interpretative strategies that are needed to decipher them both are obliged to regard all pastoral shepherds as textual and unmimetic. The shift from one trope to the other, on the other hand, is still significant and is not exempt from historical change. The growing concern that the pastoral be more lyrical cannot be explained by purely literary reasons. It inevitably suggests something about the sensitivity surrounding rural characterization in general.[1]

M.H. Abrams has asserted that the growth in poetic individualism fostered by the expressive poetic tastes of Romanticism had its roots in the endorsement of the lyric as a norm.[2] He locates the first steps in this movement as taken at this time, especially in the serious consideration granted to the 'greater Ode'. Edward Young wrote in his "Preface to Ocean, An Ode" (1728), 'on lyrick Poetry', that 'The Ode, as it is the Eldest kind of poetry, so it is more Spirituous, and more remote from Prose than any other' and that enthusiasm was its 'soul'.[3] Even in 1704 John Dennis had grouped together 'Epick' and 'Tragick' with the 'greater Lyrick poetry' as the "higher" genres.[4] Abrams explains the consequences of such a new-found respectability as a challenge to mimetic theories of art as a whole, and such an endorsement of the poet's supposed inner feelings is at odds with received notions of literary tradition and the social role of literary art.

---

[1] The model for noting the shift from one tropological and interpretative strategy to another I have taken from Jonathan Culler, "Literary History, Allegory, and Semiology", New Literary History, 7 (1976), p. 283 ff.. However, see Culler's reservations in The Pursuit of Signs: Semiotics, Literature, Deconstruction (London, 1981), p. 64.

[2] The Mirror And The Lamp: Romantic Theory and the Critical Tradition (New York, 1953), especially pp. 84-85. See also Ernest Lee Tuveson, The Imagination as a Means of Grace: Locke and the Aesthetics of Romanticism (New York, 1960), especially pp. 132-39.

[3] "Ocean, An Ode, occasion'd by His Majesty's late Royal Encouragement of the Sea-Service. To which is prefix'd An Ode to the King: And a Discourse on Ode", p. 18.

[4] The Critical Works of John Dennis, edited by Edward Niles Hooker (Baltimore, 1943), 2 vols, 1 : 338. Joseph Trapp could also find the shorter forms of poetry acceptable, even the epigram: Lectures on Poetry Read in the Schools of Natural Philosophy At Oxford, translated by William Bowyer and William Clarke (London, 1742), p.157. He goes on to claim that 'Little Things have their Beauty', and sometimes not a little Beauty. Tho' they are small in Bulk, yet they are great in Value; and not only Wit and Ingenuity are requir'd in the Composition of them, but true Reason, and solid Judgment' (p. 161).

In the chapters so far one of the underlying conclusions is that the mimetic apology for pastoral art is especially vulnerable once the taste for allegory wanes. The mode by which the rustic shepherds might allude to urban reality is largely discredited. Pastoral can no longer uncover courtly vice or express political aspirations. Consequently its standards of value are increasingly stylistic ones and the most persistent quality demanded when writing of simple country folk was simplicity itself. Defining this attribute however is problematic, perhaps deliberately so, for neo-classical aesthetics depend upon a tacit, commonsense agreement on definitions which if rigorously analysed would be socially divisive. It is in this spirit of linguistic ecumenism that the term "simplicity" was so freely used and therefore so universally useful in defining something only truly traceable from particular examples. One instance which throws up some interesting contrasts sheltering under the same terminology is that of Spenser's Shepheardes Calendar, the major pastoral site of 'Renaissance myth and convention' known to the period.

The Simplicity of the Shepheardes Calendar

Joseph Spence records several opinions of Pope's on Spenser. The first is a childhood memory that Waller, Spenser and Dryden were his favourite poets 'in the order they are named',[1] and the second places

---

[1] Observations, 1:19 (1728?). The ranking of the poets is actually uncertain as Spence did invert the order in some editions; see pp. 19-20.

Spenser both as one of the 'great landmarks'[1] and as an authority for poetical language.[2] Doubtless this is largely a reference to the Faerie Queene, but that it might not be exclusively so is evident from the relatively full account of his pastoral work in Pope's own "A Discourse on Pastoral Poetry" (1717, written 1704). Most of the section dwells on the blemishes of the work, but the opening sentence is highly complimentary: 'Spenser's Calendar, in Mr. Dryden's opinion, is the most complete work of this kind which any Nation has produc'd ever since the time of Virgil.'[3] This 'complete work' is applauded on account of its serious framework whereby the reader is granted 'a view of the great and little worlds, in their various changes and aspects'. This is a function of the allegory where the shepherds' 'little' world figures wider macrocosmic affairs not so much the Elizabethan court or clerical corruption, but of human life in general compared to the 'several Seasons'.

Pope's praise is concentrated on structural as opposed to stylistic matters. What is more to the point, Spenser's scheme is given a neo-Platonic justification in that it is supposed to address itself to the permanent, unhistorical patterns of life, not the temporal affairs of the Elizabethan court. The occasional shocks that the studied provinciality of "May", "July" and "September" administer are consequently unnecessary, a formal immaturity often associated with the pastoral writings of a poet's juvenilia. It is precisely this self-conscious innovation in stanza-form and diction, however, which "E.K." is most at pains to describe. Spenser is 'the new Poete', a master

---

1. Observations, 1:178 (1736). The others were Chaucer, Milton and Dryden.

2. Observations, 1:171 (April 5-7, 1744).

3. TE, 1:31-33 (32).

of decorum and his special language and cadence support the belief 'that our Mother tonge, which truely of it self is both ful enough for prose and stately enough for verse, hath long time ben counted most bare and barrein of both'. Indeed, the writing of pastoral in one's youth followed the example of 'the best and most auncient Poetes': not only Theocritus and Virgil, but also 'Mantuane ... Petrarque ... Boccace ... Marot, Sanazarus, and also divers other excellent both Italian and French Poetes ...'.[1] "E.K."'s roll-call locates most of Spenser's pastoral forebears as firmly within both the vernacular revolt against classical hegemony and also the satiric and allegorical traditions of the pastourelle.[2] Clearly the naturalization of the eclogue-form was a commitment to a greater, although ultimately limited, degree of realism. This had already flourished in the peasant-dialogues of Alexander Barclay (c. 1515), and the overtly critical 'eglogs' of Barnabe Googe (1563) not to mention the translations of Mantuan by George Turberville (1567). Even if superficially independent creations, Barclay's and Googe's work is often heavily imitative of Mantuan's satirical eclogues (1498), especially numbers 6, 7 and 8. Barclay's classically-named shepherds: Coridon, Cornix, Codrus and Minalcas are at the same time English and debate the miseries and evils of court life, the neglect of poets by patrons and the respective merits of town and country life.[3] In Spenser, there is the moral concern of Mantuan

---

1. "To the most excellent and learned ..., Mayster Gabriell Harvey ...", Poetical Works, pp. 417-18.

2. This tradition is best approached via Helen Cooper, Pastoral: Medieval into Renaissance (Ipswich, 1977), pp. 59-71. Spenser's involvement is dealt with at pp. 152ff..

3. Barclay's Eclogue 4 is a scarcely altered translation of Mantuan's (actually Baptista Spagnuoli's) Eclogue 5 and his Eclogue 5 is an imitation of Eclogue 6. The first three are each an adaptation of sections of Ænius Sylvius's Miseriae Curialium. The first

(Continued on p.252)

coupled with the native concerns of his English Tityrus: Chaucer.[1] To miss the ethical preoccupations of the collection as a whole, is often to elide the specific references to the culture from which it sprang. In "February", "May" and "September", Chaucer's influence is strongest, but in the main Spenser's Doric is his own creation - non-lyrical, dialectal and rough. In "February", for example, there is a clear suggestion of the alliterative accentual verse of a century or more earlier whereas "July" is written in the stolid fourteeners of the 1550s and 1560s.

This rugged "simplicity" found its admirers. In all of Dryden's references to Spenser's pastoral idiom, it is the style that is most prominent. In his "Dedication to the Pastorals" (1697), Spenser is dubbed the Master of our 'northern dialect' who has 'so exactly imitated the Doric of Theocritus, that his Love is a perfect image of that passion which had infused into both sexes, before it was corrupted with the knowledge of arts, and the ceremonies of what we call good manners' (p. 282). This primitivistic simplicity of character and prelapsarian instincts is thus exactly mirrored by a suitably artless roughness and lack of civilized cadence in the Doric. This veneration for Spenser's diction is repeated in his "Preface" to Fables Ancient and Modern (1700) where he is hailed as

---

(3 continued)
complete edition was appended to John Cawood's edition of Mantuan's Ship of Fools (1570). Besides Turberville's translation, there had been a recent, and widely apochryphal compilation in 1656, translated by Thomas Harvey: The Bucolicks of Baptist Mantuan in ten eclogues.

[1] Mantuan's satire is most particularly noticeable in "October", where Piers and Cuddie discuss poetic ambition and the moral power of poetry. Not only is Mantuan's Eclogue 5 represented, but also Idyll 16 and Barclay's Eclogue 4. "July" is partly based on Eclogue 8 and "September" on Eclogue 9. Both are 'morall' eclogues. Chaucer is Spenser's Tityrus, the 'God of Shepheards', whose praises he sang in "June" and whose Sir Thopas metre he adopted in "March".

one of the 'great masters in our language ...' who saw 'much further into the beauties of our numbers than those who immediately followed' him (2: 247). In his collaboration with Sir William Soame in translating Boileau on Horace (1683), there are also the following lines which refer specifically to the Calendar:

> Spencer did next in Pastorals excel,
> And taught the Noble Art of Writing well:
> To stricter Rules the Stanza did restrain,
> And found for Poetry a richer Veine.[1]

This 'richer Veine' is closely linked to the perspicuity of his 'northern dialect', a simplicity of language demonstrating the Theocritean ideals of uncivilized freedom with little of the emasculating pathos.

The contrast with Pope is striking. Pope finds Spenser kin to Theocritus in 'manners, thoughts, and characters', but that he was 'certainly inferior in his Dialect', not because of artistic incompetence but because the object of his imitation is 'entirely obsolete, or spoken only by people of the lowest condition'. The Doric of the Idylls had its own 'beauty and propriety' on account of its currency 'in part of Greece' and also its use by 'many of the greatest persons' (1:31-32). Dryden's relish at a Golden Age libertinism is completely rejected here for a class-based censorship of "low" life and its idioms. It is then that Pope justifies this fastidiousness in terms that annex social assumptions to artistic ones: 'As there is a difference between simplicity and rusticity, so the expression of simple thoughts should be plain, but not clownish. The addition he has made of a Calendar to his Eclogues is very beautiful: since by this, besides the general moral of innocence and simplicity, which is common to other authors of pastoral, he has one peculiar to himself' (1: 32). This concurrence of "simplicities" and the struggle to define the term satisfactorily creates several problems in interpretation. Initially, there is the clear parallel between simplicity/plainness and rusticity/clownishness which already overlays aesthetic and moral criteria as to mimetic truth. The waters get muddier when Pope gets to the 'general moral', for here pastoral is deemed to advocate both innocence (perhaps Dryden's primitivism) as well as this socio-aesthetic value of simplicity.

---

[1] The Art of Poetry, written in French by The Sieur de Boileau (London, 1683), p. 8.

Pope, alternatively, could define Spenserian simplicity with a quite different emphasis. In the heavily ironic *Guardian* 40 (April 27, 1713), Pope's anonymous contribution to Tickell's pastoral series, it proves to be a less enviable attribute. In 'praising' Ambrose Philips's '*Elegant Dialect*, which alone might prove him the eldest born of *Spencer*, and our only true *Arcadian*', Pope concludes that it might be as well if pastoralists confined themselves to their own home dialect. The example quoted is the opening of Spenser's 'September', which Pope believed was set in Wales 'where, with all the Simplicity natural to that Part of our Island, one Shepherd bids the other *Good-morrow* in an unusual and elegant Manner'.[1] Pope naturally chooses a particularly convincing but unrepresentative example to denigrate Philips's colloquialism, for 'E.K.' in his '*Glosse*' to the *Eclogue* admits that, even by Spenser's Doric standard, 'The Dialecte and phrase of speache in this Dialogue, seemeth somewhat to differ from the comen' (p.455). The full force of the irony behind naming Philips 'our only true *Arcadian*' is thus obvious; by claiming to base his diction and characters on a Doric *Idyllic* model, he is truly opposed to the self-conscious highly-wrought artistry of Virgil and runs the danger of singularity, a travesty of the traditional esteem won by artful predecessors.

---

[1] *Prose Works*, p. 104.

This sense of a canon of acceptable pastorals is crucial to a full comprehension of "simplicity's" rhetorical force. A return to a native simplicity or a lost innocence is a pastoral gesture. Pope himself is not above invoking Spenser's ghost in his own pastorals. In "Summer", Alexis uses a Flute 'which Colin's tuneful breath / Inspir'd when living, and bequeath'd in Death; / He said; Alexis, take this Pipe ...' (39-41). Presumably Pope wants to keep a memory of Spenser's mellifluousness not his low subject-matter. To Ambrose Philips, the attraction of Spenser lies immediately in other areas. In the 'Preface' to his own Pastorals (1710), he feared lest the 'innocency of the Subject' should make it so unappealing. His traditional models are Theocritus, Virgil and Spenser, the only writers 'to have hit upon the true Nature of Pastoral Poems'.[1] Pope had not accepted Theocritus or Spenser so unreservedly. It was perhaps Philips whose taste accorded with his own age. Henry Felton's A Dissertation on Reading the Classics (1713) gives Spenser the palm for pastoral poetry 'even with Theocritus, for I dare prefer him to Virgil'. In Felton's reading, 'the Sweetness and Rusticity of the Doric Muse' is a considerable bonus only recently imitated by his contemporaries, those who 'have assembled all the Beauties of Arcadian Poetry, and restored their Simplicity, Language, and Manners, to the Swains' (p. 223). This appropriation of Arcadia to a Spenserian model is the very opposite to Pope's attempt in keeping this Virgilian ideal uncontaminated by the less ideal primitivisms of Philips. This exclusiveness was not echoed by Dryden who in his 'Preface to Sylvae' (1685) treads a fine line between a veneration and a distrust of the Doric pathos of the Idylls, enjoying the 'incomparable sweetness' of its 'clownishness' whilst forbearing to imitate

---

1. Poems, edited by M.G. Segar (Oxford, 1937), p. 3.

it in his own translations because it could not succeed in English. He also presumes that Virgil would have modelled his idiom on Theocritus's if the 'severity of the Roman language' had not 'denied him that advantage'. What is most arresting about Dryden's acceptance of the Doric's 'clownishness' is the willingness to countenance the provincial and dialectal in the form. He figures this marriage of sweet 'clownishness' in terms that are as geographically precise and particular as in Pope's abhorrence that a Spenserian Eclogue could have been set in Wales: the dialect seeming like 'a fair shepherdess in her country russet, talking in a Yorkshire tone' (1: 265-66).[1] For the Arcadian pastoral to keep both its serious generic status and yet also refer directly to impoverished country life is an impossible dichotomy. It is for this reason that the choice between Arcadia and a Modern British equivalent be it Purney's Kent or Spenser's Wales is necessary for the survival of the classical pastoral's theoretical foundation.

The Renaissance mode of the pastoral took root in the fertile soil of a less mimetic climate than the Restoration or Augustan period. As Rosamund Tuve has demonstrated, clarity to an earlier taste was not incompatible with a formal beauty which was part of an attempt to institute a sufficiently expressive order.[2] The world of fact and the world of art aided rather than tested each other. "Simplicity", therefore, is no simple or obvious quality. The 'pastorall rudenesse' that 'E.K.' emphasised and defended in the epistle to Gabriell Harvey was no hindrance to an allied 'morall wisenesse' or a 'dewe observing of Decorum everye where, in personages, in seasons, in matter, in speach, and generally in al seemely simplycitie of handeling his matter, and framing his words' (p.416). In the very eclogue that Pope ridicules for its rusticity, Spenser more than once alludes to the subversive pastourelle traditions exemplified in Marot[1] where the rough directness of Diggon Davie and his questioner Hobbinoll, implicitly exposes the clerical hypocrisies 'and loose living of Popish prelates' (p. 452). It would trivialize the contrast to argue that Pope shunned such weighty pastoral themes because of some incipient Catholicism and, thereby, a latent sympathy for late sixteenth-century priests. No contemporary of his favoured the allegorical pastoral, but dwelt on formal questions reinforcing a heavily selective simplicity of form.

---

[1] The same phrase is repeated almost verbatim by Thomas Pope Blount, De Re Poetica (London, 1694), p. 112.

[2] See "Imagery and Logic: Ramus and Metaphysical Poetics", Journal of the History of Ideas, 3 (1942), 383-84. Compare Wilbur Samuel Howell's "Ramus and English Rhetoric", Quarterly Journal of Speech, 37 (1951), 301-2. Both argue that even Ramist theories believed strongly in the immediacy and warmth of the poetic argument.

With John Hughes's edition of Spenser's Works (1715), the Calendar became a branch of lyric. His defence of the form took its stand on ground really provided by Fontenelle, namely that the two ingredients necessary to Pastoral are 'Love, and the Images of a Country life; and to represent these, our Author had little more to do, than to examine his own Heart, and to copy the Scene about him'. Yet this passionate realism was perhaps not all it seemed. In comparing the Faerie Queene with the Calendar, Hughes found the same difference as between a 'Royal Palace and a little Country Seat'.[2] Hughes's

---

1. Especially in the more 'plaintive' eclogues: "November" and "December". He also contributed several translations of Marot's French versions of Petrarch to A Theatre for Worldlings (1569), his first published work. The Eclogue au Roy (to which "December" is especially indebted) probably gave Spenser the idea of comparing the course of human life with the passing of the year. Helen Cooper gives a full account in Pastoral, pp.112-13, 144, 152-55.

2. Spenser: The Critical Heritage, edited by R.M. Cummings (London, 1971), p. 272. Hughes wavers between defending Spenser's rusticity which makes 'the Picture more natural, and consequently more pleasing' (p. 273) and then banishing contemporary rustics, 'the meanest and poorest sort of People among us' altogether (p. 274).

"simplicity" is not, it would appear, completely devoid of art.

The rhetoric of the "Remarks on the Shepherd's Calendar" frequently invites a reading that takes abstractions on trust. For example, when he claims that Spenser 'chose to follow Nature it self, and to paint the life and Sentiments of Shepherds after a more simple and unaffected manner' (p. 272). The Nature indicated and its representation are value-terms as much as descriptive ones, for it was not open to every writer to illustrate Nature successfully. 'Nature', 'simplicity' and lack of affectation are invoked to underpin the argument that Spenser was correct in refusing to imitate 'the Italians' such as Tasso's Aminta. Compared to such extravagant romantic fancy, Spenser's eclogues are simpler and attempt to portray a more typical shepherd. Hughes himself notices the ambiguity in such terms. He draws a familiar distinction between the passionate pastoral - 'the Representation of a Life of Retirement and Innocence' and the Golden Age pastoral where 'Persons of Rank and Dignity honour'd this Employment' and 'Shepherds were the Owners of their own Flocks'. Theocritus is the prime example of the former, Virgil of the latter. Spenser's sympathies lie with Theocritus (p. 273). Consequently, the satirical and allegorical components of the Calendar are suppressed or, at most, downgraded mainly for reasons of decorum and lyric unity. Serious political comment is sacrificed at the altar of a simplicity both of form ('it may be doubted whether any thing of this kind shou'd be admitted to disturb the Tranquility and Pleasure which shou'd every where reign in Pastoral Poems') and a decorum based on a neatly laundered style for a toylike subject ('nothing shou'd be introduc'd more than the light and pleasant Railleries or Contentions of Shepherds about their Flocks, their Mistresses, or their Skill in piping and singing') (p. 274).[1]

The confusion covered by the one term: "Simplicity", can be great. For Dryden, Spenser's simplicity lay in his linguistic vigour which mirrored an heroic freedom from the niceties of civilized life. Alternatively, Pope's simplicity is an ideal, cleared of the contingent and transitory by bearing no relation to a particular time or place but to an enduring literary tradition. However, the most thriving definition of the term lies in what Hughes calls the 'natural Innocence, [and] Simplicity ... being a very good Contrast to the Vices and Luxury, and to that Degeneracy from [the] first Pattern' that can be found in the countryside at any time (pp. 274-75).

However much Pope may have theoretically resisted the stylistic rusticity of the Calendar, this position is still riddled with a certain ambiguity. Not only did he recognise the authoritative example of Spenser, but also chose to include his imitation of the ottiva rima: "The Alley", in the Pope-Swift Miscellanies of 1727 (even though written before 1709). In it, paradoxically, Pope is free to indulge an urban realism heavily reminiscent of The Dunciad or Swift's "A Description of A City Shower" (1710)

> And on the broken Pavement here and there,
> Doth many a stinking Sprat and Herring lie;
> A Brandy and Tobacco Shop is near,
> And Hens, and Dogs, and Hogs are feeding by;
> And here a Sailor's Jacket hangs to dry: (ll. 10-14)[2]

---

[1] Hughes's position is best characterized by his support for Philips's work, especially for its 'sprinkling of the rural Phrase, as it humours the Scene and Characters'. This is undertaken 'with great Delicacy of Taste, in the very Spirit and Manner of Spenser' (p.274). This is a far cry from the Doric envisaged in architectural terms by Vitruvius in his The Ten Books On Architecture (97-94 B.C.): 'The temples of Minerva, Mars, and Hercules, will be Doric, since the virile strength of these gods makes daintiness entirely inappropriate to their houses' (Book I, Chapter 2, translated by Morris Hickey Morgan (New York, 1914, reprinted 1960), p. 15).

[2] The full text can be found at TE, 6: 43-45.

Here is the "lower" simplicity of unselected details thrust together in a near anarchy of loose syntax, a voice of satire not pastoral.

This discomfort at the more physical details of Spenser's description has lasted. In one of the most recent studies of Spenser's work, it is claimed that 'He is a pastoralist in the way of Theocritus, conscious of the early days of the world as innocent, serene and happy ...'.[1] This bucolic vein is, however, unsatisfactory:

> Spenser's version of pastoral has little of the idyllic charm of Theocritean pastoral; the language is sometimes deliberately crude, the metres often intentionally stumbling or banal, and the subject-matter often simple or tedious. Further, while it is ostensibly a collection of twelve pieces unified by the device of the twelve months and by the pastoral convention, it is in fact heterogeneous enough for the claim of unity to seem specious (p. 33)[2]

Indeed, C.S. Lewis, from a definitive source, has regarded the Mantuan line of influence as something of an excrescence, following the example of 'a literary impulse almost exactly like that of Juvenal expressing itself through a medium originally devised for the purposes of refreshment and escape'.[3] This resistance to the realistic signifiers of Spenser's allegory is due more to a pastoral norm derived from the Romantics than the classical traditions.

The Origins of Passionate Simplicity

One of the main impulses behind the institution of simplicity as a criterion of literary worth was the need to earmark specifically poetic subjects, for if pastoral poems were not clearly transforming rural subject-matter, they invited readings that defined them as "lower" comic or satiric work. The problems of interpretation posed by the Idylls and Eclogues of antiquity lay in two main areas. Firstly, the exact mimetic status of the shepherd was blurred by 1680. "E.K." could declare that eclogues were 'Goteheards tales' and Spenser could affirm that his purpose was 'to teach the ruder shepheard how to feede his sheepe',[1] but such parallels were difficult to maintain. After all, the principal reason why rural life was so acceptably significant lay in its connotations of ease and lack of ambition or pride: in short, its "otherness". Both Theocritus and Virgil emphasise the disparity between a Cos or Arcadia imaginatively reconstructed and the sophisticated audience implied in the framework of the collections as a whole. Spenser also demonstrates no desire to mitigate the rudeness of his subject-matter in order to announce its seriousness. Secondly, the "poetic" content of the pastoral had to obey certain Horatian and Aristotelian dicta on a selective decorum and unitary form as selected by several generations of French neo-classicism.[2] The frailty of bucolic terms of reference is clear from the assaults on its lack of urbanity during the Restoration. When Flatman identifies the libertine Rochester as a latter-day Daphnis, the identity is manifestly ironic.[3]

---

[1] Peter Bayley, Edmund Spenser : Prince of Poets (London, 1971), p.23.

[2] Compare both A.C. Hamilton, "The Argument of The Sheapheardes Calender", Journal of English Literary History, 23 (1956), pp. 177ff. and R.A. Durr, "Spenser's Calender of Christian Time", Journal of English Literary History, 24 (1957), pp. 270ff..

[3] Oxford History of English Literature, volume 3 (1954), p. 131.

---

1. "The generall argument of the whole booke", Poetical Works, p. 419; "Glosse" to "December", p. 467.

2. Both Ancient and Modern French criticism had stressed Horatian decorum and Aristotelian form. The principal texts are Boileau's Art Poétique (1674) and Traité du Sublime (1674), Rapin's Réflexions sur la Poétique (1674), Le Bossu's Traité du Poeme épique (1675), Saint-Evremond's Essais (1684 f.), Bouhours's Manière de bien penser (1687), Dacier's Preface sur les Satires d'Horace (1687) and his translation of Horace's Poetics (1692) and Perrault's Parallele des Anciens et des Modernes (1688). English translations were quick to appear: Rapin (Rymer, 1674), Le Bossu (1695), Saint-Evremond (1686), Dacier (1692). Some latitude in the English version may be noted in Soames's (rev. Dryden) Boileau: Art of Poetry (1680) and Pulteney's Treatise on Loftiness and Elegance of Speech (1680), Boileau's 'Longinus'.

3. The full text of "On the Death of My Lord Rochester: Pastoral" (1680) is found in Rochester: The Critical Heritage, edited by David Farley-Hills (London, 1972), p. 115.

One strain of interpretation would have the shepherd, therefore a rustic simpleton, his erstwhile innocence protected by lack of opportunity not virtue. These two problems, of unacceptable ambiguity and possible bucolic corruption, forced those who would attempt new pastoral writing to adopt a defensive position. One of the most widespread discoveries was the shepherd as a man of sentiment, if not nobly savage, then passionately simple, inviting not admiration, but indulgence.

The critical principle that asserts that the poetic is ultimately measured by the heart rather than the head is often felt to have originally been formulated on the subjective criteria of the "Preface to *Lyrical Ballads*" (1800). This is frequently a convenient myth of the literary historian. In rejecting the neo-classic sense of "art", Wordsworth tries to expose the fact that responses both to nature and to those living in an unmediated relation to it had been frequently manipulated by a specifically poetic language 'differing materially from the real language of men in any situation', so much so that the taste of men had become gradually perverted in that this language was received as a natural language not merely as a means of giving pleasure and dignity.[1] Consequently, an Old Cumberland Beggar or a Leech-gatherer could be serious poetic material merely because they induced worthwhile feelings not because they were socially respectable. This is the notable advance of the "Preface". The nobility of simple feelings, the primitivism of the inspired rather than the learned, are all catered for, however, in the Περι Υψους of the otherwise unknown "Longinus", probably written in the first century. It is this taste for the sublime that is so incompatible with the Arcadian pastoral detachment of Pope's Pastorals and yet so encouraging to the "pathetick" innocence of those of Philips or Purney.

---

[1] See *Wordsworth's Literary Criticism*, edited by Nowell C. Smith, reprinted with Preface, Introduction and Notes by Howard Mills (Bristol, 1980), pp. 30-31.

"Sublime" does not exactly render ὕψους. The earliest English translations were entitled *Of the Height of Eloquence* (John Hall, 1662) and *Of the Loftiness or Elegancy of Speech* (John Pulteney, 1680). It was only with the vogue of Boileau's translation of 1674 that his translation, the "sublime", became authoritative. As T.S. Dorsch observes, the word does not quite carry the present associations of sublime, that is, of an outstanding and unusual exaltation of conception and style. 'As Longinus defines it, it signifies a certain distinction and excellence of expression ...'.[1] Consequent commentary has added references to exalted intellectuality. The major theoretical challenge of the essay, however, lies in the use made of the term and where "Longinus" locates its origins.

In the very first chapter, rhetoric and poetry are sharply distinguished, for the effect of elevated language upon an audience is felt to be not persuasion but transport, a frenzy [2] This places the poet in the foreground for this sublimity must be the echo of a great soul (capable of sublime 'simplicity', 7.i,ii;9i,ii)[3] not so much great labour. The individuality of the poet is thereby a crucial factor in poetic excellence. Of the five sources of this effect outlined in Chapter VIII, even those allowed to be primarily the consequence of "art" have a heavily "natural" bias to them, and seem to be the consequence of a prior disposition of soul. The two "natural" attributes, the power of forming great conceptions and inspired and vehement passion are the keystones of the three "artificial" or acquired qualities, the formation of figures ἥ τε ποιὰ τῶν σχημάτων πλάσις, noble diction φράσις and dignified and elevated 'composition' γ' ἐν ἀξιώματι καὶ διάρσει σύνθεσις Fundamentally, the treatise is, in this sense, anti-artifice. But an art of the spontaneous "sublime" is a contradiction in terms. In view of this the value of art is in restraining the passionate autonomy of what is basically an impulse or an instinctive reaction. This has two consequences of special significance for theorists of the Restoration and beyond. Firstly, scrupulous technical correctness is relatively mediocre when compared with the unevenness of grand literary effects and, secondly, the single grace or happy touch is to be treasured (as the effects of genius) rather more than a greatness or perfection achieved through a whole structure:

---

[1] *Classical Literary Criticism*, translated with an Introduction by T.S. Dorsch (Harmondsworth, 1965), p. 24.

[2] ἐκοτασις. My copy-text of the treatise is that edited by D.A. Russell (Oxford, 1964). See Russell's note on the term at p. 62.

[3] ὕψος μεφαλοφροσύνης ἀπήχημα.

> ἐξενεχθὲν τά τε πράγματα δίκην σκηπτοῦ πάντα διεφόρησεν

The extent to which this offers an alternative to both Aristotle and Horace is easily gauged by observing how vividness of description could be a virtue in itself in the eighteenth century. For example, Ambrose Philips told the patrons of his periodical The Free-Thinker 63 (Oct.27, 1718) that when a great poet conveys 'just and lively Ideas' to his readers, 'Words, in His Disposal, are Things: And, the Deception proves so strong, that the Reader forgets he is perusing a Piece of Writing'.[1] Homer proved a useful example of this power of 'Deception'. Joseph Spence in his Essay on Pope's Odyssey (1726), in discussing his landscapes, praises their quality of making 'everything present to us; and agreeably deceive us into an Imagination, that we ... actually See,

---

1. The Free-Thinker (London, 1722-23), 3 vols, 2: 51.

what we only Hear'.[1] This rapture cuts across most contemporary theories of reading that emphasised the regular and regulated pleasures with their own classical associations and implicit continuity with past writing. The emotional force of the Augustan Sublime creates an experience that is only aware of the present tense and which does not require the series of gradually and rationally associated events which characterize Aristotelian form. This simplicity of the passions appeals to any one who is sensitive enough, and leaves out of account the literary and, therefore, learned codes within the traditional neo-classical canon.

It would be wrong, on the other hand, to define the "Longinian" Sublime solely by reference to its rhapsodic effects. It may well have been an impressive authority for those who wished to endorse a psychological grammar of literary response, but it would be so only through a partial reading. In Περι Υψους there is a clear split between the sublime touch or "lucky hit" and the inventive skill plus proper order and disposition of material that only reveals itself gradually. Nonetheless there are other chapters where this distinction is denied, the most obvious example being in II.2, where sublime effects are seen to be dangerous unless balanced by knowledge, the curb as well as the spur of audacity.[2] Pope expressed this qualification in his *Essay on Criticism* (1711):

> For *Wit* and *Judgement* often are at strife,
> Tho' meant each other's Aid, like *Man* and *Wife*.
> 'Tis more to *guide* than *spur* the Muses' Steed;
> Restrain his Fury, than provoke his Speed;
> The winged Courser, like a gen'rous Horse,
> Shows most true Mettle when you *Check* his Course. [ll. 81-87][3]

---

[1] "An Essay on Pope's *Odyssey* : In which some particular *Beauties* and *Blemishes* of that Work are consider'd" (London, 1726), p. 66.

[2] See Russell's note at pp. 65-66, stressing the traditional basis of the metaphor.

[3] The full text can be found at *TE*, 1: 237-326.

This moderation of "Longinian" rapture is most evident later in the Essay when he becomes an embodiment of such tempered passion:

> An ardent Judge, who Zealous in his Trust,
> With Warmth gives Sentence, yet is always Just;
> Whose own Example strengthens all his laws,
> And is himself that great Sublime he draws. [11. 677-680]

This is a neat refutation (in line with Chapter II of Περι Υψους) of the creed that the "Longinian" sublime is essentially artless, for Pope finds "Longinus" legislating by example.

That Pope was attracted by this 'Longinian' position is borne out by the Scriblerian Peri Bathous (1728), a comic inversion of the Sublime, which uses "Longinus's" emphasis on the nobility of passion to condemn a "low" simplicity as represented by several Dunces. It is not a case of Pope distrusting the passions in poetic matters, rather that there is a clear difference between the "low" and noble in the matter. This distinction is a part of Welsted's reading of the treatise in his translation of 1724, but as the stimulus of powerful and inspired emotion (VIII.1) he places the 'Pathetic': 'I understand by the Pathetic, that Rapture and that natural Vehemence which affects and moves.' This is considered an effect of Nature, 'and must be born with us'.[1] Although one page later, Welsted's "Longinus" is reminding the reader that the sublime contains no "low" emotional ingredient such as 'Affliction', 'Fear' or 'Sorrow', his substitution of the 'Pathetic' for the more powerful original instils a potential contradiction. It is obvious that both Dryden and Pope considered this 'Rapture' to be a premeditated and learnable effect. Dryden, even when pleading for a certain poetic license from strict neo-classicism in the case of Heroic poetry, considers the sublime a rhetorical trope. In claiming that 'Imaging

---

1. Epistles, Odes, etc.. Written on Several Subjects With A Translation of Longinus's Treatise on the Sublime (London, 1724), p. 156.

is ... the very height and life of Poetry' (1: 186), he concludes that 'all reasonable men will conclude it necessary, that sublime subjects ought to be adorned with the sublimest, and consequently often with the most figurative expressions ...' (1: 190). In this Dryden is merely recasting the "Longinus" of Chapter XVII, where it is stated that 'by some quality innate in them, the rhetorical figures reinforce the sublime'.[1] They do this, however, by keeping out of the picture, allowing the beauty of the sublimity to shine. Pope, himself, allowed passion to be a primary motivating force in works of genius, but he too granted art or judgement a significant role. In Spectator 408 (June 18, 1712), whilst granting that 'the greatest Genius's have commonly the strongest Affections', he still maintained that they were controlled by 'the Reins of Reason and the Guidance of Judgment',[2] terms which betray a strong "Longinian" inspiration.

This strength of passion should be differentiated from lyric grace and its introspective intensities, for the 'Sublime Genius' is of a heroic stature apt to express itself in Pindarics or the Epic, not the smaller forms. French neo-classicism recognised Genius and found it the hall-mark of the grand style,[3] not the song or ballad. The reason

---

1. ἔσται δὲ πάνυ σύντομον, ὅτι φυσει πως συμμαχεῖ τε τῷ ὕψει τὰ σχήματα καὶ πάλιν ἀντισυμμαχεῖται θαυμαστῶς ὑπ' αὐτοῦ.

2. Prose Works, p. 47.

3. This is especially the case with Boileau in his L'Art Poétique, where one of the most urgent rules is to break with traditional formulae where the particular instance warrants it. The aspiring artist is to clear his 'ésprit tremblant' of 'scrupules' and 'doutes ridicules' and learn,

   ... par quel transport heureux,
   Quelquefois dans sa course un ésprit vigoureux
   Trop resserve per l'art, sort des règles prescrites,
   Et de l'art même apprend a frânchir leurs limites.
   [4. 77-80]

   (Oeuvres Completes, edited by Charles-H. Boudhors (Paris, 1934-43) 7 vols, 3:24.)

why Rapin chose not to endorse "Longinus's" and Quintilian's strong emphasis on Nature, as opposed to Art in tandem with Wit, was the fear that the 'celestial fire' of an 'extraordinary Genius' would be confused with the 'empty flash' of an ignorant person's imagination heated perhaps by a debauch,[1] the Dionysian 'lucky hit' of the 'natural' poet. Fundamentally, with Rapin as with Pope and Dryden, Genius flourishes consistently with an eye for formal beauty and its gradual effect. The one exception to this rule in Pope's case is Homer. In the "Preface" to his translation of the Iliad (1715), the work is likened to a 'wild Paradise', where the poet's 'amazing invention' is attributed to his 'unequal'd Fire and Rapture'. There is little doubt that the Homeric qualities are sublime ones for Pope confesses that 'no Man of a true Poetical Spirit is Master of himself while he reads him' and that so forceful is Homer's imagination that the 'Reader is hurry'd out of himself'. Even so, the Iliad is not composed of a series of 'sudden, short, and interrupted Flashes' as in the work of Lucan or Statius from whom he is dissociated. This fire of inspiration is at white-heat throughout, over a longer stretch than could be supplied by a short lyric.[2]

This passionate simplicity which seems to militate against Art is therefore, according to this position, indeed artful. Pope can explain the irregular beauties of Homer, even if he cannot supply rules for them, and even the "Longinian" rapture is guided by judgment as to when he shall indulge such a talent to move his readers. This was clearly the opinion of Dryden, who in his Grounds of Criticism in Tragedy. Prefixed to Troilus and Cressida (1679), quotes "Longinus's" dictum that to write 'pathetically' can only be the product of a 'lofty genius'. However, the great feature of this talent is that it is not totally innate, for

---

[1] Reflections on Aristotle's Treatise of Poesie, translated by Thomas Rymer (London, 1674), pp. 17, 3.

[2] Prose Works, pp. 224-25.

> unless he help himself by an acquired knowledge of the passions, what they are in their own nature, and by what springs they are to be moved, he will be subject either to raise them where they ought not to be raised, or not to raise them by the just degrees of nature, or to amplify them beyond the natural bounds, or not to observe the crisis and turns of them, in their cooling and decay; all which errors proceed from want of judgment in the poet, and from being unskilled in the principles of Moral Philosophy. [1: 220][1]

There is here the victory of Horatian skill over *furor poeticus* and, implicitly, the vindication of tradition (and its recognition) over and above the instantaneous flash of powerful feelings. To provoke the passions, to write 'pathetically', is not the result of untutored 'natural' simplicity at all.

That this critical perspective on "Longinus" was not the only prevalent one is really down to one very powerful influence. It is not that Boileau's translation and commentary on the treatise exalts the "natural" sublime at all. In both his *Traité du Sublime, ou du Merveilleux dans le Discours* (1674) and his commentary *Réflexions critiques sur quelques passages du rheteur Longin* (1694), he makes polemical use of "Longinus" to correct the current idea, most notably instanced by Perrault and others in their attack upon the Ancients, that the classical legacy was simply concerned with rules and the "kinds".[1] In the "Preface" to his *Traité*, the 'sublime' in the "Longinian" sense is cut free of its association with the "high" (*grandis*) style of ancient oratory with its dignified cadences and periphrastic expression. Instead of a formal pattern, Boileau offered a "sublime" with an element of the extraordinary.

---

[1] This debate between Art and Nature is by no means common only to this period. The demand for works displaying an ἐνεργεια stems from ancient rhetoric. However, the reaction to this anti-traditional 'art' was quite widespread. For example, see Sir William Temple, "Of Poetry" (1690): 'Without the forces of wit, all poetry is flat and languishing; without the succours of judgment, 'tis wild and extravagant. The true wit of poesy is that such contraries must meet to compose it: a genius, both penetrating and solid; ... the frame or fabric of a true poem must have something both sublime and just, amazing and agreeable.' (*Five Miscellaneous Essays*, edited by S.H. Monk (Ann Arbor, Mich., 1963), p. 180), or Wentworth Dillon, Earl of Roscommon's, dictum from his "Essay on Translated Verse" (1684):

> Beware *what Spirit* rages in your breast;
> *For ten inspir'd ten thousand are Possest.*
> Thus make the *proper use* of each *Extream*,
> And *write* with *fury*, but *correct* with Phleam. [ll. 298-301]

Spingarn, 2: 306. Even Shaftesbury, in his *Advice to an Author* (1710), recognises the pretence that might accompany genius alone; see *Characteristics of Men, Manners, and Opinions, Times*, edited by John M. Robertson (Indianapolis, 1964), 2 vols., 1: 151-52.

> It must be observ'd then that by the Sublime he [Longinus] does not mean what the Orators call the *Sublime Stile*, but something *extraordinary* and *marvellous* that strikes us in a Discourse and makes it elevate, ravish and transport us. The *Sublime Stile* requires always great Words, but the *Sublime* may be found in a Thought only, or in a Figure or Turn of Expression.

Instead of analysis, Boileau's "Longinian" qualities exacted only admiration; instead of rhetoric, he had recast the "sublime" as a quality of soul, evading full definition. Indeed, a given passage could be in the "high" style and yet not be "sublime". Such a statement as 'the sovereign arbiter of Nature from a single utterance formed the light' contains nothing marvellous or surprising, especially when it is compared to the famous pronouncement in *Genesis* (quoted by "Longinus"): 'God said *Let there be Light, and there was Light*, ...'[2] The contrast

---

1. See the discussion by Jules Brody, *Boileau and Longinus* (Geneva, 1958), pp. 113-17.

2. *The Works of Monsr. Boileau Despreaux*, translated by John Ozell (London, 1711) 2 vols, 2 : 7. The fullest account of this variety of the Sublime is given in S.H. Monk, *The Sublime : A Study of Critical Theories in XVIII-century England* (New York, 1935), pp. 29-37, 44-46.

between the grandeur and immensity of the thought and its utterly simple expression creates a sublime effect; the "high" style merely neutralized it.

The Traité and the Réflexions both sanction an idealized "sublime", a quality free of all associations of the Academy and its concomitant inheritance: classical precedent. Thanks to this emphasis, the more neo-classical "Longinus" was vulnerable to a more democratic spirit, stressing those passages that lent a spiritual colouring to the term. To some extent the power of "Longinus's" influence was strictly against Gallic influence and, interpreted nationalistically, it could reinforce Anglo-Saxon prejudice and an ideology of patriotic liberty. However, the genius as a man of feeling was an attractive image. Sir Richard Blackmore used it to excuse himself from Dennis's criticisms of his first epic: Prince Arthur (1696). In his 'Preface' to King Arthur (1697), after presumptuously comparing himself with Homer, he represents himself as an unlearned genius with "Longinus" as authoritative precedent.[1] This desperately modest persona suited Ambrose Philips in his "To A Friend Who Desired Me to Write on the Death of King William" (1702).

> The country scraper, when he wakes the Crowd,
> And makes the tortur'd cat-gut squeak aloud,
> Is often ravish'd and in transport lost;
> What more, my friend, can fam'd Corelli boast,
> When harmony herself from heav'n descends,
> And on the artist's moving bow attends?
>   Why then, in making verses, should I strain
> For wit, and of Apollo beg a vein? ....
> Let me transgress by nature, nor by rule,
> An artless Idiot, not a study'd fool.

---

[1] They, the critics, are taken to have hinted that neither Homer nor Virgil 'has shewn a more regular Conduct' than in Prince Arthur (p. iii). However, the occasional fault is expected of 'writers of the first Rank', where 'one or two of their extraordinary and admirable Thoughts will Atone for all their Faults'. This is the face-saving 'Apology' discovered in 'the famous Longinus' (p. iv).

> A *Withers*, not a *Rhymer*, since I aim
> At nothing less, in writing, than a name. [ll. 35-42, 45-48][1]

In finding for himself such a voice Philips is eschewing the public mode of elegy or ode. He encourages '*Halifax's* Muse' to sing the late king's virtues, a task to which he feels himself unequal. Therefore, 'rather than prophane his sacred herse / With languid praises and unhallow'd verse' (9-10) Philips chooses the lyric, 'like some love-sick fopling rhyme' (23): 'To blooming *Phillis* I a song compose, / And, for a rhyme, compare her to the rose;' (27-28). This unstudied simplicity is far from the "Longinian" sublime, but not so far from the "pathetick" simplicity of Welsted's translation. It differs significantly in that the model for such simple emotional display is taken from either songs or sonnets: "lower" forms. Adina Forsgren concludes in her work on John Gay that although the notion of poetical kinds had died hard even with Modern critics, there were appeals against the classical gradation, to recognise with Fontenelle, a certain number of *espèces nouvelles*: 'In that group, the "modern" French critic included "Letters of Love and Gallantry", Tales, Operas and Songs. These genres were accepted not because of authoritative classical precedence, but because they had been used with success by French poets, to whom Antiquity [had] nothing to set in opposition.'[1] These "modern" forms invite the "lower" classical forms such as pastoral and especially the Theocritean Doric, to combine with them. As will be discussed later, this passionate "simplicity" is as much an ideology as a formal preference.

---

[1] *Poetical Works*, p. 86.
The preference for Withers above Rymer ('*Rhymer*') clarifies the anti-classical line of attack. George Wither, often the butt of the Restoration Wits for his copiousness and choice of subject, often wrote in an indigenous, lyrical pastoral vein, aiding William Browne's choice of *Britannia's Pastorals* (1616). In *The Shepherd's Hunting* (1615) and *Fidelio* (1615), a poetical lament from a forsaken maiden to her lover, he established the taste for a "pathetick" plangency. Later in life, he was to turn to devotional verse such as *The Nature of Man* (1636). This simple emotional piety obviously recommended him to Philips. Thomas Rymer, on the other hand, appears as the unyielding neo-classicist, the translator of Rapin (1674) and a most literal-minded dramatic theorist as evidenced by *Tragedies of the Last Age, considered and examined by the Practice of the Ancients and by the Common Sense of all Ages* (1678) and *A Short View of Tragedy* (1692). Pope's comment on this unlearned Muse is best exemplified by his judgement on Welsted in the 1728 *Dunciad*:

> 'Flow Welsted, flow! like thine inspirer, Beer,
> Tho' stale, not ripe; tho' thin, yet never clear;
> So, sweetly mawkish, and so smoothly dull;
> Heady, not strong, and foaming tho' not full.'

(III: 163-66, *TE*, 5: 166-67).

The attraction of Boileau's commentary on "Longinus" was its canonization of elements not catered for in the neo-classic standards he had himself declared in L'Art Poétique (1674). Merveille and beau desordre were as acceptable as regularity and reason. Consequently, "Longinus's" constant reminders about the necessary role of wide reading and tradition were not half so remarkable. What for Hall (1662) or Pulteney (1680) had been a particular felicity of expression, had by the early eighteenth century, with Boileau's help, lost its rhetorical associations and become a description of a spiritual disposition. It is only a small step to the conclusion that Genius is three parts passion and only one part learning (if at all). John Dennis could actually take "Longinus" to task for stating that there are examples of the sublime which are independent of passion. This 'Enthusiastick Passion' is the sole source of Sublimity and could be taken to be the 'Characteristical Mark of Poetry ... and the more Passion there is, the better the Poetry'.[2] It is no coincidence, therefore, to find that Boileau's appreciation of a bucolic style was derived from its rendition of the rural scene, cleared of human poverty and steering an exemplary path between platitude and pomposity.[3] As soon as

---

1. John Gay: Poet 'of a lower Order' (Stockholm, 1964), 2 vols, 1: 14.
2. Critical Works, 1: 215-16. Compare 1: 359.
3. L'Art Poetique, 2: 1-37. A fuller description is available in Nathan Edelman, "L'Art Poétique: 'Longtemps Plaire, et Jamais ne Lasser'" in French Classicism : A Critical Miscellany, edited by Jules Brody (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1966), pp. 209-12.

passion rather than tradition is taken to be the touchstone of literary worth, the way is clear for the erstwhile "lower" or shorter forms such as lyric or pastoral to take on a new prominence.

The endorsement and serious consideration of the "lower" kinds was fostered in particular by the Spectator papers on the Ballad (May-June, 1711). These three issues (70, 74, 85) approached the ballads of Chevy Chase and Two Children in the Wood in a serious spirit, granting them access to academic study.[1] Addison was quite aware of the populist position he was taking up. The epigraph to the opening paper is taken from Horace Epistles II. 1. 63: 'Interdum vulgus rectum videt' ('At times the public see and judge aright'). This democratic sentiment is entirely in line with Addison's sentiments elsewhere in the Spectator. Just eight issues earlier (62, May 11, 1711), Addison had attempted a provisional definition of Wit, a subject to which he later returned in June, 1712 (409) and was adequately exploring in the series on true and false wit (58-63).[2] Wit, he argues, is inexorably annexed to truth. One of his authorities for this is Bouhours's La Maniere de bien penser dans les ouvrages de l'ésprit, Dialogue I (1687), where Eudoxe defends the classical taste and its insistence on le bon sens against French and Spanish influences, depicted by Philarete ('tout ce qui est fleuri, tout ce que brille')[3] and the other is Boileau, who particularly in his Preface to the 1701 edition of his Works,[4] claimed that fine writing did not consist so much in discovering new concepts as in giving things that are known an agreeable turn. This French neo-classicism was concerned primarily with the bon mot; Addison enlarges what were fundamentally stylistic distinctions into a conceptual framework, using "simplicity" as more than a formal description. In describing this 'natural Way of writing', he enlists the help of an unexceptionable synonym: 'that beautiful Simplicity, which we so much admire in the Compositions of the Ancients; and which no Body deviates from, but those who want Strength of Genius to make a Thought shine in its own natural Beauties.'[1] Addison thus allies 'genius' to the beauty of a well-judged simplicity. The degree, however, to which he is prepared to praise the judicial faculties involved is emphasised when the real enemy to simplicity hoves into view: 'foreign Ornaments ... the Extravagancies of an irregular Fancy'. This 'majestick Simplicity of Nature' which provides the yardstick for fine writing is not an exclusive property of the Academician, for he may be distracted by the acquired snares of artificiality. When Addison returns to affairs of "Wit", in paper 409, this 'fine Taste in Writing' is acquired by reading, it is true, but its real roots lie in the sympathies of the reader. Addison pleads for the critic who might put by a reliance on 'the Mechanical Rules which a Man of very little Taste may discourse upon' and instead would emphasise the 'very Spirit and Soul of fine Writing, and shew us the several Sources of that Pleasure which rises in the Mind upon the Perusal of a noble Work' (3: 530). The direction in which Addison's aesthetics moved from 1711 to 1712 was towards "Longinian" vocabulary with its extension into areas of taste. In order for this idea to gather sufficient authority, the taste for

---

[1] The Spectator, edited by D.F. Bond (Oxford, 1965), 5 vols, 1: 297-303; 1: 315-22; 1: 360-64. The ballads were also associated with a brand of rusticity. Bowzybeus, for example, sings both in Gay's "Saturday" (91-108) from The Shepherd's Week (1714). See Bond's note at 1: 298 n.1.

[2] True Wit lay in a 'Resemblance and Congruity of Ideas' whereas False Wit was found in either a 'Resemblance and Congruity of Single Letters' or 'Syllables' or 'Words' or 'whole Sentences or Poems, cast into the Figures of Eggs, Axes, or Altars ...' (1: 265).

[3] Quoted by Addison in Spectator 253 (December 20, 1711), 2: 483.

[4] Works, 2: 49.

---

1. Spectator 62 (May 11, 1711), 1: 268.

epigrams, turns of wit and forced conceits is the paper tiger that opposes it; there is no disguising the fact, however, that the Art suggested by the more traditional gradation of the kinds is largely discredited at the expense of 'a natural simplicity of thought' which affects the mind of the reader. Addison's 'taste' is not trammelled by received Arts or rhetorical distinctions, but is regulated by aesthetic considerations.

What is most striking about Addison's espousal of the low ballad form is how clearly it resembles his pronouncements on 'True Wit'. Once again 'majestick Simplicity' is opposed to the Gothic taste for 'Epigrammatical Turns and Points of Wit' (74, 1: 316); only here this simplicity is emphasised as a public property. The introduction of paper 70 makes this clear:

> When I travelled, I took a particular Delight in hearing the Songs and Fables that are come from Father to Son, and are most in vogue among the common People of the Countries through which I passed; for it is impossible that any thing should be universally tasted and approved by a Multitude, tho' they are only the Rabble of a Nation, which hath not in it some peculiar Aptness to please and gratify the Mind of Man.

Therein lies such natural simplicity; such a consensus taste as is mentioned here 'shows the essential and inherent perfection of simplicity of thought' (1: 297). The choice of Chevy Chase is determined by its status as 'the favourite Ballad of the common People of England' and because the particular simplicity it displays, its 'Paintings of Nature' appeal not only to the 'most ordinary' reader but also to the 'most refined' (1: 298). The keynote of the papers is simplicity, an emotional integrity which is none the less noble and elevated for its plain delivery and unprepossessing context. Cutting between passages from the Aeneid to comparable stanzas from the ballad, Addison daringly asserts that there is little to choose between them. Indeed, those extracts from Chevy Chase seem to fit quite adequately the "Longinian" sublime. In defending the simplicity of the ballad style 'which one may well pardon in so old a Poet', he hopes this lucidity will not prejudice anyone against the 'Greatness of the Thought'. He then quotes the following stanza which illustrates the generosity of Earl Percy, lamenting over his enemy:

> 'Then leaving Life Earl *Piercy* took
> The dead Man by the Hand,
> And said Earl *Douglas* for thy Life
> Would I had lost my Land. ...'
>
> That beautiful Line 'Taking the dead Man by the Hand', will put the Reader in Mind of *Aeneas's* Behaviour towards *Lausus*.

In No. 76, Addison even goes so far as to disagree with Sidney's criticism of the ballad's 'rude Stile', claiming that the language was 'majestick and the Numbers sonorous; ...' (1: 316).

No doubt satisfied by the advances he had made in papers number 70 and 74, Addison next chooses a more controversial ballad to canonize, the Two Children in the Wood, a tale not of military heroism but of pathos and tender filial sentiments.[1] The apologetic preamble to his review of the ballad serves notice that some reader resistance is expected: 'My Reader will think I am not serious, when I acquaint him that the Piece I am going to speak of was the old Ballad of the *Two Children in the Wood*, which is one of the Darling Songs of the Common People, and has been the Delight of most *Englishmen* in some Part of their Age'. The emphasis on sheer pleasure and delight plus the allowance that the 'Darling' song might excite the enthusiasms of childhood might have signified that the "Longinian" sublime was not present. However, the same formulaic test of natural simplicity, that the incidents should 'grow out' of the subject, 'and are such as are the most proper to excite Pity', is applied to both Chevy Chase and Two Children. Whilst admitting that the language is 'mean', Addison seems to imply that that is indeed an aid to the reader's appreciation that the 'Thoughts' are 'natural', and, by 'natural', he signifies the common emotional bond that all people, stripped of the acquirements of art, will recognise is a constant in human behaviour. This theory of reading relies on the transparency of the medium of expression - a limpid style that implicitly signifies in its informal appearance associations of plain-dealing and sincerity. This is essential for the passionately simple style, a form that is closely allied in this series of papers with Addison's concept of the sublime. In order that his apology for the serious consideration of the ballad-form be complete, he, in this instance, invokes mimetic criteria in its praise:

---

[1] Collected by Ambrose Philips in his A Collection of Old Ballads, with Introductions historical, critical, or humourous (London, 1723-25) 3 vols, 3rd edition (1727), 1: 221-26. Gay imitated its opening lines in Air XII of The Beggar's Opera (1728), edited by Peter Lewis (Edinburgh, 1973), pp. 64-65.

> The Song is a plain Simple Copy of Nature, destitute of all the Helps and Ornaments of Art. The Tale of it is a pretty Tragical Story, and pleases for no other Reason, but because it is a Copy of Nature. There is even a despicable Simplicity in the Verse; and yet, because the Sentiments appear genuine and unaffected, they are able to move the Mind of the most polite Reader with inward Meltings of Humanity and Compassion. [1: 362][1]

The sentiments must 'appear' sincere, therefore the 'most polite Reader' must find what he does not quite expect, a tenderly iconoclastic rudeness

---

1. This transparent plainness was the object of William Wagstaffe's parody of Addison's papers on the Ballad, in A Comment Upon the History of Tom Thumb (1711), reprinted in Addison and Steele: The Critical Heritage, edited by Edward A. Bloom and Lillian D. Bloom (London, 1980), pp. 232-47. Emboldened by the impression that the series was by Steele, Wagstaffe addresses some 'Enterprising Genius of late' who has recommended 'some Pieces ... for no other Reason but their unpolish'd Homeliness of Dress'. Wagstaffe concludes: 'And if we were to apply our selves, instead of the Classicks, to the Study of Ballads and other ingenious Composures of that Nature ... it is impossible to say what Improvement might be made to Wit in general ' (p. 233).

and the transparently contrived ballad-metre. This defenceless and open temper needs a reciprocal gesture from the reader who, ideally the possessor of the "Longinian" 'true Greatness of Soul and Genius', will be magnanimous enough to 'divest [himself] of the little Images of Ridicule, and admire Nature in her Simplicity and Nakedness' (1: 364). This yoking of 'Nature', 'Simplicity' and vulnerable sincerity is a powerful combination and is usually expected of commentaries on the Lyrical Ballads, "The Idiot Boy" in particular. That it should occur at this juncture is indicative of one line of critical thought that "Longinian" influences could both highlight and produce.

On the other hand, Addison's appropriation of sublime phrases must be clearly distinguished from the original classical source. There was no likelihood of this disparity passing unnoticed. John Dennis, the "Sir Tremendous Longinus" of the Scriblerian Three Hours After Marriage (1717), answered Spectator 70 and 74 in a letter to his old friend Henry Cromwell (1712). That Dennis felt its position to be an important one is demonstrated by its publication as an open letter in the Original Letters (1721), under the title "To H--- C--- Esq; Of Simplicity in Poetical Compositions, in Remarks on the 70th. Spectator". Cromwell had obviously asked whether Dennis had felt it to be a hoax or not. The reply was that it was too serious a mistake to be a jest and too innately comical to be in earnest. Dennis goes out of his way to draw up battle lines by taking some of Addison's phrases piecemeal and replying to each in turn. To some extent this is a deliberately unsympathetic tactic, for, taken broadly, the papers on Ballads are part of a thoroughgoing attempt on Addison's part to focus critical attention on the reader's response and away from an academic fixation with virtuoso showmanship or craftsmanlike, yet cold, technique alone. The 'Taste of polite Writing' (1: 245) that he had hoped to establish among readers of the Spectator in paper 58 (May 7, 1711) was in effect quite consistent with his purpose in 70, 74 and 85. As early as the Tatler (163, April 25, 1710) Addison had been dissatisfied with the 'true English reader' in the form of Ned Softly who proved 'incapable of relishing the great and masterly Strokes' of poetic expression by being distracted by the acquired taste for the 'little Gothick Ornaments' of art that lack the Ancient facility for representing 'Simplicity in its natural Beauty and Perfection'.[1]

What Dennis distrusts, however, is not this distaste for Metaphysical turns of wit, but the lack of social awareness that finds true simplicity the attribute of the 'common people'. As early as his Preface to The Passion of Byblis (1692), social, and therefore literary, decorum is a powerful influence. Whilst mostly engaged by the Ovidian 'Sentiments' that are 'so tender and yet so delicate', Dennis goes further (in terms that remind one of Addison) to admire the effects created by 'Expressions so fit and withal so easie': 'there seems to be something in the very sound of the Verse so soft and so pathetick, that a man who reads the Original, must have no sense of these Matters if he is not transported with it' (1: 1). Those 'easie' verses are obviously capable of touching the sublime style. Here Dennis seems in accord with Addison's view of the ballad-form. Three paragraphs later and a significant difference is obvious. Whilst dwelling on the faults of the Ovidian text, Dennis appears to require a consistency of character determined by her social station 'as a Lady, a Virgin, and a Woman of Honour'. There are passages where Byblis's immodesty break this rule:

> I know very well that a Woman of Honour, when once she is seiz'd by a great Passion, has more violent desires than

---

[1] The Lucubrations of Isaac Bickerstaff, Esq. (London, 1723), 4 vols, 3: 232.

> the most abandon'd Woman can have . . . . But this is most certain, that a Woman of Honour can never break out into immodest Expressions, let her Passion be never so violent. [1: 1]

The social decorum erected into a moral category is heavily reminiscent of the strictures of a Rymer or Collier on dramatic representation, and involves a dimension of critical value of which Addison is aware but which he chooses to ignore.[1]

Dennis's appreciation of the simple passions aroused by the "Longinian" sublime is coloured by prior assumptions about literary representation, the principal recognition being that there are emotions which are to be taken seriously and some that are not. Increasingly, it becomes clear that the "lower" forms of emotion are congruent to "lower" social castes where satire or comedy is expected. There are however inconsistencies in this critical position. Dennis agrees with Addison in his *Remarks on Prince Arthur* (1696) in banishing 'Point and Conceit, and all that they call Wit' from true poetry. In denigrating Blackmore's bombast it is easy to claim that a Poet ought always to speak to the Heart, which effortlessly condemns its rigid and unrelenting epic stylization. 'For nothing but what is simple and natural', Dennis claims at this point, 'can go to the Heart; and

---

[1] For Rymer's comments, concerning decorum especially, see Spingarn, 2: 194: 'Tragedy cannot represent a woman without modesty as natural and essential to her'; 2: 195: 'Poetical decency will not suffer death to be dealt to each other by such persons whom the Laws of Duel allow not to enter the lists together', and 2: 223, where Rymer cannot stomach Iago: 'He is no Blackamoor Souldier, so we may be sure he should be like other souldiers of our acquaintance; . . .'. Collier's *A Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage* (1698) is, in part, reprinted in Spingarn, 3: 253-91. He too is worried about stage women 'of Quality' talking 'Smuttily' (3: 269). In a more revealing moment he casts light on the political complexion of his "decorum": 'I hope the *Poets* don't intend to revive the old Project of Levelling, and *Vote* down the House of *Peers*' (3: 276). Dennis's own version of this narrower decorum seems only to apply to the actual words used, not necessarily the sentiments they were to articulate. See *Critical Works*, 1: 423-24.

Nature (humanly speaking) can be touch'd by it self alone' (1: 127). Indeed, one of the faults of Byblis's passion was its tendency to lapse into allegory and simile which 'could not be moving, because it could not be natural; it being by no means the language of great grief' (1: 2). This seems if anything a clear vindication of the ballad-form if taken in isolation.

All the same, Dennis's regard for the 'greatness' of the grief to be expressed proved a powerful antidote to such generic slumming. In both his Advancement and Reformation of Modern Poetry (1701) and his Grounds of Criticism in Poetry (1704), he swerves away from the anti-rhetorical passages of "Longinus" and increasingly to those that condemn the "lower" passions which should be avoided in sublime writing. In brief, Dennis's argument for a "higher" and admirable simplicity stems from a concentration on the Great Subject. In 1701, the Ancients were praised above the Moderns for their access to such themes and only these could excite the great passions and thus produce 'pathetick' writing (1: 214).[1] Part of the grounds for criticism three years later involved a more didactic approach. Just as the best Grand Subjects were sacred ones, the end of poetry similarly implied religious principles: 'if the End of Poetry be to instruct and reform the World, that is, to bring Mankind from Irregularity, Extravagance, and Confusion, to Rule and Order, how this should be done by a thing that is in itself irregular and extravagant, is difficult to be conceived ...' (1: 335). The Great Subject gave an Aristotelian coherence to lyric impulses and rescued them from the contamination of "lower" kinds. Passion is always excited for some ultimately non-aesthetic goal: instruction and thereby redemption.

---

1. Dennis is here drawing a crucial distinction between 'ordinary' Passion 'whose Cause is clearly comprehended by him who feels it' and 'Enthusiasm' the mainsprings of which are spontaneous and apparently unknown (1: 216).

"Simplicity" had come to signify a complex of unarticulated assumptions dictated by social and ethical criteria; it had become the confluence-mark for two divergent ideologies. The "simplicity" of Chevy Chase, to a large degree, was due to the absence of Gothic turns of wit and art which did not derive closely from the subject. This homology, if excusable in the heroic tones of that ballad, proved less easily ratified by the softer hues of The Children in the Wood. Dennis's "simplicity" was a possession of those who had learnt how to render the greater objects of contemplation and emotion in a plain, respectful manner. That this "simplicity" was basically an effect of Art rather than Nature, however smoothly concealed, is clear from the letter to Cromwell.

To some extent, Addison's past writing was easy prey for Dennis. Referring to the Tatler 134 (Feb.16, 1709), he exposes a class distinction that Addison had once upheld: 'Has not he himself observed in the 134th Tatler, that there are Exercises and Diversions which universally please the Rabble, which yet Men of Quality or Education either despise or abhor?'.[1] Dennis even chooses the 'Country Fidler' with whom Philips had so modestly identified himself to press home this advantage: 'I have known a Country Fidler who has been the Delight of three Counties, tho' he could never play the Truth of one Tune;' (2: 29). Addison's lack of distinction between the Mind of Man 'as it is rude and untaught' and 'as 'tis cultivated and instructed' might have merely been a failure of a faulty education, but Dennis extends the matter

---

1. Dennis misrepresents Addison's main topic which is the remarkable relish the British lower and upper classes have for bloodsports. In writing against bear-baiting and prize-fighting, he extends the same sentiment to other entertainments, such as hunting or watching sanguinary Tragedies:

> 'It will be said, That these are the Entertainments of common People. It is true; but they are the Entertainments of no other common People. Besides, I am afraid there is a Tincture of the same savage Spirit in the Diversions of those of higher Rank, and more refined Relish' (Lucubrations, 3: 97).

into another area of discourse。 The passage that upset Dennis so much involved an anecdote of Boileau's concerning Molière who was supposed to have read all his comedies to his 'little old' housekeeper。 By her reaction Molière was supposed to revise his work and 'the Audience always follow'd the old Woman, and never failed to laugh in the same Place'。 This was an instance of the proposition that 'Human Nature is the same in all reasonable Creatures, and whatever falls in with it, will meet with Admirers among Readers of all Qualities and Conditions'。 In response, Dennis calls on divine aid to uphold the differentials of humanity。 To distinguish between 'what Human Nature is, and what Human Nature should be' is the very first task of a poet on the Dennis model。 To blur this division is to deny the myth of the Fall: 'Human Nature was Human Nature before the Fall, and 'tis Human Nature now tis degenerated from that perfect Virtue and that unclouded knowledge。。。。 'Tis the Business and Design of Education to endeavour to retrieve in some measure the Loss that Human Nature has sustain'd by the Fall' (2:30)。 "Simplicity" therefore is an acquired quantity。 Dennis contrasts it not only with a conceited redundancy of style ('Extravagance') or inaccurate self-indulgence ('Affectation') but significantly with 'Imbecility': 'when a Man wants Force to come up to the Truth of Nature' (2: 33)。 "Simplicity" is an 'Heroick' force consistent with nobility and even, at times, 'the most pompous Eloquence'。 Chevy Chase is found deficient in both qualities by refusing the advantages of sonority and epic phrasing。

This watershed between two strikingly opposed definitions of poetic value inexorably involves two opposed ideologies not merely opinions as to taste or specifically artistic worth。 What Addison's self-conscious devil's advocacy had called into question was not only Horatian decorum but the very basis of mimetic art。 The ballad had always been an "unofficial" genre for the seventeenth-century because it portrayed a life (and was therefore a reflection of that life) that was considered unartistic, "unofficial". In taking it seriously and, worse, likening it to Virgil's epic, Addison had implicitly claimed that street-life or country-fiddlers had concerns serious enough to cause emotions in polite society. This was rather more implicit than expressed in that he had concentrated on their representative "simplicity", a state in comparison with which corrupt and compromised urban aims could be pleasingly contrasted. Even if the reflection is in the image of civilized urban desires, the very basis of the cultural caste-system is questioned.

Stylistic Simplicity and the Portrayal of the Countryman

A corollary to this desire to include a depiction of the unlettered in pastoral was the increasing vogue for a plainer, more forensic delivery of preconceived material. This materialistic linguistic philosophy fostered a tendency to ask unsympathetic questions of the traditional poetic or fictional conventions. It has already been noted that there proved to be a massive problem confronting pastoral theory at this time: a nervousness that if the pastoral was not part of the "lower" rank of expressively lyrical "kinds", then it had to demonstrate that it was written to represent some mimetic truth. Thanks to Ancient example, this would involve some truth that could be embodied in rustic or bucolic clothing, when, it was believed, nobility drove sheep to milking. In lieu of an allegorical relation between the bucolic sign and its more urban/courtly referent, there would presumably have to be a greater contiguity, and less conventionality, about such a relation. Modern shepherds were distressingly penurious and so "real" as to be awkwardly recalcitrant matter out of which to form universal statements. The crisis therefore for the form was that what had existed continuously as poetic metaphor now took on the status of a more importunate reality. What had once been convention now had to be description. In this perspective, the real alternative to the Golden Age pastoral is not the 'passionately simple' eclogues of Philips, Purney or Walsh, but descriptive poetry itself.

The desire for simplicity could also claim that its goals were to view Nature with redoubled vigour. To streamline the linguistic medium was to remove distracting associations from it and casualties included the traditional forms and vocabulary of literature, a continuity with the classical past. Most of Dennis's authority for claiming that the mind was not a universal but changed by education rested on the power of knowledge to filter perceptual reality. Once "literature" and the traditions of writing that that invokes are exposed as too manifest a fiction, then "writing" becomes more the property of the reader's taste than the craftsmanlike author's knowledge.

There are, therefore, certain antithetical groups of assumptions about the nature of the pastoral metaphor. Firstly, there is the ethical Golden Age school of thought where the rustic shepherd stands for a primeval aristocrat, and its opposite, the contemporary, sentimentalized figure, driven to poetry by deep primary feelings. Secondly, there is the opposition between the "poetic" or conventional shepherd, carrying allusions to his literary forebears and the parodic equivalent who is deliberately cut free of the pastoral tradition. These two sets of oppositions may, indeed, occur in the same works, but they demonstrate one fundamental difference that became more marked as the eighteenth century wore on: between, on the one hand, the more classical, and therefore ennobled, pastoral which refers to a transcendental ideal and, on the other, an emotional ideal arising from an urban hope for a regenerative alternative. Both these varieties of pastoral poetry appropriate and in turn mould a reader's contact with a rural existence, removing it from serious mimetic consideration. As Helen Cooper has shown, even the portrayal of the actual care of sheep in medieval bergerie conforms, along with the detailed lists of clothing, instrument and diet, to a conventional realism.[1]

Part of the legacy of an empirical linguistic theory is that words can, by careful cultivation and pruning, achieve an equivalence to things.[2] Although the most obvious influence was on prose-style, the delicacy of both kinds of pastoral idealism as identified above is exposed by this inhospitable climate of opinion. When a truly modern reappraisal of the genre is next attempted, it is from the retirement motifs of Horace and Virgil with a cutting from the Georgics that fresh inspiration is found, not the lyrical or allegorical traditions. In

---

1. Pastoral, p. 47.

2. This was the aim of the Royal Society as described by Thomas Sprat in his History of the Royal Society (1667), Part II, Section 20, where he rejects the 'amplifications, digressions, and swellings of style: to return back to the primitive purity, and shortness, when men deliver'd so many things, almost in an equal number of words.' This had nurtured a 'close, naked, natural way of speaking; positive expressions; clear senses; a native easiness ...'. This plainness is reified as 'natural' and 'easie'. Wits and scholars were to be distrusted and 'Artizans, Countrymen, and Merchants' were to provide the model for language. (The History of the Royal Society of London, for the Improving of Natural Knowledge (London, 1667), p.113.) This is the opinion of Defoe in his The Complete English Tradesman (1725-27) where in volume 1, Letter 3: "Of the Trading Stile", all 'dark and ambiguous speakings, affected words' are to be rejected for a 'plain and homely stile' where, for business, every 'species of goods' are to be given their 'trading names'. (Selected Writings of Daniel Defoe, edited by James T. Boulton (Cambridge, 1965), p. 227). This, however, pertains more to an effective prose communication of facts. It was given a wider significance by Locke who preferred a medium apt to lay ideas 'before the view of others'. (Book III, Chapter 2.2; An Essay Concerning Human Understanding, fifth edition (1706), edited by John W. Yolton (Letchworth, rev. ed. 1974) 2 vols, 2: 12.) One of the innate imperfections of words was their lack of natural subservience to matter. The second weakness in Book III, Chapter 9.5 is where the ideas words stand for 'have no certain connexion in nature, and no settled standard anywhere in nature existing, to rectify and adjust them by' (Essay, 2: 77).

attempting to describe the disintegration of the classical pastoral and its more Modern lyrical alternative, it is first necessary to confront the weaknesses and divisions within apologies for the form prior to the vogue for georgic poetry from John Philips's Cyder (1708) onwards.

Simplification of style emphasised the materiality of the object described at the expense of the metaphorical means such as allegory or allusion which traditionally helped to transform it. Part of the metonymic vigour of the Doric or the ruggedness of the Shepheardes Calendar had however appeared a regression into provincial obscurity rather than perspicuous "simplicity". The traditional sources of realism failed a test of intelligibility. The Doric, from the classical perspective, was too dialectal and was only fully assimilable to Modern tastes by dint of a smoother "simplicity" than that found in its sources.

The pastoral, as represented either by the Idylls or the Eclogues, is a form that implies spoken or sung idioms. Whilst it may be true that this does not exclude the artificial, it certainly does include dramatic contrasts either through the amoebaean structure or in its clear demarcation between the Art of song and the Nature of noon-day heat and work or the Virgilian technique of inviting Gallus into Arcadia. The "object" and its metaphor are not as distinct, for the "shepherd" and his song have a formal nature which is far more instrumental than any direct reference to analogous "real" equivalents. What is ultimately important is how the means of signification change, not so much how such change reflects or explores real agricultural labouring conditions directly. In short, it is not a matter of searching for a reality uncovered during a doubtless elaborate cognitive process but of examining either the various "realistic" effects which aim to reify pastoral signs or of describing the shifts in these "mimetic" strategies, one of the most obvious being the substitution of "written" accents for "spoken" ones, or systems of lyrical unity for dramatic discontinuities. Even if the bucolic is of Modern rather than Ancient inspiration, however, a thoroughgoing challenge to its metaphorical foundation, that a pastoral shepherd is not a real shepherd, will do much to banish its charm and its claims to mimetic truth. In the face of this greater appreciation of denotative language, the lyricization of the form is a convenient interim position, harmonizing the dramatic and accentual contrasts of classical pastoral (and thus reducing abrupt reminders of an impoverished rural existence) and so helping ensure, by requiring sympathetic readings, the survival of the shepherd as a credible poetic figure.

What is striking about pastoral theory at this time is its desire to establish as wide a mimetic foundation for the form as possible. For example, Rapin's dictum: '*It is the imitation of the Action of a Sheapard, or of one taken under that Character*'[1] weds Aristotelian unity of purpose in its concentration on a shepherd's life with a more liberal extension into areas of reader response: What the reader 'takes' as a shepherd or finds consonant with such an occupation determines the 'action' of the poetry. The reader might even 'take' a Gallus or Daphnis as a shepherd 'because he is represented like a *Sheapard*' (p.19). Pope and Chetwood both followed this example, whilst Gildon in his "Of the Manner, Rules, and Art of Composing Epigrams, Pastorals, Odes, etc." from his *Complete Art of Poetry* (1718) supplied a subtly different emphasis: on the locality: 'Poetry in all its Parts is an *Imitation*, and Pastoral Poesy is an Imitation of the Lives and Conversations of Shepherds, or rather of rural Actions' (p. 157). Thomas Purney, however, resists some of this mimetic foundation for bucolics. Whilst granting that the 'Lives of Shepherds' are to the fore in a pastoral, he joins to the Fable, 'CHARACTERS, SENTIMENTS [Thoughts] and LANGUAGE'. These jointly do not so much testify to ideas as excite 'our Pity, or our Joy, or both' (p.5). The shepherd, in this version, is not so much nobly savage as emotionally cultured.

---

[1] The qualification is really necessary because the *Eclogues* did not seem to concern merely a shepherd's daily round: '*Virgil's Gallus*, tho not really a *Sheapard*, for he was a man of great quality in *Rome*, ... belongs to *Pastoral*, because he is represented like a *Sheapard*' (p. 19).

The origins of the pastoral show a similarly variegated weave. For this problem there was one impeccable Ancient authority: Lucretius in his De Rerum Natura, who wedded the demands of art and nature for future ages by claiming that shepherds learned poetry by imitating the sounds of nature. Rapin accentuates Lucretius's hint that the pastorals were the product of 'that State of Innocence the Golden Age ...' and are therefore 'the invention of the simplicity and innocence' of that time. Even if this epoch cannot be verified, the myth survives: 'that the Manners of the first Men were so plain and simple, that we may easily derive both the innocent imployment of Shepherds, and Pastorals from them' (pp. 14-15). This combination of the exemplary ideal and the affective image of innocence is one which scarcely survives Creech's translation of Lucretius (1682) which is heavily weighted towards the softer impressions. Thomas Pope Blount's De Re Poetica (1694), although following Rapin in many particulars, significantly refuses his line on the pastoral's origin. In removing all mention of the Golden Age, Blount can give fuller scope to the pathos of that woodland environment and illustrate the lyrical impulses which would be open to his rustic contemporaries. This he does by way of Creech's

Lucretius, quoting two sections where *Nature* is seen to dictate a secondary *Art*. The first is the hypothesis that rural song was inspired by birds:

> Through all the Woods they heard the charming Noise
> Of chirping Birds, and try'd to frame their Voice,
> And *imitate*. Thus *Birds* instructed *Man*,
> And taught them *Songs*, before their *Art* began.

The second claims that the inspiration for forming instruments came from the rushing of the wind through trees. Thus is formed the 'tuneful Reed':

> And whilst the tender Flocks, *securely* feed,
> The *harmless* Shepherd tun'd their *Pipes* to love,
> And *Amaryllis* sounds in every Grove.[1]

In 1697, however, Chetwood stressed the earliest shepherds' discipline in 'obeying the unsophisticated dictates of nature' and thereby enjoying 'a vigorous health of body, with constant serenity and freedom of mind'.[2] Pope's conclusion appreciates the same Golden Age facilities, where the need for a diversion during leisure time created song - but, crucially, not the lower love lyrics but tunes where 'they took occasion to celebrate their own felicity. From hence a Poem was invented, and afterwards improv'd to a perfect image of that happy time.'[3] Here, however, are no 'shaddowings' of 'the most High, and most Noble Matters' that Drayton and most other Renaissance pastoralists found characteristic.[4] The Golden Age pastoral has no relation, direct or otherwise, to rural life as it is lived, but to how it may be appreciated as a morally coercive example. Such high matters were not the shepherd's concern nor would it have been decorous to suppose that they would be. Gay, in a rare moment of direct comment, finds Spenser's pretensions as a satirist highly improbable given its mouthpiece, in his "Proeme to the Courteous Reader" prefixed to The Shepherd's Week (1714). Although Spenser may be 'a bard of sweetest memorial', 'Yet hath his Shepherds Boy at some times raised his rustick Reed to Rhimes more rumbling than rural. Diverse grave Points also hath he handled of Churchly Matter and Doubts in Religion daily arising, to great Clerks only appertaining.'[1] This smacked of temporizing and producing a localized poetry unfit to influence posterity because of its evident indebtedness to one time and place. Rapin's Golden Age is fixed too, but even so eludes the unwelcome proximity of contemporary yardsticks by its almost mythical prehistorical nature. In so doing, it can use ideas of a rural life to image the moral structures of the lesser country gentry:

---

[1] *De Re Poetica: or, Remarks upon Poetry, Extracted out of the Best and Choicest Criticks* (London, 1694), pp. 38-39. The Creech translation is at page 182.

[2] "Preface to the *Pastorals*", *Works of John Dryden*, edited by Sir Walter Scott, revised by George Saintsbury (Edinburgh, 1882-93) 18 vols, 13: 328.

[3] *TE*, 1: 24.

[4] *Works*, edited by J.W. Hebel (Oxford, 1931-33), 4 vols, 2: 517. Compare Barclay, *Eclogues*, p. 1 or Puttenham, *Arte of English Poesie* (1589), *Elizabethan Critical Essays*, edited by G.G. Smith (Oxford, 1904), 2 vols, 2: 40.

> For since tis a product of the Golden Age, it will show the most innocent manners of the most ancient Simplicity, how plain and honest, and how free from all varnish, and deceit, to more degenerate, and worse times: And certain'y for this tis commendable in its kind, since its design in drawing the image of a Country and Shepherd's life, is to teach Honesty, Candor, and Simplicity, which are the vertues of private men; as Epicks teach the highest Fortitude, and Prudence, and Conduct, which are the vertues of Generals and Kings (p. 47).

Chetwood was to echo this belief in holding that pastoral poetry 'should represent that ancient innocence and unpracticed plainness' (13: 337) once the norm of past times and Pope's pastorals were each framed as 'a perfect image of that happy time; which by giving us an esteem for the virtues of a former age, might recommend them to the present' (1: 24). Even in a theory that is principally concerned to depict the amorous affairs of shepherds, their exemplary function is surprisingly retained. In his "Preface" to Poems (1692), William Walsh states that the main design 'ought to be the representing the Life of a Shepherd, not only by talking of Sheep and Fields, but by showing us the Truth, Sincerity and Innocence that accompanies that sort of Life'.[1] What is common to all who follow Rapin's "Golden Age" line is the need for a metaphorical relationship between 'the image of a Country and Shepherd's life' and the 'vertues of private men' - an allusion removed from all contamination from the present by the authority of its antiquity. The age distrusted allegory on the grounds that it was too obviously improbable and a loosely connected series of events; hence, it also mitigated the pastoral's direct reference to contemporary affairs and aided a growing abstraction of its preferred subject-matter. Each of Pope's pastorals was to be a 'perfect image', tacitly rebuking the present age. This heterocosmic form is always an alternative apprehended by the intellect and, inexorably, it involves a reduction in the particulars of rural life to impress upon the reader, as in Walsh's definition, that more transportable qualities such as truth or innocence exist as an alternative. Rural life is designed as an ever-receding horizon, a sign that exists in no straightforward relation to both its constituent parts. The signified expressed by the signifier is frequently as constructed as the image that calls it into being. Indeed, the true

---

[1] John Gay: Poetry and Prose, edited by Vinton A. Dearing, with the assistance of Charles E. Beckwith (Oxford, 1974), 2 vols, 1: 91. Gildon, in 1718, was adamant that 'The Poet does not lie under any necessity of making his Plot Allegorical, that is, to have some real Persons meant by those fictitious Names of the Shepherds introduc'd' (pp. 158-59).

---

1. Letters and Poems, Amorous and Gallant (London, 1692), p. viii.

referent for the Golden Age pastoral is "literariness", and its traditional locus is a canon of taste largely structured by neo-classical readings of ancient pastoral. However, there are contradictory elements contained within the mythic system of signs that pastoral provides. Rapin's representation of "simplicity" has to connote honesty, its freedom from 'all varnish, and deceit' and yet in order to communicate these values "simplicity" has to become a capitalized abstract quality; there must be a design where the mimesis of drawing, implying an uncomplicated transcription, is really far more complex than it suggests for it is the drawing of an 'image' that is put to didactic use. This "Simplicity" is of the 'most ancient' variety; that is, it is a possession of literary memory and is therefore to be located in the realms of the image, open to the skilled literary practitioner rather more than the Everyman who 'simply' perceives and experiences. Rapin's argument has one further twist as well, when he returns to the pastoral's ideological function. The endorsement of 'Honesty, Candour, and Simplicity' does not remain 'most ancient' but, on the contrary, slips back to the present where it helps praise and assert such moral values as the 'natural' attribute of 'private men'. This delicate rhetorical balance would be upset by the conscious artifice of allegorical events which traditionally suggest a didactic purpose.

This "artificial" insulation between the sign of the Golden Age pastoral and contemporary events is particularly threatened by the "passionate" simplicities that erect no such barrier between the experience of reading the poetry and the emotions of its protagonists. J.E. Congleton calls this alternative to the 'neo-classical' position, the 'rationalistic'.[1] This title is more of a reference to the method

---

1. Rapin's Ancient theory is 'essentially objective', whilst Fontenelle 'ignores the Ancients completely and develops his

(Continued on p.295)

and principles of Fontenelle, who placed the Natural light of Reason above the Ancients. This is obvious from the last paragraph of "Of Pastorals" where he refuses to apologise for not completely justifying Virgil and Theocritus: 'I have partly approv'd, and partly censur'd them, as if they had been some living authors, whom I saw every day; and there lies the Sacrilege.' (pp.294-95). This principle erects Modern psychological and subjective standards to oppose the objective criteria of Rapin. To simplify the form and render it less obviously 'varnished' would be, therefore, to render the pastoral open to more truly rational questions. If the pastoral were no virtuoso display of art, embodying values of cultural continuity, then it was liable to correction by mimetic criteria. Without the "truth" of exemplary Golden Age virtues as ballast, a more naturalistic criticism would find the pastoral form afloat amidst an uncongenial environment and might be apt to dismiss it as formalistic gesturing.

There is, therefore, a great need for those writers who wish to keep Theocritean or Virgilian echoes alive to observe a clear distinction between a "low" and a "high" simplicity. To some extent decorum demanded it. Golden Age shepherds were noble and needed figurative homage, whereas the Sentimentalists needed tender cadences. The rustic Doric, to Allan Ramsay, could signify the latter by the 1720s, but to mainstream English opinion Ben Jonson's dictum that Spenser 'in affecting the ancients, writ no language' was far more credible.[1] Rapin's view of the Doric of Theocritus was more mixed.

(1 continued)
theory on premises that are subjective and psychological'. Theories of Pastoral Poetry in England, 1684-1798 (Gainesville, Fla, 1952), p. 70.

[1] "Explorata : or Discoveries" ll. 2237-38, in Ben Jonson : The Complete Poems, edited by George Parfitt (Harmondsworth, 1975), p. 428.

On the one hand, he finds its roughness better suited than Virgil's accents to the pastoral form, yet will not condemn Virgil's bucolic idiom at all. Indeed, his final opinion, as stated in the Reflections on the eclogue, was that the 'Language' should be 'pure'.[1] Pope borrows Rapin's neutral 'pure' to describe the correct pastoral medium as well. This "purity" may have much to do with standards of usage but also with assumptions concerning who was speaking:

> For the Doric had its beauty and propriety in the time of Theocritus; it was used in part of Greece, and frequent in the mouths of many of the greatest persons; whereas the old English and country phrases of Spenser were either entirely obsolete, or spoken only by people of the basest condition. As there is a difference betwixt simplicity and rusticity, so the expression of simple thoughts should be plain, but not clownish.
> [1: 32]

This desire to purify the language of the bucolic tribe is inextricably also a problem of the social acceptability of "literary" modes of writing, for Pope is adamant in keeping the "literary" a watertight compartment. He does so here by relating specifically "literary" qualities to its alternative: "low" but real shepherds who are 'clownish' and, by definition, rustic. Once this distinction has been made, the "simple" can signify the plain style or the more laudable connotations of unvarnished guilelessness - a social ideal not a reality in the country.

"Simplicity" is a crucial word to use in this context. Under its copious umbrella many quite opposed concepts may shelter. It is especially of a certain rhetorical importance, a talismanic quality to underpin and reassure all manner of reader. Pope is clearer in his terminology in practice. When objecting to Ambrose Philips's

---

1. Reflections on Aristotle's Treatise of Poesie (1674), translated by Thomas Rymer, p. 135.

Pastorals in the ironic Guardian (40), he actually exemplifies the excrescences of style to which he objects, albeit under a cloak of irony:

> As Simplicity is the distinguishing Characteristick of Pastoral, Virgil hath been thought guilty of too Courtly a Stile; his Language is perfectly pure, and he often forgets he is among Peasants.

This sentiment is not only anti-peasant but, by extension, anti-pastoral. If peasants are the subject-matter of the form, why, it would seem, would the poet vitiate the canon of literary style by imitating them? Philips's antiquated English is enough, but why, Pope pursues, not carry things to the extreme and imitate the rusticity of the original Doric 'by the help of the old obsolete Roman language'?:

> For Example, might he [Virgil] not have said Quoi instead of Cui; Quoijum for Cujum; volt for vult, etc. as well as our Modern hath Welladay for Alas, Whilome for of Old, make mock for deride, and witless Younglings for simple Lambs, etc. by which Means he hath attained as much of the Air of Theocritus, as Philips hath of Spencer.[1]

This is not, stylistically speaking, a recipe for either plainness or simplicity; however, for Purney in particular, it could help depict a lack of artifice and so the sentiments of an ideally sympathetic shepherd culture.

John Gay's "Proeme" to his The Shepherd's Week (1714) similarly defends the proprieties of literature by also writing ironically of the rustic dialect. His position is really founded on the observation that the modern Doric has only a conventional truth. It cannot be a direct rendering of country speech. In advertising his own Spenserian pastorals, Gay warns the 'courteous Reader' that his shepherds utter

---

1. Prose Works, p. 98. Rapin, however, favoured the Doric for pastoral. Virgil's 'Tityrus beneath his shady Beech speaks as pure and good Latin as Augustus in his Palace' (p. 35). He goes no further in objecting to Virgilian precedent.

phrases 'such as is neither spoken by the country Maiden nor the courtly Dame' (1: 92). The language is of textual value only as it has no history, being neither the dialect of the past or present. If the mimetic authority for a "low" style is removed, then the keystone to affective theories of pastoral is, from the neo-classic perspective, found to be invalid. Gildon expands on this line of attack in 1718 in an unconscious but equally revealing manner. Although out to praise Ambrose Philips for avoiding the 'great Spenser's' lapses in style, he in effect tars him with the same brush. Spenser is found lacking in intelligibility a fault not associated with the Greek Doric for that operated as a convention 'familiar to all Greece, being us'd by their greatest Authors as occasion required'. Spenser, however, was far too radical in his accents in that 'no Body before this extraordinary Poet ever writ in any of our own Country Dialects, whether Western or Northern, etc.' (pp. 160-61). As Philips claimed himself a son of Spenser, this seems like Job's comfort.

It was a common reflex of the age to equate Nature with Simplicity. To some extent the bold, "unpoetic" diction of the sublime proved an attempt to carry over this reflection into poetry, the Natural exemplified by a minimum of Art. When Pope was inspired by Homer's Gardens of Alcinous to write Guardian 173 (Sept. 29, 1713), the context could well have been the rhapsodic passages of Tickell: 'There is certainly something in the amiable Simplicity of unadorned Nature, that spreads over the Mind a more noble Sort of Tranquility, and a loftier Sensation of Pleasure, than can be raised from the nicer Scenes of Art.' Pope's translation, on the other hand, seems to be written with Sir William Temple's Essay upon the Gardens of Epicurus (1690) in mind:

> Each dropping Pear a following Pear supplies,
> On Apples Apples, Figs on Figs arise: ...

> Here order'd Vines in equal Ranks appear
> With all th' United Labours of the Year, ...
> Beds of all various Herbs, for ever green,
> In beauteous Order terminate the Scene.
> [ll. 13-14, 17-18, 26-27][1]

Here is the ancient simplicity of garden design, simple because planned, free from conceits on the one hand and that regularity which grows to a fault on the other.

Two years later, Pope, in the "Preface" to his translation of the Iliad, welcomes Homer's example in exalting the powers of invention. When turning to the problems of translating the poetry and 'transfusing the spirit of the original', Pope, though endorsing his admirable fire and energy, realises the necessity of observing the change in stylistic registers in the original. In addressing himself to this topic, he reveals certain important distinctions. Firstly, the great secret of writing is to know when to be plain and when 'poetical and figurative'. This plainness is given a telling connotation in the very next sentence: 'Where [Homer's] Diction is bold and lofty, let us raise ours as high as we can; but where his is plain and humble, we ought not to be deterr'd from imitating him by the fear of incurring the Censure of a meer English Critick'.[2] Plainness is humble besides the exalted figures of the "bold" Style. As was usual with Pope's discussions of style, a norm was to be observed. This humility of form derived solely from the "unliterary", almost conversational nature of the plain, the sermo pedestris that surfaces in Pope's later satires. Writing to the Earl of Oxford on March 3, 1725/6, Pope elucidates what was meant by the 'plain and humble' in connection with Homer's style. A certain 'mediocrity of style, agreeable to conversation and dialogue' is necessary as this is the narrative style, and this 'ought to be low, being put into the mouths of persons not of the highest condition or of a person acting in the disguise of a poor wanderer ...'.[1] The proximity to an oral accent and its distance from a "literary" style ensures its rank and function.

---

[1] Prose Works, p. 145. The Temple passage to which Pope alludes is found in Sir William Temple, Upon The Gardens of Epicurus with other XVIIth. Century Garden Essays, edited by Albert Forbes Sieveking (London, 1908), pp. 24-25: 'The Garden of Alcinous ... seems wholly poetical, and made at the pleasure of the painter; ... Yet, as all the pieces of this transcendent genius are composed with excellent knowledge, as well as fancy; so they seldom fail of instruction as well as delight, to all that read him.' Pope contrasts this contoured design to the 'Modern Practice of Gardening' where 'Nature' is ignored 'not only in the various Tonsure of Greens into the most regular and formal Shapes, but even in monstrous Attempts beyond the reach of the Art itself: We run into Sculpture, and are yet better pleas'd to have our Trees in the most awkward figures of Men and Animals, than in the most regular of their own.' In his Epistle to Burlington (1731), Pope was to return to this numinous ideal; see ll. 47-70 (TE, 3: 137-39).

[2] Prose Works, p. 245.

The norm therefore between the "high" and "low" must be an ideal mixture of both plainness and energy. To some extent, the subject will require its own style of description.[2] However, there must be stylistic models as to what constitutes the elevated and what the degraded. In Pope's discussion of the Iliad, the search for this golden mean is a task of the first importance: 'Nothing that belongs to Homer seems to have been more commonly mistaken than the just Pitch of his Style: Some of his Translators having swell'd into Fustian in a proud Confidence of the Sublime; others sunk into Flatness, in a cold and timorous Notion of Simplicity.'[3] This narrative norm is

---

1. Correspondence of Alexander Pope, edited by George Sherburn (Oxford, 1956), 5 vols, 2: 370.

2. Pope in the above letter demonstrates how relative "simplicity" could be. He condemns the 'one continued sameness of diction' that keeps all tragedy or epic predictable.

3. Prose Works, p. 245. In the "Observations on the Catalogue" following Book II, 'Simplicitas' is one of those 'excellent general Phrases for those who have no Reasons', and could describe a 'shameful, unpoetical Neglect of Expression' (TE, 7: 175).

really formed by the judgement as to the correct occasion to be plain or otherwise. Homer, meanwhile, is seen to proceed 'with an unaffected and equal majesty'. Others approximating to that will frequently find themselves involved in the bathetic, where the distinction between 'simplicity' and 'dullness' is an abstract, non-empirical one:

> There is a graceful and dignify'd Simplicity, as well as a bald and sordid one, which differ as much from each other as the Air of a plain Man from that of a Sloven: 'Tis one thing to be tricked up, and another not to be dress'd at all. Simplicity is the Mean between Ostentation and Rusticity.[1]

This regionless and essentially classless simplicity seems especially designed to allow no vitiation or partiality to corrode the authority of the classic. The "plain man" *persona* is really a creation of Horace's *Epode* 2 and inspired the several odes to retirement and rural retreat - a tradition much longer lived than this strain of ideal pastoral.[2] This "simplicity" resembles Dennis's sublime in being 'pure and noble' and found 'nowhere in such perfection as in the Scripture and our author [Homer]'.

This 'air of simplicity' is therefore very much an indication of the honest man that writes in such a style. It is as much a moral sign as a medium of expression. The nearest Pope gets to assigning Rules for the effect is when he prescribes language only a little this side of Spenser's archaisms. The mixture of 'some Graecisms and old words after the manner of Milton, if done without too much affectation', gives the correct pitch of style. Two peculiarities of Homer's style are, on the other hand, not true models for those writing in English: his compound epithets and his repetitions. These very faults in Pope's search for a correct Homeric style Thomas Purney openly advocates for pastoral poetry. The division between Pope and those ready to praise Philips is clearly seen here. Fontenelle says little on the language of the lyrical pastoral. Tickell in praising Philips approves a little nervously the Anglo-Saxon dialect of Spenser[1] and Hughes follows that line, welcoming 'a sprinkling of the rural Phrase, as it humours the Scene and Characters'. Philips, showing a 'great Delicacy of Taste' thereby catches something of the 'very Spirit and Manner' of Spenser.[2] Only Thomas Purney really takes up the Modern argument in favour of a pretty rusticity and its effect on the heart as opposed to the judgement. A Full Enquiry into the True Nature of Pastoral, Part IV is devoted exclusively to this theme in linguistic matters. Spenser is his model and it is Spenser's language in particular, not his ethical concern, that 'supports his Pastorals'(p.59). What Purney selects as worthy of comment about such expression is Spenser's diligence in 'weakening and enervating' the style. Sometimes too many 'harsh Old-Words' are employed without an effort to confine the vocabulary to a particular dialect. This aim of 'softness' implies a conception of the pastoral form totally opposed to Pope's. Pope has in mind classical precedent; Purney's taste involves a Modern appropriation of the form by 'throwing out all Words that are Sonorous and raise a Verse' (p. 60), and then adding to this 'weak and low' dialect Simplicity, Softness and Rusticity 'in order to render it pleasant'. This enjoyment is best provided by Old-Terms, Turns of Words and Phrases, and by Compound Words, all three linguistic choices

---

[1] *Prose Works*, p. 246.

[2] See Maren-Sofie Røstvig, *The Happy Man: Studies in the Metamorphosis of a Classical Ideal* (Oslo, 1954-58), 2 vols.

---

1. It proves 'more capable, of that pretty rusticity than the Latin' (Guardian 30, April 15, 1713), 1: 123.

2. Spenser: Critical Heritage, edited by R.M. Cummings (London, 1971), p. 274.

diametrically opposed to Pope's Homeric preferences (p. 62). The archaisms help preserve a vigour in the verse and to avoid the error of Shepherds talking sublimely 'and with Passion, as in Tragedies'. Those who have a 'Genius' for pastoral 'will have some Thoughts occur so inimitably Simple, that they would appear ridiculous in the Common Language' (p. 64). It is interesting that Purney believes that this small compass would avoid the "low" and mean as much as Pope's stylistic prescriptiveness. It is not a case of Purney advocating a more "naturalistic" pastoral than Pope. To some extent, the minimal degree of localized dialect is a mere convention. However, some of his recipes for style do resemble an effort to reinstate the speaking voice and its sound-value above that of mere writing.[1] This is most obvious in the appreciation of 'Compound Words'. Their effect is to lend an 'easy and natural' relation between the character depicted and his or her utterances: 'They must run easy and smooth, and glide off the Tongue, and that will occasion their not being observ'd in the reading' (p. 66). This illusionistic harmony is itself a characteristic phonic accent, a soft music that creates a sensual context for the shepherds.

It would be wrong to conclude decisively that Pope's pastoral form was unmusical, but this music was never intended to be merely a word-music. If the whole poem was to be an image, criteria of coherence and interdependence were to be pre-eminent. The "Discourse's" pronouncements on style are a re-working of material that both Rapin and Chetwood had made available. Rapin had preferred a 'concise, close way of Expression' (p. 60) and Chetwood had agreed that 'the sentences should

---

1. This is most strongly noticeable in Purney's desire to preserve a 'Spirit and a Liveliness of Expression' by the inclusion of 'Old-Words'. The alternative would be to 'make Shepherds talk Sublimely, and with Passion, as in Tragedies' (p. 63).

be short and smart' (13: 340). Pope reasons that this brevity will help the effect of purity and simplicity: 'And it ought to preserve some relish of the old way of writing; the connections should be loose, the narrations and descriptions short, and the periods concise. Yet it is not sufficient that the sentences only be brief, the whole Eclogue should be so too' (1: 26). In Pope's opinion, this carries Ancient associations. One Ancient example could have been suggested by Rapin's appreciation of Virgil's *Eclogue* style. He first quotes Pliny on the art of Timanthes, where '*in all his pieces more was to be understood than the Colours express'd* .... In this *Virgil* is peculiarly happy' (p. 40). This ability to say a great deal in a few words is consonant with Pope's emphasis on the heterocosmic pastoral ideal, especially in the technique by which the poem as a whole can express much more than the individual parts, shepherds included. The singer, in Pope's conception, will not determine the full context of his song neither will he himself characterize the pastoral in which he appears.

The potential for such gentle irony is either ignored or significantly foreign to Fontenelle's design for the pastoral. For the lyrical grace that he finds most relevant to the pastoral form, there needs to be a freedom from reflection. Pope would have agreed, for none of his shepherd-singers are philosophers. However, this extra cerebral dimension, where the rustic and unmannered are placed in a wider context is never a perspective shared by Fontenelle. In terms reminiscent of either Wordsworth or Coleridge, he claims that such poetry should 'run only on Actions, and never almost on Reflections. Those who have a middling share of Wit, or a Wit but little improv'd by a Converse with polite Books or Persons, use discourse only of those particular Things of which they have a sense; while others raising themselves higher, reduce all things into general Ideas ...' (p.290).[1] This tendency to particularize and describe without obvious prior selection seems to be no attempt to create a symbolic or metaphorical significance for the rural setting. From this original perception Tickell allows, as Fontenelle does, that the shepherds described should not be exact transcriptions of experience, but his shepherds differ only in their more circumscribed and particularized expression from the learned. 'Truth being eternally the same to all', only the style of its appearance in the world can be susceptible to change or experience. Such unlettered shepherds are thereby forced only to be able to record circumstantial descriptions 'and those observations which either strike upon the senses, or are the first motions of the mind'.[2] This degree of mimetic probability is of a rather more literal strain than in Chetwood or Pope. It is perhaps due to its undue reliance on the senses alone with no clear significance that Pope distrusted the length of the description of the Goatherd's cup in Idyll 1, preferring the brevity of Virgil's own revised description (1: 29-30). By keeping such descriptions in proportion to the action of the piece, the poem could retain its status as an image in itself.

This is why the conclusions by Modern critics such as Purney or Tickell were such anathema to Pope or Gay. By allowing a scarcely laundered rustic too much of the foreground, a pastoral poet was corroding the stainless and uncontaminated reality of his material and indirectly denying the poem its impact as an interdependent whole.

---

1. By 'not pursuing their Ideas beyond what they have a Sense of', it is therefore possible to "defamiliarize" a country landscape: 'Now the Mind is delighted with sensible Ideas, because it easily admits of them, and it loves to penetrate, provided it be without Effort ...' (p. 291).

2. Guardian 23 (April 7, 1713), 1: 92-93.

In lieu of its Renaissance allegorical tradition, the pastoral all too easily could become the repository of ill-judged servility where sense-impressions were concerned. However, in terms that echo Chetwood, Pope did have to admit some reference to a specifically rural setting. His ideal of a 'design'd scene or prospect' should be offset by a 'variety' that adds a pleasing irregularity. This could be attained by the inclusion of 'frequent comparisons, drawn from the most agreeable objects of the country' (1: 28). Chetwood had boldly claimed that in each pastoral a 'beautiful landscape' should present itself 'to your view', and cited Virgil's Eclogue 1 as the norm, 'the standard of all pastorals' (13: 329). That this is no realistic impulse should be evident by reading those passages in the Virgil that present natural descriptive details; in each passage, the landscape is a projection of human desire. Our 'view' of the scene is constantly referred back to our growing knowledge of the character that is providing it. Added to this, there is the rider that the landscape be 'beautiful'. Pope adds to this Rapinian conclusion and agrees on a beauty taken from the Golden Age. Therefore, the characters that people that time are not provided with the rural circumstances that would give content to the designation: 'shepherds': 'We are not to describe our shepherds as shepherds at this day really are, but as they may be conceiv'd then to have been; when the best of men follow'd the employment' (1: 25). It follows that the rurality of the poems would be metaphorical. However, if this position were impregnable, there would be no need to betray some doubts about the life of contemporary shepherds as material for pastorals. If it is indubitably accepted that in portraying them and their concerns the pastoralist was using a modified allegory, the occasional lack of beauty would surely be no problem. Pope tacitly points to a contradiction in his own theory therefore when he feels it necessary to assert that 'We must ... use some illusion to render a Pastoral delightful; and this consists in exposing the best side only of a shepherd's life, and in concealing its miseries' (1: 27). He also provides a footnote to this claim, namely: 'Fontanelle's Disc. of Pastorals'. So schematic is Congleton's desire to create order in the mass of pastoral theory that confronts the historian of taste that the watertight distinctions between the Rapin and Fontenelle "parties" actually give a false account, especially in Pope's case, of its mingled thread. Pope's Golden Age is a manifest illusion, a myth that does not attempt to mislead. The Modern pastorals do paint the countryside untruly by claiming its status as real, unmediated.

The desire to escape the schematic prescriptions of allegory was really involving the more neo-classical position in an illusion of another kind. Joseph Trapp could claim that 'Bucolics ... ought always to be laid in the Country', and yet in order to provide a "natural" effect the 'easie' language and form should endorse a transformed countryside.[1] The only "natural" thing about the pastoral milieu from this account are the cadences, intelligible syntax and naive sentiments. Such "simplicity" may tread a cautious path between undue complexity and facile uniformity, but its "natural" position is endorsed by the extremes from which it is equidistant, not by an essential condition of human expression. In purveying a myth, neo-classical pastoralists cannot allow its fiction to be manifest. Therefore, the "simple" nobility of the periods and 'loose' connections is as much an imposition and contrivance as the induced 'tranquility' of the landscapes described by Fontenelle.

---

1. Lectures on Poetry, p. 174.

There is little doubt, however, that to both Pope and Gay, any reduction of the metaphorical distance between the reader and the scene portrayed was ill-advised. Gay, in the "Proeme" to The Shepherd's Week, in ironic mode, 'endorses' the inartistic simple-mindedness of the literal representation:

> Furthermore, it is my purpose, gentle Reader, to set before thee, as it were, a Picture, or rather lively Landscape of thy own Country, just as thou mightest see it, didest thou take a Walk in the Fields at the proper Season. [1: 91]

The 'design'd scene' has become a 'Picture' or 'lively Landscape' painting, a more material and potentially less intellectual exercise. This lack of a universal relevance to the Modern pastoral is particularly suspect. Therefore, those who would wish to learn the Modern art would have to be obedient to material circumstances such as checking when the 'proper season' might be. That there might not be a 'proper season', when May-time might discover neat and contented country folk, is the proposition suggested by Gay's irony.

This attempt to recall the neo-classic standards of formal as opposed to aesthetic unity was forced to emphasise the metaphorical foundation of the pastoral's appeal, the delight in a "literary" as opposed to a more literal account. The alternative to the Golden Age pastoral, however, owed its existence not only to 'sympathetic' readers but also to those who required a greater degree of verisimilitude or who were uneasy about such manifest mythology. This by no means implies that the lyrical pastoral was, in effect, a naturalistic work. Fontenelle would set his ideal of the 'quiet life, with no other business but love' in the country with the qualification that 'no Goats or Sheep shou'd be brought in ... for, the Goats and Sheep add nothing to its Felicity; ...' (p. 283). Addison, too, would have the pastoral poet 'know' the countryside. One of the Pleasures of the Imagination was 'a due Relish of the Works of Nature'. Therefore, a poet should be 'thoroughly conversant in the various Scenary of a Country Life'. This store of images taken immediately from Nature is considered sufficient for 'Pastoral, and the lower kinds of Poetry', but is still the basic requirement for those who would attempt either the Epic or the Tragedy (Spectator 417, June 28, 1712, 3: 563-64). This reliance on the observation of external nature provides a clear catalyst for the growth of the indigenous pastoral. This detail is not all it appears, for the "simplicity" of the Modern variety is more to be experienced than perceived, and the transcription of landscape imagery a means to a sublime or "pathetick" end not a knowledge of its rustic context.

Nevertheless, the landscape could be a particularly potent sign, a fertility that testifies to the corresponding decline in transcendent classicism. The indigenous pastoral promised a tender pleasure. Philips's Pastorals were praised by both Tickell and Purney for their native qualities as well as their tenderness. As Tickell exclaims in exasperation: '... in so fine a country as Britain, what occasion is there for that profusion of hyacinths and Paestan roses, and that cornucopia of foreign fruit which the British shepherds never heard of? ...' To illustrate what a British pastoral could accomplish, he then quotes the opening scene-setting of Philips's Pastoral 5.[1] This amount of particularized detail is by no means the abstract tranquility meant by Fontenelle. Purney, for his part, is suspicious of too much detail. Arguing to similar ends as Pope, his section on "The Proper Length for Descriptions" uses quite opposed reasons for curtailing landscape imagery. In Pope's case it had been the desire for compressing meaning into as short a span as possible to enhance each pastoral's heterocosmic form. Purney, on the other hand, concentrates more on the act of reading and its experiential effects: ''Tis best ... only just to exhibit the Picture of an Object to the Reader's Mind; for if 'tis rightly set and well given, he will himself supply the minute Particulars better to please himself than any Poet can do; ...'. This particular analogy from the "Sister Art" creates, despite its desire to escape particularization, the sense of a more plastic object for contemplation than the ethical abstractions of Nature or textual fictions such as the Golden Age. This description is not quite as simple as all that on the other hand, for the terms Purney uses to depict the construction of the poetic object are only one part objective. Extended descriptions are to be avoided exactly because some circumstances may not be 'pleasant to every Fancy'; consequently, the descent to particulars 'cools the Mind' (p. 40). So that the poet may retain control over the effect of the image and not render up power to the reading, Purney advises him to enumerate only two or three details to supply a hint to the mind. It is significant that Purney's example from the Fine Arts is landscape painting: 'When I cast my Eye on a beauteous Landscape, and take in a View of the whole and all it's Parts at once, I am in Rapture, not knowing distinctly what it is that pleases me; but when I come to examine all the several Parts, they seem less delightful. Pleasure is greatest if we know not whence it proceeds' (p. 41). By the copious notes added to the 1717 appearance of his Pastorals, it is clear that for Pope the pleasure of reading was greater if it was known to be derived from either Theocritus, Virgil or Spenser. Eric Rothstein has borrowed a contemporary term from the Fine Arts: the "Non-Finito", to describe this effect. Lord Kames in 1762 was to find there an 'ideal presence', but scattered throughout the Modern pastoral theories are prototypes of the notion that help cast off the confines of precedent.[1] The danger to the living metaphor of the pastoral shepherds can be demonstrated by turning to Moses Browne's An Essay in Defence of Piscatory Eclogues (1729). There Browne disregards the Golden Age or Edenic, associations of the shepherd in moving the scene and occupation depicted in the pastoral from the fields to the streams. The descriptive pleasures prove much more transportable than neo-classical ones for, he asks, 'Who can have greater leisure, or be led into more agreeable contemplation, than an angler, peacefully seated on the shady banks of a lonely river at his quiet recreation, attentively considering the gliding stream, mingled groves, hills, and open plains; the various landskip around him?'.[2] This Defence proves how near to the descriptive or topographical poem the pastoral could be and how vulnerable the pastoral tradition proved to the disintegration of the shepherd metaphor. In Browne's account of his Eclogues, the landscape details produce an experience not the art of its depiction. William Diaper, in 1712, prefaced his Neriedes: or Sea-Eclogues with a promise of mystery and sensual experience, arguing that 'the Beauties (as well as the Riches) of the Sea are yet in a great measure untouch'd: And those who have made some Attempts

---

[1] Guardian 30 (April 15, 1713), 1: 122-23.

---

1. Restoration and Eighteenth-Century Poetry 1660-1780 (London, 1981), p. 69. For the full quotation from Kames see The Elements of Criticism, 2 vols, 1: 91-93. See also Eric Rothstein, "'Ideal Presence' and the 'Non Finito' in Eighteenth-Century Aesthetics", Eighteenth-Century Studies, 9 (1975-76), 307-32.

2. p. xxii. That the shepherd should be the regular pastoral subject is the result of 'the arbitrary, humorsome pedantry, of Scholiasts and Commentators, Servius on the Bucolics, and Heinsius upon Theocritus' (p. xix). When reviewing the possibilities for a Halieutic pastoral, John Jones uses authorities for this view: 'If the Waters contain in them nothing but what is uncomfortable and dreadful, 'tis very strange that Ovid, who naturally loved what was soft and agreeable, should ever have made any Attempt in this kind; and that Mr. Waller should have given us a specimen of the Halieutick Strain in his Battle of the Summer Islands' (Oppian's Halieuticks of the Nature of Fishes and Fishing of the Ancients (Oxford, 1722), p. 10).

that way, have only given us a few Piscatory Eclogues, like the first Coasters, that always keep within sight of Shore and never venture into the Ocean'.[1] Compared to this pleasure, the neo-classical pastoral is clearly seen, by its very structure, to be a homage to the past and the possibility of its emulation by the present. Consequently, the human figures are prominent, quite properly expressing the humanistic power of art to subdue or order natural impulses. In the new order, such figures are frequently depicted only in order to give an idea of scale.

It would be wrong therefore to claim that the Modern eclogue was ultimately more naturalistic than its antecedent examples. Fontenelle, who proves the authority for much of the psychological interest in a country life would, at times, almost banish shepherds from the poem: 'I therefore am of the Opinion, that Poetry cannot be very charming, if it is as low and clownish as Shepherds naturally are ... what is pleasing is the Idea of quietness, which is inseparable from a Pastoral Life.' The shepherd who is the exponent of the songmaking art, the possessor of an inherited yet learnt gift found in both Theocritus or Virgil is never quiet. He may sing of quietness and a life freed from care but it is this lack of tranquility that provides the impulse to sing. So it is that the shepherd is an embarrassment to the descriptive eclogue. Such a figure in the landscape is not easy to assimilate - 'For we do not mind the meanness of the Concerns that are their real Employment, but the little trouble which those Concerns bring. The meanness would wholly exclude Ornaments and Gallantry ...' (p. 285). Fontenelle would have the shepherd exist in a half-light,

---

1. p. x. Dr. Johnson distrusted the piscatory eclogue for two major reasons. Firstly, it afforded 'much less variety than the land, and therefore will be sooner exhausted by a descriptive writer' and secondly, the 'greater part of mankind' live in 'ignorance of maritime pleasures' (Rambler 36 (July 21, 1750), Works, 3 : 199).

the better to blend with his surroundings. This selected image is no deliberate catalyst to the active imagination as in Purney's landscaping but its very opposite:

> Let it [the Imagination] see only the half of a Thing, but let that half be shown in a lively manner, then it will hardly bethink it self that you hide from it the other half, and you may thus deceive it as long as you please, since all the while it imagines that this single moiety, with the Thoughts by which it is taken up, is the whole Thing. (p. 284)[1]

Consequently, the mimetic truth of the representation is much beside the point.

However, the anti-classical energies of Modern pastoral were welcome to those who saw the opportunity for a re-birth of "Nature". Addison praised Philips in those terms in Spectator 523 (October 30, 1712). Poetry no more needed, he argued, the 'Fawns and Satyrs, Wood-Nymphs and Water-Nymphs with all the Tribe of Rural Deities' to lend it a poetical turn, for it could be seen by Philips's example how a 'new Life, and a more natural Beauty' could be achieved by anglicizing the form (4: 362-63). This is the view of Purney who boldly disowns the Golden Age on the grounds that 'we are not so much interested and concern'd in what was only some thousand Years ago, and ne're will be again'. Besides, Purney emphasises, the more naturally poetry 'deceives', the more it pleases; therefore, if real places are mentioned as the location for pastoral song, a greater 'Air of Truth' is given them (p. 25). As Congleton points out, this desire for precise geographical terms and some particularized detail is quite alien to Fontenelle's "Ideas" (p. 208). These alternative forms of pastoral ought to be highlighted. Congleton's scheme of

---

1. Compare Tickell's rephrasing in Guardian 22, 1: 90: that a poet should 'show only half an image to the fancy' and 'let the tranquility of that life appear full and plain, but hide the meanness of it.'

'neo-classical' as opposed to 'rationalistic' marks a useful initial distinction but, on closer inspection, the 'rational' school shows a more varied pattern. Such schematic conflation can lead to some misleading conclusions even on his own evidence: 'The rationalists do not exploit the pictorial element of the pastoral .... In contrast to their lack of interest in the scene, the rationalistic critics show an eager concern about the characters' (p. 308). Although it is also valuable to dub the varied theories of Philips, Purney and Tickell as 'rational', too strict an adherence to this term eventually falsifies the true picture. Modern pastoral theories were rational to the extent that they did not rely on the authority of the classical pastorals alone, but preferred to ground their assumptions about the true nature of the form on "reasonably" induced criteria of aesthetic value. However, the endorsement of experiential readings owes nothing to reason, but rather a renewed interest in aesthetics and its non-rational bases. A less confining term such as Modern has a more helpful orientation in that it covers more of the variety of theory at this time and implicitly indicates the clear need for the pastoral form to be re-directed away from the nervous adherence to accredited classical models.

The crisis in the classical defence of the form really stems from its vulnerability in the face of growing political and social confidence.[1] Theocritus and Virgil provided two orders of example. Firstly, they could be taken to have described non-geographical locations in Cos or Arcadia. This idealist tendency is re-emphasised in translation or allusion by locating these exemplary sites safely (and instructively) in the past. The focus of such theoretical positions is therefore

---

1. See pp.464-70.

retrospective and, by extension, pessimistic about "modern" conditions of life. It will represent Virgil's Eclogues as a support, pointing to the elegiac portions of Eclogues 1, 5 and 9. Secondly, such precedent will be honoured as models of stylistic "good taste". Virgil, especially, will provide a stylistic touchstone, and create an authoritative paradigm of heroic phrasing with lyric grace: as Pope puts it: 'As for the numbers themselves, tho' they are properly of the heroic measure, they should be the smoothest, the most easy and flowing imaginable ...' (1: 28-29). Theocritus, however, although it is apparent that Doric was an artificial dialect, endorses a "sub-literary" cadence and diction. Modern pastoralists will come upon an opportunity for a "simpler" style inspired by the Spenserian Doric. Imperceptibly, the figural autonomy of the shepherd becomes less and less and the landscape gains greater significance.

An example of how opposed Ancient and Modern pastorals is found in the effect of Pope's Guardian paper 40, which formed a supposed continuation of Tickell's series on pastoral standards. Tickell had ended his run in an allegorical set-piece where various figures were made to typify alternative pastoral models. 'Drest in a richer habit than had ever been seen in Arcadia', the Fontenelle-poet, 'so enriched with embroidery' pipes a tune 'set off with so many graces and quavers' that the shepherds and shepherdesses who seem to constitute Tickell's ideal bucolic audience, cannot follow the rhythm which 'required great skill and regularity of steps, which they had never been bred to'. Similarly, a 'person uncouth, and awkward in his gait', by which the Theocritean Doric is suggested, 'with some difficulty' pipes 'harsh and jarring notes, that the shepherds cried one and all, that he understood no musick ...'. He is banished to the remotest crags of Arcadia and barred for ever from the pipe.

Tasso's representative 'appeared in clothes that were so strait and uneasy to him, that he seemed to move with pain'. His reward is to be given over to an old shepherd who is to provide him with suitable clothes and who would teach him to speak 'plain'. Each of these extremes are distinguished from the fourth representative who is anonymous, although by the frequency with which they are named, Philips and perhaps Spenser, are meant. Fontenelle is too ornamental and divorced from the realities of rustic life. Theocritus is too unmusical and therefore "unliterary", whereas Tasso is too complex and so unpastoral. Young Amyntas, redolent perhaps of Virgilian associations, provides the golden mean, by pouring forth 'such melodious notes, that though they were a little wild and irregular, ... filled every heart with delight' (Guardian 32, April 17, 1713, 1: 130-31).

Purney, in his preface to the Pastorals. After the Simple Manner of Theocritus (1717) betrays what by modern standards appears to be a critical blindness by taking Pope's paper at face value. Yet Steele who accepted the contribution appears just as guilty, a coincidence that must cause a second glance at Pope's terms in the paper. Under the guise of exposing 'Mr. Pope's' errors and praising Philips's elegance, Pope is indeed accomplishing in Guardian 40 just the opposite. Thus, Virgil is convicted of too courtly a style, it being so pure and unpeasant-like. He also 'introduces Daphnis, Alexis and Thyrsis on British Plains, as Virgil had done before him on the Mantuan'. Philips is content to name his creations with more of an ear for probability and giving them a sound 'more agreeable to a Reader of Delicacy; such as Hobbinol, Lobbin, Cuddy, and Colin Clout'. Philips's attempt at a native "feel" to the pastoral is here dismissed as inelegant and provincial. He is also taxed with an 'Order and Method' in his application of book-learning which comes near to plagiarism and, by selectively comparing more vacuous instances of tenderness with Pope's more moderate style, with an insipid taste.[1] Pope warms to his subject by quoting A Pastoral Ballad chosen for its 'Nature and Simplicity'. This is his type of the Moderns' 'perfect pastoral': 'It is composed in the Somersetshire Dialect, and the Names such as are proper to the Country People.' The whole dialogue between Cicily and Roger is based upon the 'low' passion of jealousy and is so obviously a spoken style: 'Cicily: "Roger go vetch tha kee*, or else tha zun / Will quite be go, beyore C'have half a don," (*That is the Kine or Cows)' (p. 104). Pope clearly identifies both Spenser and Philips with 'this old West Country Bard' (p. 106), whereas he smoothly dissociates his writings and those of Moschus, Bion and especially Virgil from the pastoral form altogether if this is the model.

That Purney could not perceive a manifest alteration in scope and concern between Tickell's ideal pastoral figure and this Somersetshire ballad-singer is the salient detail. He is drawn to defend his Doric simplicity by accepting Tickell's taste for that 'pretty rusticity' for which Virgil's Latin was found quite unsuitable. He further enlists the help of rustic decorum to suit the language to the 'matter':

> Be the Language, says Quinctilian, always suited to the Matter. True it also is, that Homer used the most rustick Words, drawn from the Beotians; Virgil, from Ennius, in his Heroicks, render'd his Language uncommon; Milton, Shakespear, Spencer, and our contemporary Pastoral Writers, by reviving the antiquated English terms, by chusing and culling the finest Words of our Glorious Ancestors.[2]

---

[1] Prose Works, p. 99.

[2] "Advertisement Concerning the Language", Works, edited by H.O. White (Oxford, 1933), pp. 3-4.

Even the most sublime poetry would be a travesty if employed on 'low' subject-matter; therefore, the argument goes, such localized dialect has the charm of its suitability. Purney, however, has in mind a particular kind of rustic, a most unnaturalistic figure. Claiming that he followed in the steps of those authors of genius who had allowed themselves archaic or uncommon styles, he notices a certain lack of mimetic truth in a literal transcription of rural expression for 'where the Phrase in use was not suited to the softness and simplicity of his Characters, as he is acquainted with the Dialect of most Counties in England, has from thence drawn the tenderest Expressions ... and [those] best adapted to the simplicity of his sentiments' (p.3). He then exemplifies such sentiments by quoting the Ballad couplet from Pope's 'West Country Bard' believing it to have been sanctioned by 'that excellent Judge of Poetry, Mr. Addison'. With Addison's Spectator series on the Ballad form still fresh in mind, Purney feels that such a defence of Philips's style could be applied to Spenser and the common ballad. This association of an erstwhile "lower" form with the "unartificial" and unclassical 'simplicity' is just such an association that Pope, Gay and Chetwood, following Rapin's example, were out to denounce.

Conclusion

The term: "Simplicity" may be more familiar in connection with an eighteenth-century History of Ideas through the reception and application of the views of Locke and Newton. As has been amply demonstrated, the potentially reductive approach to Nature did not murder by dissecting it, but rather created new wonder.[1] Experience usurped the place of principle; old hypotheses were examined afresh, but were often reinforced again even if by different materials. For Addison, Locke's *Essay on Humane Understanding* (1690) was a primer for those who 'would get a Reputation by Critical Writings', for it helped a would-be critic learn the 'Art of distinguishing between Words and Things, and of ranging his Thoughts, and setting them in proper Lights.' It proved most effective in dispelling 'Confusion and Obscurity' (*Spectator* 291, February 2, 1712, 3: 36). The imagination gave most pleasure when the simplest "ideas" of experience were enjoyed by a spectator innocent of the traditions by which such objects of perception were transformed in literature. However, this does not lessen the reverence paid to the Creation. Indeed, there is little interval between the physical perception and a complex "idea" of wonder that arises from it, 'So that it is impossible for us to behold his Works with Coldness or Indifference, and to survey so many Beauties without a secret Satisfaction and Complacency' (413, June 24, 1712, 3: 546). This "natural" sublimity challenges the erstwhile steady states of decorum and kind. What is remarkable about the *Pleasures of the Imagination* series of *Spectator* papers (409ff.) is not just its intense concern for the visual but its Modern neglect of generic definition, or even definition per se.

---

[1] The effect is much as described in M.C. Battestin, *The Providence of Wit: Aspects of Form in Augustan Literature and the Arts* (Oxford, 1974), pp. 1-57: 'The victory of Chaos and old Night which Pope envisioned in *The Dunciad* would soon be real enough; but for one bright moment before the darkness fell, Newton and the divines had restored the world to Order, giving new force to the values and metaphors of the Christian humanist tradition. The consequence for Augustan art was the triumph of form' (p. 57). See also Herbert Drennon, "James Thomson's Contact with Newtonianism and His Interest in Natural Philosophy", *PMLA*, 49 (1934), 71-80; Marjorie H. Nicolson, *Newton Demands the Muse : Newton's 'Opticks' and the Eighteenth-Century Poets* (Princeton, N.J., 1946); F.E.L. Priestley, "Newton and the Romantic Concept of Nature", *University of Toronto Quarterly*, 17 (1948), 323-36, and Jerome Stolnitz, "Locke and the Categories of Value in Eighteenth-Century British Aesthetic Theory", *Philosophy*, 38 (1963), 40-51.

When he wishes to expose the inherited weaknesses of the taste for epigram or forced conceit with its piecemeal fine effects, it is to the ineffable majesty of the 'Longinian' sublime that he turns. In Spectator 409 (June 19, 1712) the 'Mechanical Rules' are confronted by the 'very Spirit and Soul of fine Writing' and found wanting. Whilst it is necessary that the unities be understood, 'there is still something more essential, to the Art, something that elevates and astonishes the Fancy, and gives a Greatness of Mind to the Reader, which few of the Criticks besides Longinus have consider'd'. Art henceforth can elude the traditional calculus of example and authority, and reside in effect as well as, if not instead of, demonstrable causes. In the face of this, the traditional neo-classical consensus dissolves, and the 'great force which lies in a natural Simplicity of Thought to affect the Mind of the Reader' is most powerful (3: 530). "Simplicity" is not striven for at the school of imitation or allusion but is forever available. E.L. Tuveson has identified as one of the most vigorous set of texts the Boyle Lectures (1692-1714), designed to demonstrate by natural philosophy that a beneficent God sustains His Creation.[1] This emphasis on the cumulative impression of perfection and the seamlessness of nature makes a virtue out of not exercising a precise critical vocabulary. If the Deity is immense, then the effects of His handiwork share such attributes. Shaftesbury, in The Moralists (1705), finds the Deity 'boundless, unsearchable, impenetrable. In thy immensity all thought is lost, fancy gives over its flight, and wearied imagination spends itself in vain, finding no coast nor limit of this Ocean, nor, in the widest tract through which it soars, one point yet nearer the circumference than the first centre whence it parted."[1] The physico-theological "simplicity" is an attribute of the Creator as well as a description of his substance, the 'secret hand of Providence' according to James Thomson, in his "To the Memory of Sir Isaac Newton" (1727).[2] Newton, as had Locke, inspired a fundamentalist revision of just what felt simple. For Thomson,

---

[1] The Imagination As a Means of Grace : Locke and the Aesthetics of Romanticism (Berkeley, Ca., 1960), pp. 56-71.

> The heavens are all his own, from the wide rule
> Of whirling vortices and circling spheres
> To their first great simplicity restored.
> The schools astonished stood; but found it vain
> To combat still with demonstration strong,
> And, unawakened, dream beneath the blaze
> Of truth ... [ll. 82-88]

The novelty of this 'first great simplicity' is not merely open to demonstration but is a 'blaze' of new perception, sweeping aside the nice distinctions of the 'schools'. Shaftesbury's reverence for the interrelatedness and profusion of the Creation, for instance, drove him to endorse a philosophical poetry virtually indistinguishable from a poetic philosophy, Homer the grand example of the first and Xenophon of the latter. Xenophon's well-bred philosophy was chosen for its unorthodoxy: 'Nothing could be remoter than his genius was

---

1. Characteristics, edited by John M. Robertson (Indianapolis, 1964), 2 vols, 2: 98. For a general discussion of Shaftesbury's "simplicity", see Alfred Owen Aldridge, "Lord Shaftesbury's Literary Theories", Philological Quarterly, 24 (1945), 46-64; Robert W. Uphaus, "Shaftesbury on Art : The Rhapsodic Aesthetic", Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism, 27 (1969), 341-48, and Pat Rogers, "Shaftesbury and the Aesthetics of Rhapsody", British Journal of Aesthetics, 12 (1972), 244-57. For a straightforward account of Francis Hutcheson's extension of the "natural" Sublime into ethical matters in the Inquiry into the Original of Our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue (1725), see William Frankena, "Hutcheson's Moral Sense Theory", Journal of the History of Ideas, 16 (1955), 356-75.

2. (l. 15). Poetical Works, edited by J. Logie Robertson (London, 1908), p. 436.

from the scholastic, the rhetorical, or more poetic kind. He was as distant on one hand from the sonorous, high, and pompous strain, as on the other hand from the ludicrous, mimical, or satiric.' This quotation, from his Advice to an Author (1710), immediately precedes his definition of the correct stylistic norm, that 'natural and simple genius of antiquity, comprehended by so few and so little relished by the vulgar'. What Shaftesbury attempts to endorse is really a fusion of the "Longinian" regard for the rhapsodical Sublime effect and the equally "Longinian" observation that such force could only be fully obtained by he who had accurately inspected 'the works of preceding masters' (1: 167).[1] In practice, his advice is heavily weighted towards a Modern freedom from academic tastes: 'The simple manner, which being the strictest imitation of Nature should of right be the completest in the distribution of its parts and symmetry of its whole, is yet so far from making any ostentation of method, that it conceals the artifice as much as possible, endeavouring only to express the effect of art under the appearance of the greatest ease and negligence' (1: 168-69). This "real" simplicity arises directly from the influence of "Longinus" (1: 169). Gradually, it becomes clear that critical prescription of all kinds is beside the real point. Any aspiring author whilst fixing his eye upon a 'consummate grace' and an intense 'beauty of Nature' wedded to a 'perfection of numbers' must rise above simple law-giving: 'For even rude Nature itself, in its primitive simplicity, is a better guide to judgment than improved sophistry and pedantic learning' (1: 214-15). Shaftesbury's "Longinus" is very much the inspirer of Philips and Purney.

---

[1] Shaftesbury's fusion of rationality and liberty is not quite Hutcheson's. See Martin Price's distinction in To the Palace of Wisdom: Studies in Order and Energy From Dryden to Blake (Carbondale, Ill., 1964), pp. 93-98: 'Natural phenomena are transitory; only their pattern is permanent. Man's mind also requires stability of pattern if it is to be free. Liberty of choice requires continuous identity' (p. 95).

In the wake of this passionate apprehension of order, the more overtly ordered "kinds" of poetry were no longer as distinct. Both Philips and Purney favoured a more indigenous pastoral setting not because it signalled a greater realism but because such Doric simplicity pleased more easily. Even Spenser's Doric had become by 1715, in John Hughes's edition, lyrical, far more a signifier of provincial charm than a signified of rustic life. Whilst pastoral is rarely, if at all, representational, there is a degree of difference between the tender troubles of Philips's shepherds and 'Winters wasteful Spight' (2) of "Januarye" or the 'bitter blasts' of 'rancke Winters rage' (1-2) of "Februarie". This new lyrical pastoral may still claim a Doric ancestry but its Doric is not Spenser's, but a more streamlined model. This did not go unnoticed. Reviewing Purney's Theocritean pastorals, Thomas Brereton in The Critick (May 19, 1718) found such an attempt to ape country phrases laughably wide of the mark: '... we are not such Cockneys in Town, as to believe [that] grown Men and Maids talk like Babys in the Country; We make some Distinction between Simplicity and Impotence.'[1] The particular potency that Pope was to aim at was not quite the heroism of Dryden's translation of the Eclogues. Such grand gestures and immortal longings produced a potentially humorous effect which might vitiate original compositions which could not so manifestly rely on Virgil's practice as in a translation. The classical "simplicity" maintains a necessary distance between the "High" occasion for Art and the "low", more naturalistic, impingement of physical particulars. Erich Auerbach has discovered in the classical separation of styles a major hindrance to the

---

1. The Critick, edited by John Pace (London, 1857), 2 vols, 1 : 110.

development of realism.[1] The plainness of this higher Simplicity is a convention, with heavy connotations of plain-dealing.[2] Without such localized trappings as in Purney's Doric or Ramsay's Scottish, the Shepherd is freed from "nature" and becomes the property of "art". His reality is textual; therefore, he is capable of universal significance with all the endorsement of literary culture.

As will be discussed later with reference to Pope, the practice did not quite tally with the theory. The pastoral strains of 1709 and Tonson's Miscellany by no means run parallel to the Horatian styles of the 1730s. These traditions of "simplicity" have very distinct sources and do not mix easily. The priority of res over verba that is found in Jonson's utilitarian classicism or the smooth perspicuity of Waller or Cowley lies adjacent to the pastoral smoothness of 1709, but should not be confused with it. Basically, its distrust of the metaphor or "hard" conceit and its relish for hard, clear lines of thought boldly expressed leads more directly to the descriptive poem or Horatian odes of Retirement. What characterizes the pastoral "simplicity" of 1709 is its refusal to compromise its classical ancestry for an "unliterary" awkwardness both of style and subject, and its recognition of the fine judgement that draws a thick line between "simplicity" and rusticity or between modest clothing and stiff bejewelled redundancies. This position resembles that reached by Dryden in answering objections about the meeting of Cleopatra and Octavia in All For Love (1678). He knows that they might offend against 'the greatness of their characters, and the modesty of their sex' in the scene, but makes the point that

---

[1] Mimesis : The Representation of Reality in Western Literature, translated by Willard R. Trask (Princeton, N.J., 1968), passim, especially pp. 554-55. Auerbach's methodology has been attacked most strongly by Timothy Bahti, "Vico, Auerbach and Literary History", Philological Quarterly, 60 (1981), 239-55, and defended by Thomas M. Depietro, "Literary Criticism as History: The Example of Auerbach's Mimesis", Clio, 8 (1979), 377-88.

[2] See the map of the changing definitions of the term in Raymond D. Havens, "Simplicity, A Changing Concept", Journal of the History of Ideas, 14 (1953), 3-32. For its Renaissance connotations, see R.F. Jones, "The Moral Sense of Simplicity", in Studies in Honor of Frederick W. Shipley, edited by R.F. Jones (Saint Louis, 1942), pp. 265-87.

> though the one were a Roman and the other a queen, they were both women. 'Tis true, some actions, though natural, are not fit to be represented; and broad obscenities in words ought in good manners to be avoided: expressions therefore are a modest clothing of our thoughts .... If I have kept myself within the bounds of modesty, all beyond it is but nicety and affection; ...
> [1: 193]

Hobbes would have agreed, for when rejecting the indecencies of Davenant's Gondibert (1651), he finds that one of them was the 'Dialect of the Inferior sort of People ... which is alwayes different from the language of the Court' and another 'to derive the Illustration of any thing from such Metaphors or Comparisons as cannot come into mens thoughts but by mean conversation and experience of humble or evil Arts'.[1] The preference for the "simple" alternative is really a desire to keep the literary work nobly chaste, and is closely related to the primitive simplicity from which Man has fallen. Even Addison complained that:

> If we look into the Manners of the most remote Ages of the World, we discover Human Nature in her Simplicity; and the more we come downward towards our own times, may observe her hiding herself in Artifices and Refinements, Polished insensibly out of her Original Plainness, and at length entirely lost under Form and Ceremony, and (what we call) Good-breeding.[2]

Addison's remedy had been to prescribe the ballad's unsophisticated roughness to challenge implicitly the 'Form and Ceremony' of

---

1. Spingarn, 2: 64.

2. Spectator, 209 (October 30, 1711), 2: 318.

contemporary polish.[1] Dennis's objection to this recommendation centres not so much on its untutored style as on its social implications. Hobbes's fear that the 'inferior sort of people', that is, the uncourtly, might be seriously portrayed and thus their manners open to emulation, remains in Dennis's rejection of the ballad's Simplicity. Obviously, any gesture towards a problematic treatment of (putative) rustic existence vitiated the sanctity of humanistic Art. Simplicity, which had been for several generations a convenient alternative to excessive wit, could now increasingly be used to question the literary decorum of representation according to social expectations. Thomas Purney's assertion: 'There is nothing in Pastoral, of which Persons have a wronger Notion than of the word Simplicity', in *A Full Enquiry* (p. 17), seems to promise some ambiguity of style alone. The new sentimental pastoral, however, includes bucolic criteria equally applicable to both Nature and Art: 'Simplicity and Tenderness are universally allow'd to constitute the very Soul and Essence of Pastoral' (p. 27). This passionate Simplicity asks of the reader a measure of identification with a rustic character once generally considered inappropriate for literature except as an occasion for satiric bitterness or comic derision.

---

[1] For a fuller explanation, see Albert B. Friedman, *The Ballad Revival : Studies in the Influence of Popular on Sophisticated Poetry* (Chicago, 1961), pp. 84-113. For a description of French influence, especially on its Modern perspectives, see pp. 100-4. Also see E.K. Broadus, "Addison's Influence on the Development of Interest in Folk-Poetry in the Eighteenth Century", *Modern Philology*, 8 (1910), 123-34, and Keith Stewart, "The Ballad and the 'Genres' in the Eighteenth Century", *Journal of English Literary History*, 24 (1957), 120-37.