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Nigel Paul Wood

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Chapters 4-6

Pp.327-572



27 APR 1984

## CHAPTER 4

The Pastorals of Ambrose Philips  
and the "Modern" Bucolic

From the very first direct discussion of the pastoral form, it is obvious that the classical heritage, or to be more precise, Virgil's Eclogues, cast a long shadow. Marco Girolamo Vida's De Arte Poetica (1527) not only projected the pastoral type, the lowest and most humble of the genres fit for a fledgeling poet, but also the polish and elegance of the most authoritative pastoral poet: Virgil. Ostensibly Vida is advising the poet to strip the Ancients and turn all to one's advantage, but his partiality for Virgil produces a heavily selective image which leaves Theocritus out of account<sup>1</sup>. These are mere details in a wider scheme, but in Scaliger's Ars Poetica (1561), the pastoral is given more space. Here, too, Virgil's example does much to consolidate a prescriptive notion of the pastoral, for he does 'not seem to have been taught by nature, but to have vied with it, or even better to have given it laws ... We have not been able to get from nature a single pattern such as the ideas of Virgil can furnish us.'<sup>2</sup> Virgil's nature is regular and streamlined, a product not a process. Furthermore, the fundamental assumption of the treatise is that there is a standard of perfection for each genre, and this Aristotelian ideal is located in the Eclogues.

- 
1. The Art of Poetry, translated by Christopher Pitt, edited by A.S. Cook (New York, 1926), pp. 53-55, 132-37.
  2. Select Translations from Scaliger's Poetics, edited by Frederick Morgan Padelford (New York, 1905), p. 52.



Pope's view of such Renaissance criticism is revealing. The 'barb'rous Age' (695) where 'Much was Believ'd, but little understood' (689), in the Essay on Criticism (1711), is that of medieval, monastic scholasticism.<sup>1</sup> The re-birth of inspiration commences at Rome whose 'ancient Genius, o'er its Ruins spread,/ Shakes off the Dust, and rears his rev'rend Head!' (699-700). This is a time when 'A Raphael painted, and a Vida sung!' (704). Pope's praise for 'Immortal Vida'. on whose honour'd Brow/ The Poet's Bays and Critick's Ivy grow:' (705-6), is for a learned critic-poet, one whose poetry reveals the critical nous and range to institute a sounder basis for pleasure. Such appreciation for Virgil's example, however, is not free of a little anxiety. As W. Jackson Bate has pointed out, the advantage of enlisting, by allusion or imitation, classical authority in a new work also proved a burden, productive of a cramping sense of inferiority and derivativeness.<sup>2</sup> As Edward Young was to point out, in his Conjectures on Original Composition (1749), in imitating the Ancients, one imitated 'not the Composition, but the Man. For may not this paradox pass into a maxim? viz. "The less we copy the renowned antients, we shall resemble them the more"' (p.21). Although more commonly cited this sentiment is a mere restatement of Young's position in 1730 when prefacing his "Imperium Pelagi: a Naval Lyric, in Imitation of Pindar's Spirit.":

We have many copies and translations that pass for originals. This ode I humbly conceive is an original, though it profess imitation. No man can be

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1. The full text can be found at TE, 1:239-326.
  2. The Burden of the Past and the English Poet (London, 1971), especially pp.31-45.

like Pindar, by imitating any of his particular works; ... The genius and spirit of such great men must be collected from the whole; and when thus we are possessed of it, we must exert its energy in subjects and designs of our own ...<sup>1</sup>

This sentiment is not as radical as might appear; a clear polarization between Ancient traditions and Modern practice is acceptable in a broad view but, when more closely inspected, is less useful. Young upholds the right of new poets to find 'subjects and designs' of their own (p.64). That is the crucial distinction. What Young does not advocate is a thorough-going fundamentalism. Pindar's spirit should float free of his particular works. It can therefore be embodied afresh, but it is still Pindar's. It is servile copying that is the dangerous attraction, a stoking of embers that would long since have gone out.

To some extent classical authority could be quoted to support unacknowledged appropriation of chosen models. By Vida's time this was almost a sanction for unabashed plagiarism. Swift, in his Battel of the Books (1704), has Scaliger say to his Modern counterpart, Bentley: "'Thy Learning makes thee more Barbarous, thy Study of Humanity,

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1. Edward Young's "Conjectures on Original Composition", edited by Edith J. Morley (Manchester, 1918), pp.63-64 (Appendix C). Appendix B is Young's essay "On Lyric Poetry" which prefaces his Ocean: an Ode (1728). In reviewing the power of the classical past, he concludes that: 'we should rather imitate their example in the general motives, and fundamental methods of their working, than in the works themselves ... the first may make us their equals; the second must pronounce us their inferiors even in our utmost success' (pp.60-61). For a fuller account of this debate see Elizabeth Nitchie, "Longinus and the theory of Poetic Imitation in Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century England", Studies in Philology, 32 (1935), 580-97, and Harold F. Brooks, "The 'Imitation' in English Poetry, especially in formal Satire, before the Age of Pope", Review of English Studies, 25 (1949), 124-40.

more Inhuman: Thy Converse amongst Poets more groveling,  
miry, and dull."<sup>1</sup> Bentley's scholarly analysis of more  
 Modern models had signalled, to Swift at least, a refusal  
 to transmit the humane arts.<sup>2</sup> However, this amount of  
 plagiarism is never seriously advanced. "Longinus", after  
 all, had exhorted the writer to imitate past masters in  
 order to emulate, if not surpass them. This was no plagiarism.  
 Horace frequently stated that he was the follower of  
 Lucilius,<sup>3</sup> but this did not imply an undue reliance on his  
 very words - far from it, as there was a clear difference  
 between a slavish translator and an imitator, between imi-  
 tation and the Imitation as an accredited poetic form. Pope  
 had another passage in mind however when he advised the  
 budding critic in his Essay on Criticism:

Be Homer's Works your Study, and Delight,  
 Read them by Day, and meditate by Night,  
 Thence from your Judgment, thence your  
 Maxims bring,  
 And trace the Muses upward to their Spring.

[11.124-27]

A judgment formed on this degree of acquaintance with the  
 Ancients is an alternative to Young's position. Pope early  
 in his career tried to remedy the defects in his own  
 writings and 'mend [his] manner by copying good strokes  
 from others'.<sup>4</sup> This kind of emulation exists specifically,

1. A Tale of a Tub, With other Early Works, 1696-1707,  
 edited by Herbert Davis (Oxford, 1939), p.161.
2. For a fuller survey of the elegiac bases for Augustan  
 conservative thought, see Paul Fussell, The Rhetorical  
 World of Augustan Humanism: Ethics and Imagery from  
 Swift to Burke (Oxford, 1965), pp.283-305.
3. See especially Satires, 1:10, 11.50-71.
4. Joseph Spence, Observations, Anecdotes and Characters  
 of Books and Men, edited by James M. Osborn, 2 vols.  
 (Oxford, 1966), 1:21.

as Henry Felton termed it, to form a 'just style'.<sup>1</sup> It does not immediately idealize its models, but rather attends to formal habits of expression which, much as Dryden discovered in his translation of Virgil, provided an authoritative voice.

Thus, although there were marginal cases, the debate between the Ancients and Moderns did have some substance. To do the Ancient position full justice, however, it is necessary to stress how apparently congruent it might appear to the Modern. Pope's enthusiasm for Homer was by no means gratuitous, an unswerving adherence to a rigorous classicism. Homer's Sublime, for example, was a daring impulse: 'Virgil generally escapes the Censure of those Moderns who are shock'd with the bold Flights of Homer ... They think to depreciate Homer in extolling the Judgment of Virgil, who never shew'd it more than when he followed him in these Boldnesses.'<sup>2</sup> Indeed, Homer's "natural" style was often distinguished from a more ornate classicism.<sup>3</sup>

1. A Dissertation on Reading the Classics, and Forming a Just Style (London, 1713).
2. TE, 7:317, note to Iliad (1720), V, 1054.
3. See Pope's "Postscript to the Odyssey" (1726): 'The sublime style is more easily counterfeited than the natural; something that passes for it, or sounds like it, is common in all false writers: But nature, purity, perspicuity, and simplicity, never walk in the clouds; they are obvious to all capacities; and where they are not evident, they do not exist.' (TE, 10:389). Indeed, scholastic Classicism was reserved for the pedantry of a Theobald or Bentley and to be contrasted with this "newer" Classicism. See the satire on the 'Rules of the Ancients, for the generation of Children of Wit', and Martinus Scriblerus's playthings in Memoirs of the Extraordinary Life, Works, and Discoveries of Martinus Scriblerus (1729), edited by Charles Kerby-Miller (New Haven, 1950), pp.96-99, 105-11 or Swift's distrust of the formulaic deployment of Ancient tropes in "Apollo's Edict" (1725), ll.44-49 (although see also the irony at the expense of the 'Simplicity' of 'The manners of the rural race' (27-32); Jonathan Swift: The Complete Poems, edited by Pat Rogers (Harmondsworth, 1983), pp.229-31).

The so-called Ancient prescriptiveness is by no means as monolithic as a differentiation from Modern tastes implies.

What was most basic about the English form of the quarrel in the 1690s was the issue taken over the possibility of progress in not only the Arts but human nature as well. Sir William Temple's An Essay upon the Ancient and Modern Learning (1690) is a powerful argument against scientific optimism, especially if it spreads to the humanities. He contrasts the legions of 'Scribblers ... , that like Mushrooms or Flys are born and dye in small circles of time;' to those 'Books, [which] like Proverbs, receive their Chief Value from the Stamp and Esteem of Ages through which they have passed.'<sup>1</sup> This tone is as important as its subject-matter, and takes its power from a notion of the High and the Low. The grub-like insignificance of contemporary imagination when compared with the achievements of the past is designed to evoke a conservative fear of falling standards or, worse, a conflation of them. This is the rhetoric of Swift's Battel of The Books. The Ancients and Moderns are in conflict, the Moderns stigmatized as envious pigmies, coveting the summit of Ancient Parnassus. Ambassadors are sent to demand that either 'the Antients would please to remove themselves and their Effects down to the lower Summity ... ; or else, that the said Antients will give leave to the Moderns to come with Shovels and Mattocks, and level the said Hill, as low as they shall think it convenient.' These are levelling tendencies and futile ones

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1. Spingarn, 3:34. Temple's influence can be traced in Swift's Tale of a Tub (1704), especially the "Dedication to PRINCE POSTERITY" (pp.18-23). See also Fussell, pp.233-61.

at that, as the demolition work would be undertaken on material as seamless as 'an entire Rock, which would break their Tools and Hearts ' (pp.142-43). Ancient example is effortlessly established and unitary, unlike the myriad formlessness of Modernity.

Temple's Olympian assurance, however, is at times given to a certain shaking of resolve, especially when he turns to the possibility of and motive for new works. Resigned to the weakness of contemporary languages which 'change every Hundred Years', he fair-mindedly takes into account the possibility that 'the weight and number of so many other mens thoughts and notions' might not 'suppress' or 'hinder' the free play of mind 'from which all Invention arises; As heaping on Wood, or too many Sticks, or too close together, suppresses and sometimes quite extinguishes a little spark that would otherwise have grown up to a noble Flame ' (3:63, 48). This is, indeed, presented as an incipient weakness of Modernity but it is also acknowledged to be caused by a faulty recognition and use of classical knowledge, fuel sometimes too close-packed and numerous to do more than suffocate the present. This is given an explicit historical dimension by Dryden in his advice "To Mr. Congreve" (1694):

Strong were our Syres; and as they Fought  
 they Writ,  
 Conqu'ring with force of Arms, and dint  
 of Wit;  
 Theirs was the Gyant Race, before the  
 Flood;  
 And thus, when Charles Return'd, our Empire  
 stood ...

... Our Age was cultivated thus at length;  
 But what we gain'd in skill we lost in  
     strength.  
 Our Builders were, with want of Genius,  
     curst;  
     The second Temple was not like the first:  
 [1.3-6,11-14]<sup>1</sup>

Innate, primeval liberty establishes a strength of precedent, knowledge of which circumscribes the freedom of later ages. All that is left is an improvement in skill. To characterize the Ancient position as merely the dead hand of convention is far from the view of Dryden, Swift or Pope, who all in their individual ways find such precedent a strength and power, freed from the postlapsarian vapidness of sonnets or ballads or conceitful Metaphysical quibbles.

Inevitably, however, the classical past had carried associations of ideas that stifled the creation of new models. Felton, whose requirements of 'good style' seemed to derive from axiomatic criteria, held it a universal truth that 'There is a Chain of Relations in Nature, which must not be broken, nor twisted with any other String: The whole World of Being, the Qualities, Properties, Accidents and Affections of Things are distributed into proper Classes, as they are compatible or inconsistent with one another. Propriety of Thought therefore must arise from a competent knowledge of the Nature and Decency of Things.' [p.64]

This scala Naturae, or at least its reification, was increasingly challenged during the century. The decline of the classical pastoral is a symptom of this shift in taste and also of a new alignment of political and social opinion.

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1. "To my Dear Friend Mr. Congreve, On His COMEDY, call'd The Double-Dealer", Poems, 2:852-54.

As R.F. Jones has pointed out about the Modern position, its anti-authoritarianism not only attempted to invalidate Ancient prescriptiveness, but also 'to attack a prevailing theory of the Renaissance, which asserted that modern times represented the old age of the world.'<sup>1</sup> This pessimism was often confronted by an alternative not as Modern as the title suggests, but, as far as pastoral was concerned, often took the form of re-discovering the appeal either of the rugged Theocritean Doric or Spenser's anglicized equivalent. More pervasive, however, was the adoption of a form ripe for Modern appropriation: the Georgic, with a tincture of Horace's Beatus Ille sentiments.<sup>2</sup> These are both time-honoured monuments to an enduring classicism in one sense, but their application and the contemporary apology for their adoption at this time, and in English literature, pre-eminently both oppose the monolithic hegemony of the past.

It is at first necessary to examine the two contrasting sets of pastorals in Jacob Tonson's 1709 Miscellany, one by Ambrose Philips, the other by Pope, to determine how each set diluted or adapted the classical images of the shepherd and his landscape. Only then is it fully comprehensible how the rustic was transformed from a quiescent, leisured Man of Feeling to an active, industrious Husbandman.

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1. "The Background of the Attack on Science in the Age of Pope", in Pope and His Contemporaries: Essays Presented to George Sherburn (Oxford, 1949), p.97.
  2. The Retirement poetic tradition is based on allusions to, or imitations of, Georgic 2.458-512 and Horace's Epode 2 (minus the closing irony). See Maren-Sofie Røstvig, The Happy Man: Studies in the Metamorphosis of a Classical Ideal, 2 vols. (Oslo, 1954-58. 2nd ed., 1962-71) for a fuller history.

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Ambrose Philips's Pastoral Simplicity

The six pastorals that appeared in Tonson's Miscellany: the Sixth Part have often been consigned to the footnotes of literary study. Their context in the quarrel with Pope over the correct mode of bucolic has often stigmatized them unfairly. Tonson, himself, appears to have had some idea of this polarization as Philips's appear at the head and Pope's at the conclusion of the volume. Indeed, they appear almost as book-ends, one of Modern, the other of Ancient stamp. The poems themselves also seem to have gone through a slow process of maturation awaiting just such an opportunity as Tonson's interest for them both to emerge. Pope's work could have started in 1704 and been thence overseen by such as Walsh and Congreve. Tonson was certainly soliciting them for publication by April 1706.<sup>1</sup> Four of Philips's, on the other hand, had in part been published already in Fenton's Oxford and Cambridge Miscellany Poems (1707/8).

Philips's work is often presented as the result of a meagre talent rather than conscious artlessness. Eric Rothstein sees his Pastorals as a branch of retirement poetry and tantalisingly suggests that their interest lies in his 'having revived an English (Spenserian) rather than Latin mode, and for their insistence, however awkward the results, on a somewhat more realistic treatment of Arcadians who were English. / <sup>Their</sup> [Philips's and Purney's] new mode, dignifying the sincere feelings athrob in rustic

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1. See The Correspondence of Alexander Pope, edited by George Sherburn. 5 vols. (Oxford, 1956), 1:17.

hearts, also has ideological implications in the eighteenth century and beyond.<sup>1</sup> Even with this interest, Rothstein does not develop the observation and detail just where such 'ideological implications' lie, and he feels in duty bound to point out their comparative lack of 'skill'. It is the precise nature of this requisite of 'skill' that is, at least, problematic at this time.

One account of the rivalry over the correct bucolic mode between Pope and Philips stresses their personal antagonism. The popularity of Philips's work was fostered by those savants associated with Buttons coffee house and the Whig interest. The comparative neglect of Pope's efforts could have been no greater slight than Addison's particular desire to advance one of his little Senate, of which number most of Philips's earliest admirers could be counted: Tickell, Welsted and Steele, in particular. Pope's earliest advisers frequented Will's and counted among their number Wycherley, Congreve, Swift, Arbuthnot and Gay, all by 1712 (and the large rift between the factions) sympathetic to, if not abetting, Tory affairs.<sup>2</sup> Sheer political or personal differences do not account wholly for the manifestly alternative forms of the two sets of pastorals neither do they obscure the differing ideologies, expressed in differing literary positions, that emerge from the quarrel. Not all is explained by biographical detail in support of party-lines.

Initially, Philips's work was well received by both

1. Restoration and Eighteenth-century Poetry, 1660-1780 (London, 1981), p.46.
2. For a fuller account see George Sherburn, The Early Career of Alexander Pope (Oxford, 1934. Reprinted, 1968), pp.114-48.

Swift and Pope. Swift was a regular correspondent of Philips's from 1708 to about 1709-10. On July 10, 1708, Swift is found writing about the victory at Oudenarde to Philips, expressing impeccable Whig sentiments: 'I wish the victory we have got, and the scenes you pass through would put you into humour of writing a Pastoral to celebrate the D. of Marlborough, who, I hope, will soon be your General.' Perhaps more striking is the obvious intimacy Swift felt he enjoyed with both Addison and Steele at this time, dubbing their association a 'Triumvirate': 'I often see each of them, and each of them me and each other; and when I am of the number Justice is done you as you would desire ...'<sup>1</sup> That the link between Philips and the pastoral was no casual one is clearer from Swift's next letter (Sept. 14, 1708). With a view to publicizing Philips to Addison, Swift desires the despatch of 'half a dozen Pastorals, tho' they were all made up of Complaints of your Mistress and of Fortune.' (1:99). Six months later and Swift informs Philips in Denmark that 'Your Pastorals will appear at the head of the new Miscellany in a month' (8 March, 1708/9 (1:129)) and also indulges in some playful banter about composing poetry in northern climes: 'Your versifying in a Sledge seems somewhat parallell to singing a Psalm upon a ladder, and when you tell me it was upon the Sea, I suppose it might be a Pastorall, and that you had got a Calenture, which makes men think they behold green Feelds, and Groves on the Ocean. I suppose the subject was love ...' (1:128). Here is no scruple at the

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1. The Correspondence of Jonathan Swift, edited by Harold Williams. 5 vols. (Oxford, 1963-65), 1:90-91.

lyrical pastoral and, what is more, clear evidence that Swift's early Whig sympathies implied an amount of collusion with Philips. By October 8, Steele is surprising Swift with news of Philips's arrival back in Britain: 'Mr. Philips din'd with me yesterday. He is still a Shepheard, and walks very lonely through this unthinking Crowd in London' (1:151), even though there is evidence that Swift had received letters from Copenhagen on February 22, end of May, August 16 and October 30 (1:152). Perhaps the friendship cooled rapidly after that together with Swift's lack of influence with Addison, especially in view of his possible notoriety over his suspected authorship of a Letter on the Sacramental Test (December, 1708) which is a savage attack on the claims of the Irish Presbyterians for tolerance and inevitably an anti-Whig document. When the Whig ministry broke up in 1710, Swift found it time to re-assert his Anglican beliefs especially against tolerance and this meant a step into the Tory camp. Pope, however, whose intimacy with the Buttonians had never been intense, could write glowingly of Philips's talents in his letter to Henry Cromwell (October 28, 1710): 'In the whole, I agree with the Tatler, that we have no better Eclogs in our language. This Gentleman, ... is capable of writing very nobly ...' In common with Addison, he also picks out Philips's "Winter-Piece" for especial praise: 'Tis a very Lively Piece of Poetical Painting ...' This fulsome praise is tempered somewhat by some astute criticism of the pastorals. Pope liked the first 'infinitely the best', the second the worst, and was careful to note of the third that it was 'for the greatest part a Translation from Virgil's Daphnis, and I think a good one.' He reserves

special praise for lines 83 to 88 of Pastoral 5:

Now, lightly skimming o'er the Strings  
     they pass,  
 Like Winds, that gently brush the plying Grass,  
 And melting Airs arise at their Command:  
 And now, laborious with a weighty Hand  
 He sinks into the Cords with solemn Pace,  
 And gives the swelling Tones a manly Grace.

whilst worried that they are 'too lofty for Pastorall, especially being put into the mouth of a Shepherd as they are here; In the Poets own person they had been ... more proper.' There is also a back-handed compliment in assigning to these verses a Virgilian rather than a Theocritean manner, 'whom yet in the character of Pastoral he rather seems to imitate ...'<sup>1</sup> This Virgilian/Wallerian sweetness is very much more Pope's own pastoral idiom, a style akin to that of Lobbin's complaint in Pastoral 1, but most unlike the song-like repetitions and Creech-like simplicities of the Doric in the second. Pope here also starts to develop the point that such lyric grace is too unsuitable for gross shepherds. Decorum is not breached on the other hand if the Shepherd is a Poet. This distinction is not an idle one in reference to the differences between the two sets of eclogue. Pope, indeed, chose to omit this letter from his quarto and folio of 1737. It was included in the octavo editions with several revisions and omissions, calculated to excise all praise of someone who had become a symbol of insipid vacuity.

Philips's work, however, received long-lived and consistent support from the Spectator and its editors: Addison

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1. Correspondence, 1:101. He is referring to Tatler 12 (May 7, 1709).

and Steele. Both were almost Whig literary whips during the fiercest propaganda years of 1711-15.<sup>1</sup> Steele's The Tatler (1709-10) proclaimed that it would expose 'the false arts of life, pulling off the disguises of cunning, vanity, and affectation, and recommending a general simplicity in our dress, our discourse, and our behaviour' (Tatler 89).<sup>2</sup> That it was Whig in its interpretation of such "simplicity" is obvious less from the avowed intentions of each number than the partisan Tory reaction the periodical excited, notably in Swift's The Examiner (1710-11). However much the Spectator proclaimed its disinterestedness, the same collaboration from March, 1711 to December, 1712 was inevitably tainted by the charges of Whig hackery. In 1712, Addison broke cover; on the death of Arthur Maynwaring, he inherited the post of unofficial director of Whig propaganda and took Steele with him. In the Englishman, Guardian and Freeholder, the Whig interest and its literary tastes were sure to find a footing. There is evidence to suppose Philips was an irregular contributor and at the very least a fellow-traveller. Both Steele's and Addison's correspondence show that from about July, 1712, Philips had assumed the post of secretary to the Hanover Club of hard-line Whiggish sentiments.<sup>3</sup> On December 27 Swift describes

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1. The background to this debate is analysed in detail in Bertrand Goldgar, The Curse of Party: Swift's Relations With Addison and Steele (Lincoln, Na., 1961), pp.80-170, and J.A. Downie, Robert Harley and the Press: Propaganda and public opinion in the age of Swift and Defoe (Cambridge, 1979), pp.131-48, 162-83.
  2. November 3, 1709, Lucubrations, 2:211.
  3. The Correspondence of Richard Steele, edited by Rae Blanchard (Oxford, 1941), pp.57, 58, 68, 85, 89; Letters of Joseph Addison, edited by Walter Graham (Oxford, 1941), p.282.

to Stella a meeting with Addison and Philips: 'I mett Mr Addison and pastorall Philips on the Mall today, and took a Turn with them; But they both looked terrible dry and cold; a Curse of Party; and do you know that I have taken more pains to recommend the Whig Witts ... than any other People.'<sup>1</sup> That Philips's commitment went deeper than any hopes of future preferment is clear from his initiative in publishing The Freethinker from March 24, 1718 to July 28, 1721. Conceived at the suggestion of the Whig administration, the paper had Philips as its editor and attracted contributions from such notables as Burnet, Bishop Boulter and West, later Lord Chancellor of Ireland. What is clear from these associations is how inextricably political such periodical support for Philips's work would be regarded. Although not reducible to conformity to politically pure sentiments, the taste enforced by such writing was strongly Modern and passionate in its distrust of traditional Classical influences.<sup>2</sup>

Addison's association with and influence on Philips's literary development may indeed have commenced even earlier than in the heyday of political interest. Philips is likely to have shown him early drafts of the Pastorals as early as 1704 or 1705. In a letter from Addison (March 10, 1704), Philips is complimented on his pastorals which are found to be conscious imitations of Spenser. Addison proceeds to

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1. Journal to Stella, edited by Harold Williams, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1948), 2:589.
  2. On Philips's involvement, see Nicholas Joost, "The Authorship of the Free-Thinker" in Studies in the Early English Periodical, edited by Richmond P. Bond (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1957), pp.103-34.

find Philips's little 'Essay on Pastoral' 'very Just in the theory as well as in the practical part'.<sup>1</sup> Tatler 10 (May 3, 1709) advertises Tonson's sixth Miscellany where Philips, but not Pope, is mentioned as one of its attractions.<sup>2</sup> Steele is warmer two papers later (May 7) when praising Philips's "Winter-piece", picking out its painterly virtues of naturalistic detail. It is commended as being

as fine a winter-piece as we have ever had from any of the schools of the most learned painters. Such images as these give a new pleasure in our sight, and fix upon our minds traces of reflection, which accompany us whenever the like objects occur. In short, excellent poetry and description dwell upon us so agreeably, that all the readers of them are made to think, if not write, like men of wit.

To conclude the section, the poem is published in full and the 'excellent performance' highlighted as coming from the pen of 'Mr. Philips, the author of several choice poems in Mr. Tonson's new Miscellany' (1:43). A month earlier (April 5), Addison had also praised the Winter-Piece in a letter to Philips, although he was not happy about its conclusion which needed some 'moral topic, or reflection, or compliment, to Lord Dorset'. Addison, however, does not miss the more Modern interest in the affective potential of description for its own sake, advising Philips that he will easily find such a cohering narrative interest if it has some 'correspondence with the climate, as the poetry of that country, the language, the difference of manners in

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1. Letters of Addison, p.49.

2. Lucubrations, 1: 33.

the people ...'<sup>1</sup> It is no coincidence that at the same time as Philips is praised for his pastoral poetry he is also commended for an achievement quite antithetical in theme and form from the classical pastoral, stressing precise topographical description.

By August 12, 1710, Addison is ready to lionize his protégé, pointing out that although he has 'an admirable hand at a Sheep-Crook', he might 'follow the example of ... Spencer and Virgil in making [the] Pastorals the prelude of something greater ' (p.230). Indeed, their first public commendation by Addison in his Spectator paper 223 (November 15, 1711), yokes both the Winter-Piece and the Pastorals together and speaks of their creator as one whose reputation has already been established, enthusing over their illustration of that 'Pathetick Simplicity which is so peculiar to him.' Offered as part illustration of this quality is Philips's own translation of Sappho's Hymn to Venus:

O Venus, Beauty of the Skies,  
 To whom a thousand Temples rise,  
 Gayly false in gentle Smiles,  
 Full of Love-perplexing Wiles;  
 O Goddess! from my Heart remove  
 The wasting Cares and Pains of Love.

[11.1-6]

In praising the faithfulness of the translation, Addison is at pains to pick out the 'several harmonious Turns in the Words' which are not lost in the English. Indeed, the version presents the passion 'in its genuine and natural Beauty, without any foreign or affected Ornaments,' a com-

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1. Letters of Addison, p.132

mendation that was reserved for the anonymous singer of Chevy-Chase and The Babes in the Wood.<sup>1</sup> Addison returns to Philips's Pastorals in Spectator 523 (October 30, 1712) as an example of the power of 'nature' above the fictions of poetical 'machinery' and Classical Legend. He introduces the section by a dictum of Bouhours's: 'No Thought is beautiful which is not just, and no Thought can be just which is not founded in Truth, or at least in that which passes for such.' This innocent truism, given the clichés of the time, becomes much less conventional in its application, treating the Ancient mode as a whole as committed to empty formalism. The touchstone is the Pastorals: 'If any are of Opinion, that there is a necessity of admitting these Classical legends into our Serious Compositions, in order to give them a more Poetical Turn; I would recommend to their Consideration the Pastorals of Mr. Philips ' (4:362). This poetry is to be praised for dispensing with 'Fawns and Satyrs, Wood-Nymphs and Water-Nymphs; with all the Tribe of Rural Deities:' In its place there is a 'new Life, and a more natural Beauty' drawn mainly from the 'superstitious Mythology which prevails among the Shepherds of our own Country,' which supersedes such 'Antiquated Fables' (4:363). There is little doubt that such appreciation is not just derived from the pleasure of adding to the Little Senate, but rather part of a more general literary taste.

In this strategy, Steele proved an invaluable accomplice. Earlier in the year, Philips's work had provided evidence of another kind: to help advocate Steele's own

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1. Spectator, 2:367.

form of Sentimental writing. In Spectator 400 (June 9), he attempts to demonstrate a chaste style amenable to the increasing politeness of the age, a 'gentle Art ... made up of Complaisance, Courtship, and artful Conformity to the Modesty of a Woman's Manners.' The pattern might have appeared clearer if this stand had led Steele to find fault with the hints of Doric found in Philips's bucolic characters, for he concludes in terms heavily reminiscent of Pope or Chetwood that 'Rusticity, broad Expression, and forward Obtrusion, offend those of Education, and make the Transgressors odious to all who have Merit enough to attract Regard.' Steele unexpectedly chooses an example from Dryden's heroic drama, not a normal 'gentle art', in printing Antony's description of his first sighting of Cleopatra in All For Love (III.i,162-66,168-79). Read purely from Steele's highly selective viewpoint, this gentle and 'beautifully ordered' description is chaste and decorous: 'Here the Imagination is warmed with all the Objects presented, and yet There is nothing that is luscious, or what raises any Idea more loose than that of a beautiful Woman set off to Advantage.' The languid beauty of Antony's speech stems from the delicacy of witty compliment:

Her Nymphs, like Nereids, round her Couch were  
 plac'd,  
 Where she, another Sea-born Venus, lay.  
 She lay, and lean'd her Cheek upon her Hand,  
 And cast a Look so languishingly sweet,  
 As if, secure of all Beholders Hearts,  
 Neglecting she could take'em ...

Here is no "Simplicity" as applauded by Addison which implied the removal of classical figures from poetry. It is apparent

from Steele's preamble that the imagination is excited by the object described in a fitting manner; the 'beautiful Woman' as much as, if not more than, the poetic style by which she is arrayed, creates the effect. Philips's Pastorals are taken to display, compared with this passage, 'a more delicate and careful Spirit of Modesty' and to underpin this assertion Hobbinol's lament from Pastoral 6 is chosen:

Breathe soft ye Winds, ye Waters gently flow,  
 Shield her ye Trees, ye Flowers around her  
 grow;  
 Ye Swains, I beg you, pass in Silence by,  
 My Love in yonder Vale asleep does lie ...

[11.61-64; 3:497]<sup>1</sup>

This melodious flow is supposed to be a literary equivalent of courtesy and the regulation of desire: 'Desire is corrected when there is a Tenderness or Admiration expressed which partakes the Passion. Licentious language has something brutal in it, which disgraces Humanity' (3:498). Steele might also have added that this pathos is aided by the lack of metaphor or other evidence of obvious artifice. Philips's sonority is really a construction of a succession of open vowel-sounds and an unexact choice of rhyme-words or metre. These lyrical qualities owe little to the classical pastoral and more to the line of pastoral love-lyric.

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1. This chaste lyricism was seen by Steele as the characteristic of Philips's "she-tragedy": The Distrest Mother (1712), an adaptation of Racine's Andromaque and with more than passing allusions to Steele's own The Tender Husband (1705). Steele was to praise its style 'such as becomes those of the first Education ... It was a most exquisite Pleasure to me, to observe real Tears drop from the Eyes of those who had long made it their Profession to dissemble Affliction; ...' (Spectator 290, February 1, 1712; 3:32). See also Addison's similar praise in Spectator 335 (March 25; 3:239-42).

Here, Steele is counting Philips's less Doric moments as a contribution to the literature of Sentiment.

This chaste pathos is a challenge to Pope's own reverence for classical example. Dressed in Whig colours, Philips's bucolic muse is lent an anti-authoritarian bias and becomes a means of affording the urbanite an unruffled pleasure. Whilst recognizing a Spenserian influence, there is hardly a whole-hearted appreciation of the rugged awkwardness and defiant provinciality of his Doric style. On the contrary, the Doric is much as Allan Ramsay found it, a branch of lyric, Modern in its freedom from allusive complexity.<sup>1</sup> In the first revaluation of pastoral writing since Philips's own preface, Tickell in his Guardian papers is quick to seize on the Modernity of such work. Most of his examples of simple shepherd expressions come from Philips. This simplicity is really a mark of inferiority, an opportunity for the literate urban reader to regard the "other" rural hinterland as really distressed about unproblematic matters. Tickell compliments Philips in particular for the hints of religion or superstition that appear in such rustic: 'For we find that those who have lived easy lives in the country, and contemplate the works of nature, live in the greatest awe of their author.' This 'easiness' has given rise to the comforting reassurance of 'tales of goblins and fairies' which easily take the place of the heathen 'fawns, nymphs and satyrs' of antiquity. This superstition Tickell claims is an Ancient practice: 'Hence we find the works of Virgil and Theocritus sprinkled with

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1. See pp. 41-44.

left-handed ravens, blasted oaks, witch-crafts, evil eyes, and the like.<sup>1</sup> This superstitious machinery is far more the stock-in-trade of contemporary ballads and songs than the pastoral. Eclogues 1 and 9 provide withered oaks and portentous ravens, whereas the witch-craft stems directly from Idyll 2 and its Virgilian equivalent Eclogue 8. The oaks and ravens are by no means a major element even in characterization whereas the spells of Simaetha or Alpheisiboeus are part of an urban mime. Their inclusion in the more lyrical pastorals is not for realism's sake, but for a local colour that diminishes such believers.

Later, in issue 30, Tickell more directly attacks the Ancient models for pastoral, claiming that their influence breeds servile imitators, who dabble in 'occasional' Pastorals on a very consistent model, that of Idyll 1 and Eclogues 1 and 5 whose elegiac flavour has comforted 'most of the noble families in Great Britain'. Philips is linked with Spenser in providing British bucolics, the North European landscapes being chosen the better to 'deceive' the reader (April 15, 1:121).

Purney's approval in 1717 was fully alive to such patriotic ideals. The Full Enquiry quotes liberally from Philips to support the call for an English pastoral spirit. In the "Proeme", Cubbin, a 'Kentish Swain', is visited by Sophy, 'a true-born Britton' who little admires the French and their undue reliance on the Ancients. Sophy instructs Cubbin in the correct pastoral spirit which aims at discovering a middle path between the 'Courtly and Florid'

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1. Guardian 23 (April 7, 1713), 1:94.

desecration of the Sublime on the one hand and the 'bastard and degenerate' style often dubbed the 'Fine and agreeable' (but which is really a similar failure in the 'truly Tender') on the other. Whilst dwelling carefully on Ruaeus, Dryden, Fontenelle and Rapin, Purney directs the reader especially to Tickell's Guardian series on the pastoral where he 'will find the Criticism on Phillips ... extreamly Ingenious' (pp.1-5). The work is filled with references to Philips, almost without exception ostentatiously complimenting his correctness, images, turns, similes and language. Quite pointedly, there is not one mention of Pope's Pastorals or the "Discourse". Purney is decidedly unfavourable to the Theocritean spirit in favour of the amorous delicacy of Fontenelle. His reason for this is based on the assumption that, in reading a pastoral, there is a desire for emulation and 'no one would desire to be one of Theocritus' Shepherds.' What is needed is an ingredient of the 'soft'. 'Our excellent Philips' is commended for this innocence; his shepherds sing for 'Praise' rather than 'the Pouch and the Kid', counter to the precedent set by Theocritus and Virgil (pp.25-28). Indeed, there is nowhere else so complete a rejection of the Ancient example and it is significant that Purney turns to Philips' work of eight or more years before for its illustration (pp.51-54). In the spirit of "Longinus", the veneration for the vivid though irregular work in preference to the unimpeachably correct observance of the rule-book canonizes those writers who are capable of exciting subjective responses analogous to those enjoyed experientially. A specifically "literary" enjoyment at the signs of good "writing" is foreign not only to this design, but, in its

primary sense, alien to Englishness itself. Philips's work not only challenges Virgil's example but also the bases on which generic criteria are founded, for ignoring the deliberate hints of epic and local tragedy in Virgil and such levels of style that alternate constantly with the more bucolic touches, pastoral is polarized from the major genres. The 'busy, great, or pompous' state of life that occasions tragic or epic representations is psychologically antithetical to the 'retir'd, soft, or easy' countryside. This does not prevent Purney tying the Modern pastoral to Aristotelian moorings and emphasising the necessity of a worthy fable, a moral, fully-drawn characters and decorous expression (pp.18-20). What arbitrates the choice of these elements however is not the touchstone of tragic effects but the 'tender' found in Spenser, and the possible adoption of what had been hitherto "unliterary" forms such as the 'inimitably pretty and delightful' tales like The Two Children In The Wood (p.72). Purney has the courage of his convictions in two logical extensions of some basic premises. Firstly, if the 'tender' is unartificial, then Purney is brave enough to argue for an enervated diction and unheroic shepherds. The soft marries uneasily with his endorsement of Spenser's Anglo-Saxon archaisms only if the term may be taken to apply to the sound of the words; as it is, Purney is deliberately applying these prescriptions to effect rather than form. Similarly, he adopts the Addisonian distinction between the sublime and the beautiful and borrows Dennis's suggestion that the sublime image and the sublime thought not only did not presuppose one another but could create alternative effects (p.4).

Therefore, when Charles Gildon claims in his Complete Art of Poetry (1718) that Philips could stand as 'beyond Controversy the third at least' in the genre, above Spenser, he is merely varnishing a reputation carefully created by specifically Whig writers or sympathizers, but for all that a view to which many subscribed. In their favour, such pastoral theorists could invoke "Nature" and carefully suggest a more realistic approach. This is only a suggestion for as both Fontenelle and Purney maintain, the disagreeable and mean would not please and therefore should be omitted. This tradition may not be dead for as recently as 1935 and C.V. Deane's Aspects of Eighteenth Century Nature Poetry, Philips emerges as 'the first poet of the eighteenth century who thought of using the uniformly correct couplet for depicting unusual aspects of nature with precise observation' (p.117). In the classical tradition there is little point in such an emphasis.

#### The Tender Pastorals of Ambrose Philips

In his Preface to the Tonson printing, Philips tussles with terminology. The epigraph for the collection lights on Virgil's defence of the bucolic at line 2 of Eclogue 6: 'Nostra nec erubuit Silvas habitere Thalia' ('Our Thalia [the Muse] does not blush to dwell in the woods<sup>R</sup>). Virgil is here offering an excuse to Varus, his dedicatee, for providing what he might not have expected: instead of constructing stories of grim war to honour him in an heroic manner, Virgil is content to accept inspiration from the agrestem Musam or rustic Muse and tune his song on the slender reed of a less prepossessing

tradition: that of the Sicilian music of Theocritus. Virgil at this point directly associates the pastoral form with a rough-hewn provinciality that is as assumed a poetic voice as the epic. Dryden's translation gives the epigraph its full context:

I First transferr'd to Rome Sicilian Strains:  
 Nor blush'd the Dorick Muse to dwell on  
   Mantuan Plains,  
 But when I try'd her tender Voice, too young;  
 And fighting Kings, and bloody Battels sung,  
Apollo check'd my Pride; and bade me feed  
 My fatning Flocks, nor dare beyond the Reed.  
 Admonish'd thus, while every Pen prepares  
 To write, thy Praises, Varus, and thy Wars,  
 My Past'ral Muse her humble Tribute brings;  
 [11.1-9]<sup>1</sup>

This humility is not worn with embarrassment but is the result of a conscious acceptance that pastoral verse is an apprenticeship suitable to 'tender voices'. Therefore, the rustic references are an integral part of that humble simplicity that contrasts so clearly with more exalted forms of address. In invoking Virgil at this point, Philips is aiming well, for it selectively represents the Virgilian bucolic tradition minus Golden Age references and is in support of a more realistic manner.

This nervousness about the convention lies behind much of the debate of the Preface. Explaining that the pastoral had 'always been accounted the most considerable of the smaller poems', Philips points out its traditional uses as a 'Prelude to Heroick Poetry' quoting Virgil and Spenser as his examples. Indeed, Philips's closing comments imply that he may be accounted part of that pantheon

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1. Poems, 2:894

of taste: 'Theocritus, Virgil, and Spencer are the only Writers, that seem to have hit upon the true Nature of Pastoral Poems. So that it will be Honour sufficient for me, if I have not altogether fail'd in my Attempt.' Absent from this list are the French and Italians of the Renaissance who infused a more imposing spirit into pastoral verse. Philips proposes an alternative path, arguing that the pastoral poem 'gives a sweet and gentle Composure to the Mind;' unlike the 'fighting kings and bloody battles of the Epic or Tragedy which puts the Spirits in too great a ferment by the Vehemence of their Motions.' This distinction is culled from the aesthetic pastoral theory of Fontenelle, a demarcation that leaves the pastoral a very private mode. Philips makes no mention of the Golden Age and, furthermore, seems bent on a complete rejection of such obvious fiction in favour of description:

There is no Sort of Poetry, if well wrought,  
but gives Delight: And the Pastoral perhaps  
may boast of this in a peculiar manner. For,  
as in Painting, so I believe, in Poetry, the  
Country affords the most entertaining Scenes,  
and most delightful Prospects.

However, this description, although of the present, is not realistic. Part of the condition of the poem being 'well wrought' seems to stem from the selection or extrapolation of elements like enough to engage the attention yet selective enough to provide pleasure and delight super-added to the sordid reality it keeps at bay. Given this covert duplicity, it seems ironic that Philips can promote the 'Innocency' of the pastoral subject, where shepherds imitate the artless strains of birdsong on account of its lack of 'Passion and Violence' and discover therein a

'natural Easiness' that aids 'Contemplation'.<sup>1</sup> Nothing could separate Philips from Pope more than this. Philips's Shepherds should pipe like birds; Pope's like Poets.

This aspiration to song is a literal reading of the piping of shepherds. In Pope, it implies an artifice enhanced by a reading that notices its Art and literary qualities. Later in his career, Philips was to extend these interests in oral literature in more obvious directions. His three-volume edition of old ballads (1723, 1725, 1738) contained many examples of the "simplicity" that Addison found admirable in the form, including Chevy-Chase and The Children in the Wood.<sup>2</sup> Some of the claims for the respectability of ballads seem like deliberate provocation to those who had a more normal faith in Aristotelian norms of coherence. For example, Homer is found to be little more than

a blind Ballad-singer, who writ Songs of the Siege of Troy, and the Adventures of Ulysses; and playing the Tunes upon his Harp, sung from Door to Door, till at his Death somebody thought fit to collect all his Ballads, and by a little connecting 'em, gave us the Iliad and Odysses.

[pp.iii-iv]

This innocence of composition is free of presumably more corrupt modes involving writing and its textual fictions.

1. Poems, p.3.

2. A Collection of Old Ballads - with an introduction and notes. Collected anonymously by Philips. For evidence of Philips's involvement, see Lillian de la Torre Bueno, "Was Ambrose Philips a Ballad Editor?", Anglia, 59 (1935), 252-70. Chevy-Chase (pp.17-21) and The Children in the Wood (pp.42-47) are both in the 1723 volume.

Consequently, Philips prescribes the use of such ballads to interest children particularly. This concern had however shown itself much earlier, for in 1709 Philips's translation of Pétis de la Croix's Contes Persanes (Persian Tales) appeared, full of the unlikely incidents and exotic backdrop that could safely be said to characterize the Orient in contemporary imaginations.<sup>1</sup> Pope received a letter from Atterbury in 1720 who confessed he disliked them because they were 'writ with so Romantick an Air, and allowing for the Difference of Eastern manners ... of so wild and absurd a Contrivance ...'<sup>2</sup> Martinus Scriblerus is schooled in the 'Oriental Languages'. So apt is he for this study of the 'Eastern way of writing' that he composes in imitation the 'Persian Tales, which have been since translated into several languages, and lately into our own with particular elegance, by Mr. Ambrose Philips.'<sup>3</sup>

The six pastorals that appeared at the head of Tonson's sixth Miscellany were the first to which Philips put his name. They also bear the mark of the patronage of the seventh Earl of Dorset, Lionel Cranfield Sackville, who although only twenty-one at the time, was already a notable patron of literature. Pastoral 1 commences with a short invocation to Dorset's Varus- and Gallus-like presence:

1. A Thousand and One Days: Persian Tales translated from the French by Ambrose Philips is the full title.
2. Correspondence, 2:56.
3. Memoirs, p.108.

If we, O Dorset, quit the City Throng  
 To meditate in Shades the Rural Song  
 By your Commands; be present: And, O, bring  
 The Muse along! The Muse to you shall sing.

[11.1-4]<sup>1</sup>

This is the setting provided for the initial allusion to Spenser:

... A Shepherd Boy, one Ev'ning fair  
 As Western Winds had cool'd the sultry Air,  
 When as his Sheep within their Fold were  
 pent  
 Thus plain'd him of his dreary Discontent; ...

[11.5-8]

The urbane apology of the opening lines has a counterpart in Eclogues 4 and 6, where Virgil hopes that the woodlands would be made worthy of both Pollio's and Varus's regard.<sup>2</sup> The Spenserian content of the allusion is also a little vitiated by the clearly different course that Philips's poem takes from "Januarye", its model. Spenser's Colin Cloute complains of his love for Rosalinde, 'with which strong affliction being very sore traveled, he compareth his careful case to the saddle season of the yeare, to the frostie ground, to the frosen trees, and to his owne winter-beaten flocke.'<sup>3</sup> The oppression of the elements and love's pangs lead him to break his pipe and forswear the 'unlucky Muse, that wontst to ease / My musing mynd, yet canst not, when thou should: ...' (69-70). Disappointment in love is part of a wider continuum in the poem, a lyrical manifestation of the season, its universal inhospitality and its highlighting of the more perennial hardships for both

1. Poems, pp.5-9.

2. See Eclogues 4.1-3, 6.6-12.

3. Poetical Works, p.421. The full text can be found at pp.421-23.

flock and shepherd.<sup>1</sup> This corporeal concern is not dissolved by song and transmuted to an artistic subject. This is apparent from the opening lines to which Philips's own allude:

A Shepeheards boye (no better doe him call)  
 When Winters wastful spight was almost spent,  
 All in a sunneshine day, as did befall,  
 Led forth his flock, that had been long ypent.  
 So faynt they waxe, and feeble in the folde,  
 That now unnethes their feete could them uphold.

[11.1-6]

This pithiness is a result of several associated correspondences. The season of the year corresponds with the season in the life of the shepherd poet, who is shown as unhappy as the season and the landscape in which he appears. The depth of his forlorn condition is indeed realized by the landscape which provides a complete metaphor of his grief: 'Thou barrein ground, whome writers wrath hath wasted, / Art made a myrrhour, to behold my plight ' (19-20). Object and image cast a reciprocal light on each other. Landscape-and-poet become a sign of the unassimilable "reality" that resists the "art". Paradoxically, this impression of "reality" is artfully wrought, for it is also composed of antithesis: firstly, in the fact that the shepherd in his spring of life is likened to winter and secondly, that this January day, a 'sunneshine day' , promises recovery and renewal in opposition to Colin's hopeless position: 'And yet alas, but now my spring begonne, / And yet alas, yt is already donne ' (29-30).

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1. This series of correspondences has been analysed in more detail by Patrick Cullen, Spenser, Marvell and Renaissance Pastoral (Cambridge, Mass., 1970), pp.120 - 48, and Haruhiko Fujii, Time, Landscape and the Ideal Life: Studies in the Pastoral Poetry of Spenser and Milton (Kyoto, 1974), pp.32-41.

The poem's structure provides its concepts.

This interdependence is very much an extension of the series of correspondences made possible by, indeed a reflex of, an allegorical tradition. It is this convention that allows Spenser to imbue the pastoral form with a capacity for generalizations. The Calendar is not the relation of the traditional calendar with its miscellanea for each season but a poetic framework which lends significance to each detail in the individual poems. Consequently, each month is associated with the microcosm of human life - not only in terms of a pathetic fallacy but as a very precondition of its selection and ordering.<sup>1</sup> This is not strictly an allegorical presentation, for there is no precise exegesis. Colin Clout could be Spenser but could also be a Pastoral Poet. The detailed historical allegory of these eclogues has often been the object of study as has the deeper patterns such as number symbolism, but in each case, unlike Petrarch or Mantuan, understanding is not exclusively confined to the allegorical explanation.<sup>2</sup>

This coherence is never Philips's aim; on the other hand, the Pastorals of 1709 achieve a lyrical mood which provides its own unity, and the precise references to Spenser's example are a form of appropriation rather than homage to his practice. Lobbin in Pastoral 1 compares his love for Lucy with Colin's for Rosalind: 'Had Rosalind

1. This framework is noted by Paul E. McLane, Spenser's Shepherdes Calendar: A Study in Elizabethan Allegory (Notre Dame, Ind., 1961), pp.299-323.
2. See McLane, pp.314-23 and Helen Cooper, Pastoral: Medieval into Renaissance (Ipswich, 1977), p.154.

been Mistress of my Mind, / Tho' not so fair, she would have been more kind ' (41-42). Pastoral 2 is a relation of "Februarie" in that Thenot appears in both. There is some point to the allusion, however, in that his role is different in each case. In "Februarie",<sup>1</sup> he is the butt of Cuddie's youthful energy: 'But my flowring youth is foe to frost, / My Shippe unwont in stormes to be tost' (31-32). but in Philips's version<sup>2</sup> he is the wise comforter of Colinet's disappointed ambition, an optimistic counterpart:

Yet, tho' with Years my Body downwards tend,  
As Trees beneath their Fruit in Autumn bend;  
My Mind a cheerful Temper still retains,  
Spite of my snowy Head and icy Veins.

[11.17-20]

Spenser is commemorated alongside Virgil in the preamble of Pastoral 3 which Philips extends into a polite compliment to and parallel with the time of Queen Anne. Spenser becomes a lyricist for the occasion 'when amid the rural Throng' (4), and one who is remembered only on the strength of his praise of Elizabeth in "Aprill"<sup>3</sup> where he

made ev'ry sounding Wood  
With good Eliza's Name to ring around;  
Eliza's name on ev'ry Tree was found.

[11.6-8]

Philips takes upon himself such an obligation in his own time, hymning the new rural prosperity enjoyed in Anne's reign, seeing 'our Cattle in full Pastures thrive' (10).

1. Poetical Works, pp.423-27.

2. Poems, pp.10-16.

3. Poetical Works, pp.431-35.

Philips's Pastoral 4 includes Mico's elegy for Stella akin to Colin's lament for Dido in "November"<sup>1</sup> and, although the fifth is in direct imitation of a pastoral of Strada's<sup>2</sup>, Philips cannot forbear praising Cuddy, the 'perfecte paterne of a Poete' in Spenser's "October"<sup>3</sup> and the 'fresh and liefest boye' (192) of "August"<sup>4</sup>, as well as Colin Clout, a latter-day Orpheus:

When Shepherds flourish'd in Eliza's Reign,  
 There liv'd in great Esteem a jolly Swain,  
 Young Colin Clout; who well could pipe and  
 sing,  
 And by his Notes invite the lagging Spring.  
 [11.19-22]

Hobbinol, the pupil of Colin Clout in "April" and interlocutor of Diggon Davie in "September", is given fresh life in Pastoral 6 where the reign of Elizabeth is found to be 'Albion's Golden Days' (38)<sup>5</sup>. Nonetheless, under Dorset's patronage of the 'Country Muse' and 'While ANNA reigns' there is the prospect of bringing 'on Earth a Golden Age again' (42-45). This Modern optimism appropriates the non-Classical precedent of Spenser's Doric style and aims to re-fashion its nationalistic attractions, in the hope that the Elizabethan Golden Age might resemble the England of Queen Anne just as Spenser's pastorals might find an apt successor in Ambrose Philips's. This equation might suppose that the Pastorals of 1709 were

1. Poems, pp.17-21.
2. Poems, pp.22-27. It is based on Strada's Pastoral 6 in Famiani Stradae Romani Proclusiones Academicae, 3 vols. (Oxford, 1621), 2:240.
3. "Argument", Poetical Works, p.456
4. Poetical Works, pp.448-51.
5. Poems, pp.32-36.

paying defiant homage to those of 1579. In practice, however, this praise of a Modern Golden Age when 'Shepherds flourish'd' is heavily qualified by the pious hope that the present itself is golden not only because of Dorset's patronage and Anne's rule but because of its own pastoral Spenserian "voice".

This is clearly the case from several of the references to Colin Clout. In each example he is not just a veiled Edmund Spenser, but a synecdoche for an innocence and simplicity thought to be a possession of a by-gone age. However praiseworthy this may have been and however reliable it could be as a model for pastoral poetry, the present caps it. When Menalcas's skill is elegiacally praised by Moeris and Lycidas in Eclogue 9 (7-10,55) and Colin Clout's by Hobbinoll and Thēnot in "April" (21-28), the loss of such skill is keenly felt. In Philips's equivalent homage to the past, the present is praised all the more. When Menalcas is mentioned, in Pastoral 2, it is not as one who has left his memory but not his talent behind. Menalcas is very much alive. Thēnot is pleased that

Menalcas, Lord of all the neighbouring Plains,  
Preserves the Sheep, and o'er the Shepherds  
reigns.  
For him our yearly Wakes and Feasts we hold,  
And chuse the fattest Firstling from the Fold.  
He, good to all, that good deserve, shall give  
Thy Flock to feed, and thee at Ease to live; ...

[11.112-17]

It is his place to act rather as a patron not a poetic example to haunt the lesser talents of the present, to 'curb the Malice of unbridled Tongues, / And with due Praise reward [their] rural Songs ' (118-19). The reference to Menalcas in Eclogue 9 is elegiac; in Pastoral 2

it confirms Modern pretensions. Cuddy's tale of Colin Clout's competition with the Nightingale in Pastoral 5 is an opportunity both to demonstrate the melodiousness of the Doric 'rural Fife' (48) and the "natural" qualities of its "art". Colin's triumph is recounted by Cuddy and it is this contemporary fame that concludes the poem: 'Thus ended Cuddy with the setting Sun, / And by his Tale unenvy'd Praises won ' (117-18). Colin's tender grief is not Spenserian anyway. It is neither the Colin Clout of "Januarye" who felt 'rage as winters' reign in his heart and his 'life bloud' freeze 'with unkindly cold ...' (25-26) nor the indignant Colin of "June" who 'wote my rymes bene rough, and rudely drest: / The fyttter they, my carefull case to frame: ...' (77-78). Most obviously it is not the Colin Clout of Colin Clouts Come Home Againe (1595) whose taste of English courtly life is a bitter one:

Where each one seeks with malice and with  
 strife,  
 To thrust downe other into foule disgrace,  
 Himself to raise ...

[11.690-92]<sup>1</sup>

Compared to this power, Philips's Spenserian references bring to mind a quiescent lyricism constructed out of nostalgic nationalistic ideologies. Absent are the allusions to the 'Morall' eclogues which, as "E.K." holds, are those 'mixed with some Satyricall bitternesse' (p.419). This reading of Spenser's pastorals emphasizes his lyrical "voice" and also posits a new Renaissance in the England

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1. Poetical Works, pp.535-45.

of Queen Anne. This excludes the harshness of contemporary satire in favour of an optimistic advertisement for the present. An example of this is clearly seen in the singing-contest between Hobbinol and Lanquet in Pastoral 6. Hobbinol as 'eldest' begins the competition and Lanquet's 'Under-Song by Turns' responds (7-8). In several ways, the poem resembles a series of amoebaen contests. Geron, as judge, sets a scene similar to the calm sea-shore of Eclogue 9 and offers a prize of 'A boxen Haut-boy .../... with brazen Ringlets bound' (111-12 ) that is reminiscent of the crook with even knots and ring of bronze that Mopsus presents to Menalcas at the end of Eclogue 5 (90). Virgil's prize is part of a ritual exchange of gifts wherein Menalcas also gives Mopsus his frail reed. Philips's allusion goes no deeper than a display of acceptable pastoral gestures. The rustic Haut-boy offers no obvious symbolism but casts an air of British folkishness. Its decorative function is apparent from Geron's adjudication which ends the 'pleasing Strife ' (109). Two of such prizes are suddenly produced and given to both competitors, which lends emphasis to Hobbinol's earlier claim that both he and Lanquet sing for 'Praise' not gain (11). Indeed, Geron shows becoming pride in his prize: '... No small Reward, / If with our usual Country Pipes compar'd,' (19-20) which stands in stark contrast to the exchange of Eclogue 5 where the fragili ... cicuta is as acceptable a stake as the grander notes betokened by the curiously-wrought crook.

The Modern appropriation of Spenser is an acknowledged strategy of Philips's. The various themes expressed by

Hobbinol are answered by Lanquet in an increasing series of modifications of the original desire or statement. Therefore, whilst Hobbinol can take his inspiration from 'Albion's Golden Days': 'Then gentle Sidney liv'd, the Shepherds Friend: / Eternal Blessings on his Shade attend!' (39-40), this is only one half of a melodic unit that shifts the emphasis onto the prosperity of the present:

LAN: Thrice happy Shepherds now: For Dorset  
 loves  
 The Country Muse, and our delightful  
 groves;  
 While ANNA reigns. O ever may she reign!  
 And bring on Earth a Golden Age again.

[11.41-44]

A similar attempt to use the admiration for an Elizabethan Golden Age (not that evoked by Eclogue 4) only to cap it is obvious from the concluding and climactic songs of the contest. Hobbinol professes his knowledge of 'The Force of healing Herbs, and where they grow ...' (94) in terms reminiscent of Simaetha of Idyll 2 and Alpheisiboeus of Eclogue 8<sup>1</sup>. Lanquet responds with a confidence in his command over specifically native superstitions and spirits quite foreign to the classical pastoral:

What profits me, that I in Charms have Skill,  
 And Ghosts and Goblins order as I will;  
 Yet have, with all my Charms, no Pow'r to lay  
 The Sprite, that breaks my Quiet Night  
 and Day.

[11.97-100]

This as yet faint contrast between classical and Modern pastoral models grows in intensity during the next part-

1. See especially Idyll 2:32-40 and Eclogue 8:64-67, 95-99.

song. Hobbinol wishes for Colin's 'Skill in Rhymes: / To purchase Credit with succeeding Times!' (101-2) whereas Lanquet desires the Voice of 'Wrenock' which has power 'To free the clisping Moon at Midnight Hour' and summon Fairies and their Queen to trip 'o'er the Green' (105-8). The exact identity of this 'Wrenock' is not obvious from the text but its significance is best suggested by the emendation Philips introduces here for the 1748 edition of his work where 'Merlin' is allowed the same power. Once again a native traditional alternative is offered to even the Spenserian precedent and the more orthodox classical works are ignored. The strength of the allusions to The Shepheardes Calendar is therefore never completely to witness Spenser's continuing influence. They are frequently sufficient only to paint an Anglo-Saxon landscape and to establish Philips's pastoral heritage. Substituting for some of the satire and Doric roughness, however, is little of the melancholy of Spenser's 'sweetness'. This tenderness appears more in the purling delicacy of Philips's rhythms where plosive or dental consonants are few and far between. This enervated diction is claimed as a distinct advantage by Purney in 1717, and, considering some of the more robust styles that Philips could deploy, vide his "Winter-Piece", the selection of such delicately chaste sentiments is no limitation imposed by innate weakness but a conscious effect. Purney's comments on Philips appear most directly in his chapter on Pastoral language (Part IV, Chapter 1) (pp.59-63). In the preceding paragraphs, Purney chooses Philips to demonstrate the possibility of progress in poetry. If the budding poet

will trust to his own 'Genius', then it is to be hoped that Pastoral will, one Day, arrive at it's utmost perfection, which if Writers pretend to go no further than the first who undertook it (I mean THEOCRITUS) it never can do ' (p.58). This is presumably Lanquet's perspective.

This progress is one where successive generations of pastoral poets have striven to attain a specifically pastoral music free of epic or "low" satirical imports. In this 'weakening and enervating' of the 'Dialect' both Spenser and Philips have sacrificed strength for 'a Tenderness and Simplicity of Expression' which 'must supply its Place, or else 'tis only bald and low, instead of Soft and Sweet.' This emphasis leads Purney to advance the claim that Spenser's language 'is what supports his Pastorals' in that he has not taken 'above one Sentiment in fifteen but is either false, or taken from the Antients ...' This revealing association of language with 'Sentiment' and falsity with 'Antient' modes places a great premium on originality and a directness of relation between the speaking voice, probability (English folklore), and an unadorned vocabulary. Spenser's 'promiscuous' use of archaisms tended to obscure a smooth and agreeable vein that he shared with Philips. Purney finds Philips's diction far more acceptable: 'They are used where our common Words were infinitely more Soft and Musical ...' (pp.61-62). This "commonness" of vocabulary is as conventional in effect as Spenser's but it stands as distinct from the specifically literary accents of the classical pastoral and as similar to what was acceptable as realistic. The illusion, so the theory ran, lay in the lacunae of the

text, its "absences". One of the clearest unmimetic facets of the tender pastoral was its absence of this lower stratum of despair or melancholy that lent much-needed shade to what was otherwise garish colouring. This "simplicity" has precedents, in Purney's view, in Creech's Theocritus as well as Spenser, and the examples quoted frequently exhibit little or no poetic diction but are manifestly poetic or, to be more accurate, melodious purely from metre and sound. To Purney, the true content of the correct pastoral was a form.

In order for this to have the desired effect on the reader, the metre and sentiments must not produce a disturbing complexity of description or characterization, a passion or syntax that would project a shepherd, textual or otherwise, as if he were distinct from the urban nostalgia that motivates much pastoral poetry. If he is as conducive to illusion as the other substantiating circumstances such as his flock or the sunset that brings a "natural" close to most of the pastorals, then he is not so much a figure in the landscape as a figure of the landscape: an unproblematic locus for simplified emotions and absurd sensitivity. Within the conventions of the Modern pastoral, however, this "natural" lack of polished and strategic artifice is the true and exclusive pastoral "voice". Purney has the courage of his convictions by insisting on this enervation of style. He is also consistent enough to recognize that this demands 'thoughts' that run the risk of ridicule to more prosaic spirits: 'Again, if a Writer has a Genius for Pastoral he will have some Thoughts occur so inimitably Simple, that they would appear ridiculous in the Common Language; and 'tis necessary that the Language'

should answer to the Thought. These are the finest Thoughts of all for Pastoral ' (p.63). It is with the positive addition of 'Simplicity and Softness' to the reduced state of the style after the courtly and Epic gestures have been omitted that Purney's interest grows for otherwise the rural scene would be realistically stupid and dull. "Simplicity" is therefore a rhetorical not a naturalistic quantity.

The prominence of these Modern apologies for pastoral poetry is really guaranteed by the ease with which they can accommodate the lyrical end of the spectrum. Philips fits Purney's pastoral "voice" in his concern for the undramatic and soothing cadences of ballad metres. However, unlike many ballads, the prospect of eventual tragedy is never seriously entertained. It is really only in Pastoral 2 that the darker side of rural existence is allowed a hearing, where references to thwarted desires are not deflected from serious consideration by the decorously appropriate gesture. This has even been recently described by one Pope critic as realistic.<sup>1</sup> Thenot comes across Colinet in tears and attempts to sustain him with wholesome advice. Colinet had ventured 'To drive my pining Flock athwart the Plain / To distant Cam ' (82-83), and had fallen prey to slander and ill-nature, yet through the notice of 'Menalcas', possibly Dorset, 'Nor Night, nor Day, shall my rude Musick cease; ...' (110). Thenot concludes the poem by offering the grateful yet chastened Colinet a night's shelter and some food.

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1. G.S. Fraser, Alexander Pope (London, 1978), pp.31-32.

The model for the poem is Virgil's Eclogue 1, where the fortunate Tityrus is sharply contrasted with the dispossessed Meliboeus. The similarities are obvious enough to be clear allusions. Tityrus has occasion to praise the iuvenis whose intervention has secured his land just as Colinet has cause to thank Menalcas for securing him the opportunity to practise his art. There are oaks struck from heaven in both poems. Tityrus's Rome becomes Colinet's Cambridge. Lastly, Philips attempts to capture the conciliatory tone of Tityrus's magnanimous gesture in Thenot's offer. Nevertheless, there are clear dissimilarities which are only to be expected when allegory gives place to lyric. Philips depoliticizes his model and, by the way, softens the dramatic chiaroscuro between the smug Tityrus and the self-pitying Meliboeus. At the poem's conclusion both Philips's shepherds will unquestioningly perpetuate a rural oasis full of vicarious freedom from care for the reader. Virgil's poem leaves only a tenuous and transitory peace, for Meliboeus is due to leave his homeland for the less than ideal exile that a Roman political decision has visited on him. There is still a sufficient portion of the Virgilian encounter left to provide a pleasingly melancholic (yet still melancholic) tinge to the poem.

The tenderness stems from two major areas. Firstly there is the habitual likening of human to sub-human figures or natural appearances, Thenot describes Colinet's demeanour as 'cloudy' (1), about to melt in tears and Colinet thinks of these as increasing the 'falling Dew' (12). Thenot's bent, aged body is likened to Trees 'beneath their Fruit in Autumn' (18); he possesses a 'snowy Head and icy

Veins' (20). Secondly, at moments of greatest stress, there is a simple repetition of key words:

Ah me the while! Ah me the luckless Day!  
 Ah luckless lad! the rather might I say.  
 Unhappy Hour! when first, in youthful Bud,  
 I left the fair Sabrina's Silver Flood:  
 Ah silly I! more silly than my Sheep,  
 Which on thy flow'ry Banks I once did keep.

[11.57-62]

The proliferation of regularly stressed monosyllables has a predictability that takes the threat out of the complaint. This is a common tactic of Philips's but it is not totally representative of the canon. In Pastoral 2 Philips reinforces a common sense perspective alongside the defencelessly pathetic. Thenot is apt to introduce specific examples or rural misfortune to counterpoint Colinet's more consistently emotive delivery:

Sure thou in some ill-chosen Hour was born,  
 When blighting Mil-dews spoil the rising  
 corn ...  
 Nor Wolf, nor Fox, nor Rot amongst our Sheep;  
 From these the Shepherd's Care his Flock may  
 keep: ...

[11.47-48, 53-54]

He is also apt to indulge in sub-Hesiodic home-spun wisdom:

Against ill Luck all cunning Foresight fails;  
 Whether we sleep or wake, it naught avails ...  
 A rolling Stone is ever bare of Moss;  
 And, to their Cost, green Years old  
 Proverbs cross ...

[11.55-56, 79-80]

This characterizes Thenot and highlights the more expansive symptoms of Colinet's regret, especially in his tale of the visit to 'distant Cam'. The memory of Menalcas's steadfast protection to 'curb the Malice of unbridled Tongues ...', however, occurs early enough in the poem to

dispel the clouds of past adventuring. It is also an example by which both singers are united, so that the complaint of Colinet and the kindly sagacity of Thénot blend into a hymn to Menalcas. The better to emphasise this soothing reconciliation Philips includes an extra speech of Colinet's in the 1709 version which repeats once again, quite superfluously, Menalcas's praises (120-24). This functions as a rather premature slackening of the tension that had gripped Tityrus's last speech in Eclogue 1. Philips's version illustrates the Modern pastoral at its most Virgilian:

This Night thy Cares with me forget; and fold  
 Thy Flock with mine, to ward th'injurious Cold.  
 Sweet Milk and clouted Cream, soft Cheese and  
 Curd,  
 With some remaining Fruit of last Year's Hoard,  
 Shall be our Ev'ning Fare: And for the Night,  
 Sweet Herbs and Moss, that gentle Sleep invite.  
 And now behold the Sun's departing Ray  
 O'er yonder Hill, the Sign of ebbing Day.  
 With Songs the jovial Hinds return from Plow,  
 And unyoak'd Heifers, pacing homeward, low.

[11.124-33]

This 'folding' of both shepherds and their flocks against the 'injurious Cold' of ill fortune is, in small, the experience of the whole poem. The sensory delight offered by the healthy dairy produce of lines 126 and 127 is rustic and yet 'Sweet' and 'soft'. The night is inviting too, leading both shepherds to 'gentle Sleep'. Therefore, the sunset bodes no evil for it allows songs for those released from work. Similarly, the heifers are in an 'unyoaked' condition and, at their leisure, join with human song as they pace towards their homes. Tityrus's epilogue, as translated by Dryden, might lie behind these lines but Philips has transformed their full context:

This Night, at least, with me forget your  
 Care;  
 Chestnuts and Curds and Cream shall be  
 your fare:  
 The Carpet-ground shall be with Leaves  
 o'respread;  
 And Boughs shall weave a Covering for your  
 Head.  
 For see you sunny Hill the Shade extends;  
 And curling Smoke from Cottages ascends.  
 [11.113-18]<sup>1</sup>

These lines are even cosier than Virgil's own which do not include the sheltering foliage thoughtfully provided by Nature and are certainly less positive in the offer of hospitality. Philips's lines demonstrate some of the strength of the "tender" pastoral, but also some of its weakness in avoiding or expelling the non-rhapsodic and threatening.

This removal of threat is a factor that accompanies the 'enervated' style. Lobbin gains eleventh-hour relief from a Nightingale's song 'Pleas'd with so sweet a Partner in his Grief' (98) and is thus invited to sleep. Palin and Angelot do not compete in song for Philips indicates as early as line 17 that they have been 'In Friendship's mutual Bonds united long,'. Pastoral 3 obeys the principle of its model: Eclogue 5, and dispels the mournful notes at Albino's death by dwelling on the rustic festivities that his death will occasion. Colinet's grief at Stella's death is heard at second-hand in Pastoral 4. Mico's 'Soft Numbers' lead Argol to exclaim: 'O, Colinet, how sweet thy Grief to hear! / How does thy Verse subdue the list'ning Ear! (105-6) . In Pastoral 5 Cuddy tells

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1. Poems, 2:877.

of Colin's 'loud' grief over the death of a nightingale, and Pastoral 6 concludes with the offer of a prize to both Hobbinol and Lanquet. In none of the poems is there any attempt, above the token gesture, to provide a metaphorical framework for the poetry. In its place there is a lyrical coherence of form composed of melodic cadences which do not require conceptual significance.

Such lyricism, however, is no isolated example. Philips's novelty lies in its degree of "tenderness" not its technical innovation. With the disappearance of the polemical or autobiographical pastoral, some of the most valued characteristics of the pastoral form fell into disuse, namely the power of the eclogue to represent rural conditions antipathetic to shepherd culture and the facility to comment on the historical forces that threaten to limit human desire and its Arcadias. Bereft of the power to qualify and question the terms of its illusionistic Golden Age or beautified Kent, the Pastoral, Ancient or Modern, is a form of lyric. M.K. Bragg judges the state of the genre most succinctly:

... for, based as it is upon literary convention rather than objective truth to Nature, it is particularly open to influence, and indeed in the early eighteenth century is scarcely more than a group of rather artificial devices associated under a single term and sanctioned by tradition.<sup>1</sup>

Indeed, it is very frequently only through a "sentimental" association of these 'artificial devices' that

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1. The Formal Eclogue in Eighteenth-Century England, (Orono, Maine, 1926), p. 22.

coherence of an Aristotelian order can be found. What is implicit in this pastoral debate is a host of interlaced Ancient or Modern assumptions about literature, especially in the case of the value, or otherwise, of literary imitation, and the continuity of a particular brand of "literariness". "Imitation" in Ancient rhetoric meant a demonstration of an education in the normative forms and styles of literary "good taste" by deliberately alluding to them in the creation of a new work. In the Poetics Aristotle had defined poetry as an imitation, or mimesis, whereby an observed type of human action is re-presented in a new "medium" or material - that of words.<sup>1</sup> What Abrams, in The Mirror And The Lamp, maps out is the location of that "natural" yardstick in the poet's feelings not in his display of craft.<sup>2</sup> The lyric modes proscribe extended narratives and curtail the multi-lateral "voices" on which the classical pastoral had thrived. The better to represent a state of mind or a process of thought and feeling, the lyrical pastoral must concentrate the reader's mind on the poem as an experience of shared emotion between the protagonists in the work or, preferably, between a single "voice" musing in solitude and the reader's empathy. In this both Pope and Philips seem similar. The crucial difference is in the degree of lyrical autonomy the pastoral should enjoy, and its potential to universalize. The period grew increasingly to accept the sentiments of Bragg's

1. Poetics, I.6-9.

2. See especially pp.21-26, 103-14.

pessimistic pronouncement. There is a clear difference between the occasional pastoral lyric and the clearly defined pastoral programme of a set of such poems. The former can use pastoral trappings for lyrical ends whereas the latter is more committed to modifying, or testifying to, the extant pastoral models. One is truly a lyric and the other more exclusively a pastoral poem, yet the ease with which such divisions became normal in the period bears witness to the decline in the epic "voice" or the mimetic motive in pastoral poetry.

#### The Ancient Objection to Philips's Pastorals

Philips's "Whiggism" may perhaps be a contribution to political discourse but it never appears as such in his creative work. The Pastorals exude an optimistic nationalism which demonstrates a consciously deployed transparency of sentiment and style. They often aspire to song and forsake some of the narratorial objectivity that tends to a reader's detachment. In Pope's first pejorative remarks on them, in Guardian 40 (April 27, 1713), it is the criterion of a "correct" style that is most active. Philips had felt his bucolic "correctness" established by impeccable examples: Theocritus, Virgil and Spenser, even if his practice had made use of the Elizabethan as opposed to the classical Golden Age. In the Spring of 1713, Tickell had placed him alongside Spenser in Guardian 30 in providing a pastoral norm and, even more extravagantly in issue 32, as an heir to Theocritus and Virgil. Pope's Guardian essay is an attempt to counteract such misplaced admiration.

The epigraph promises a piece of personal polemic. It is taken from the opening and closing lines of Eclogue 7 together with Dryden's translation:

Compuerantque greges Corydon et Thyrsis  
           in unum. (2)  
 Ex illo Corydon, Corydon est tempore nobis. (70)

("Their sheep and goats together graz'd the  
       plains -  
 Since when? 'tis Corydon among the Swains,<sup>1</sup>  
 Young Corydon without a rival reigns.")

The two shepherd-poets, although appearing together in Tonson's Miscellany, had had disproportionate fortunes. The paper, pretending to pass judgement on the as yet largely ignored Pastorals of Pope, in effect takes Philips's work under review. By ironically instituting it as the correct touchstone of pastoral "simplicity", Pope manages both to ridicule it and also distance his own work from its style.

The first paragraph begins in a disarmingly calm manner, promising that there will be observations on Pope's work 'written in the free spirit of criticism and without apprehension of offending that gentleman, 'whose character it is that he takes the greatest care of his works before they are published ...' This would seem to commend to the reader's notice constant correction, as opposed to spontaneous creation. The next paragraph rehearses the argument that none of the classical pastorals seems to fit a norm that could easily represent the genre. Only two eclogues of Virgil and less than eleven of Theocritus's Idylls are left if Tickell's earlier formula is rigidly

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1. Ault, p.97.

upheld, namely that the idea of the pastoral 'should be taken from the manners of the Golden Age and the moral formed upon the representation of innocence.' Here there is an early crossroads, for a 'moral' of innocence is near to a contradiction in terms. Pope is convicted along with Virgil by the "simplicity" that both Theocritus and Spenser display:

As Simplicity is the distinguishing Character-  
istick 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 ...

Mr Pope hath fallen into the same Error with  
Virgil. His Clowns do not converse in all the  
Simplicity proper to the Country ...

[p.98]

Indeed, "Tickell" taxes Pope with impropriety by introducing Daphnis, Alexis and Thyrsis onto British plains 'whereas Philips, who hath the strictest Regard to Propriety, makes a choice of Names peculiar to the Country, and more agreeable to a Reader of Delicacy; such as Hobbinol, Lobbin, Cuddy, and Colin Clout ' (p.99). Pope is here engineering the debate in the hope that the indelicacy of such native rustic names will be obvious, even if more decorous, more "realistic". Implicit in this opening is Pope's distrust of the "true" pastoral voice that Philips claimed to be imitating. The 'Simplicity proper to the Country' is not the literary "simplicity" that is the 'Error' of both Pope and Virgil.

As an answer not only to Tickell but also Philips, it is necessary that the "innocent" pastoral style and its apologists be exposed as clumsy and unskilled. Tickell's "simplicity" included no reference to the Golden Age. He

needed no such myth, for 'Before mankind was formed into large societies, or cities were built, and commerce established, the wealth of the world consisted chiefly in flocks and herds. The tending of these, we find to have been the employment of the first princes, whose subjects were sheep and oxen ...' (1:89). This rural dominion is a token acknowledgement of primeval nobility, for the exemplary status of such shepherds is a by-product of the need to provide pleasing images, the transport that fills the reader by the 'kind of Fairy-land, where our ears are soothed with the melody of birds, bleating flocks, and purling streams ... It is a dream, it is a vision, which we wish may be real, and we believe that it is true ' (1:88). This is a Golden Age of the present and does not need a noble but rather a melodious shepherd. Tickell's "simplicity" is built on a reader's vicarious experience of a freedom from care or competition created by urban or courtly stress. This "simplicity" is not learnt but innate: 'This is the reason why we are so much charmed with the pretty prattle of children, and even the expressions of pleasure or uneasiness in some part of the brute creation. They are without artifice or malice ...' (1:91). This rosy vision is only possible if some disagreeable aspects are disguised or censored. "Shepherds" are of minimal significance as herders of sheep, but as contributors to pleasing delusion they are invaluable.

Pope's targets are all embodied in the stylistic principle of "simplicity" as defined by Philips and Tickell. He observes how indebted Philips's Pastoral 3 is to Virgil's Eclogue 5, and 'how judiciously' he has 'reduced Virgil's

Thoughts to the Standard of Pastoral ' (p.99). Philips also betrays a lack of knowledge about English landscape as he is taxed with having introduced wolves into England in Pastoral 1 where none still existed and 'by a Poetical Creation' culled roses, lilies and daffodils to form the same flower-bed irrespective of the varied season in which each grows (p.100). This lack of learning renders the writing unpoetic. The compassion that is intended as the correct response to the alternate song of Hobbinoll and Lanquet in Pastoral 6 is a "simplicity" that it is not poetry's province to indulge. Pope compares lines 93 to 100 of that poem with lines 77 to 84 of his own "Spring". Although he concedes that the thought might be the same, his own expression is not only better in degree than Philips's but in deviating 'into downright poetry', it is of a different quality altogether. This perspective is a consistent factor throughout. When quoting Colinet's 'dirge' of Pastoral 2 (57-58,61-62), Pope damns it on several counts: 'How he still Charms the Ear with these artful Repetitions of the Epithets; and how significant is the last Verse! I defy the most common Reader to repeat them, without feeling some Motions of Compassion ' (p.103). The empty delight of verbal music, the lack of art in repetition without variation and its appeal to the 'most common' faculty of a reader are all contrived effects on Philips's part and also causes of Pope's distaste. This theme is most strongly enunciated in the 'Pastoral Ballad' which 'for its Nature and Simplicity may ... be allowed a Perfect Pastoral.' Using a 'Somersetshire Dialect' and names 'proper to the Country People', Pope stresses his earlier objections to

the "naturalistic" pastoral, which, as Pope acknowledges pace Addison, can dispense with the beauties of nymphs or naiads (p.104). It may be that Pope's whole opinion of pastoral work was at best equivocal. He studiously avoids mention of Theocritus as a model for his own work, perhaps remembering Tickell's relish for his soul 'more softly and tenderly inclined to [the Doric] than Virgil, whose genius led him naturally to sublimity ...' (l:112). On the contrary, Pope dissociates himself from such "tenderness":

After all that hath been said, I hope none can think it any Injustice to Mr. Pope, that I forbore to mention him as a Pastoral Writer; since upon the whole, he is of the same Class with Moschus and Bion ...; and of whose Eclogues, as well as some of Virgil's it may be said, that according to the Description we have given of this sort of Poetry, they are by no means Pastorals, but something Better.

[p.106]

This 'something Better' is Virgilian in spirit and classical in temper, notwithstanding Theocritus's example. As such the more it demonstrates a continuity, albeit modified according to the dictates of contemporary life, with a set of inherited "literary" values, the more it demonstrates that it is "poetic". In demonstrating a liberty from such traditions, Philips's Pastorals had forfeited the right to be taken seriously.

Philips, indeed, had become a symbol for Pope of philistine populism. He emerges consistently as a synecdoche for the current malaise in writing. Certainly, the high summer of Scriblerian activity in 1714 saw Philips proposed several times as a vulnerable hack. Coinciding with Gay's The Shepherd's Week, published April 15, Lord Oxford's acceptance on the 10th of an invitation to a Scriblerian

meeting provides evidence of a rapid distaste for his style:

filld with  
 You merry five who full of Blisful nectar  
 Can Philips sing as Homer Chanted Hector  
 I wil attend to hear your tuneful Lays  
 And wish your merits meet with one who pays -<sup>1</sup>

Not only is Philips's bathos highlighted by the comparison with Homer's fire, but there is also a veiled reference to the grievance nursed by Pope that, in his stewardship of the Hanover Club, Philips had withheld Iliad subscriptions from him in favour of the rival translation of the first book by Tickell.<sup>2</sup> By December 1725, Philips had become a symbol for childish insignificance. Pope and Bolingbroke, in writing to Swift on the 14th, mention Gay's work on some 'Tales for Prince William', namely his first series of Fables (1727) and continue: 'I suppose Philips will take this very ill, for two reasons; one, that he thinks all childish things belong to him; and the other, because he's take it ill to be taught, that one may write things to a Child, without being childish.'<sup>3</sup> Running parallel to this contempt for childish verses was an opposition to Philips's Whiggism. Pope confesses as much to Caryll on June 8, 1714, defending himself against a slander of Philips's that he 'was entered into a Cabal with Dean Swift and others to write against the Whig-Interest, and in particular to undermine his own reputation, and that of his friends Steel and Addison '<sup>4</sup>. However, the retention of subscription-

1. Memoirs, p.354.

2. For a fuller account see Sherburn, pp.115-21.

3. Correspondence (Swift), 3:120-21.

4. Correspondence (Pope), 1:229.

money and its Whig source proves a sore point and Pope concludes that it was 'to this management of Philips, that the world owes Mr. Gay's Pastorals.' Pope was to return to Philips's example in the early stages of the writing of the Dunciad. In October, 1725, Pope writes to Swift about 'the conclusion of one of my Satires, where, having endeavoured to correct the taste of the town in wit and criticism, I end thus:

But what avails to lay down rules for sense?  
In George's reign these fruitless lines were  
writ,  
When Ambrose Philips was preferred for wit!'<sup>1</sup>

These lines were not wasted for they find their way into the third book (322) of the Variorum edition (1729) where he is known as 'Namby Pamby'. Pope's note to the line is more revealing. He identifies Ambrose Philips as 'Namby Pamby' on account of his 'Infantine stile' and derides him for his 'constant cry' that 'Mr. P. was an Enemy to the government; and in particular he was the avowed author of a report very industriously spread, that he had a hand in a Party-paper call'd the Examiner'.<sup>2</sup> There is little doubt that political animus lay behind the feud even if it was one-sided. Pope's neutrality was an effective satirical position, one which disguised the frequency with which the Buttonians were pilloried in Pope's later satires. The Whig administration, nurtured by Hanoverian favour, ensured the perpetuation of tastes that could elevate Eusden to the Laureateship. George I becomes 'Th'Augustus born to bring Saturnian times ...' (III.318) in the Variorum where the

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1. Correspondence (Swift), 3:107.

2. TE, 5:188.

reference to 'Namby-Pamby' takes on a resonance that sounds clearer and less strident than it might if seen merely as the effect of personal dislike. If not directly the conclusion to the Variorum, this passage forms part of the pessimistic panorama of the new age of lead that Pope saw as Georgian England:

This, this is He, foretold by ancient rhymes,  
Th'Augustus born to bring Saturnian times:  
Beneath his reign, Shall Eusden wear the bays,  
Cibber preside Lord-Chancellor of Plays,  
B [enson] sole Judge of Architecture sit,  
And Namby Pamby be prefer'd for Wit!

[11.317-22]

Benson counterpoints the 'united labours' of Inigo Jones and Burlington in architectural matters, whereas Eusden, Cibber and Philips form a Georgian triumvirate to match Gay 'un-pension'd with a hundred friends' (326), Swift: 'Hibernian Politicks ... thy doom' (327), and Pope himself who had just been condemned to three years translation-work. Philips becomes in the Variorum a symptom of a widespread disease where true artistic talent is unrewarded and, in a frantic inversion, lack of it gains not only popular accolades but courtly preferment too.

Pope did not spare Philips in more specific satires as well. His pastoral style forms the subject of The Three Gentle Shepherds (written c.1713; published (piratically) 1726):

Of gentle Philips will I ever sing,  
With gentle Philips shall the Vallies ring ...  
Oh! may all gentle Bards together place ye,  
Men of good Hearts, and Men of Delicacy. <sup>1</sup>

[11.1-2, 7-8]

Together with Budgell and Carey, Philips's gentleness is

1. TE, 6:112-13.

emotional and delicate but slow and dull. Pope's satire was not necessarily consistent in its attack on the Buttonian schools' "simplicity". In To Eustace Budgell, Esq. On his Translation of the Characters of Theophrastus (1714), each type of character-sketch is provided with a key chosen from Addison's circle.<sup>1</sup> Philips fits the 'Rustic Lout so like a Brute' (25). This is the alternative unacceptable face of Philips's pastoral style. Its tender Doric could be regarded as working against itself. Pope's own Theophrastan imitations included Macer (written c.1715) first published in the Pope-Swift Miscellanies for 1728<sup>2</sup>; a clear reference to Philips. 'Simple Macer, now of high Renown' (1) deals in 'borrow'd' plays and translations and is likened to 'some coarse Country Wench' who is at first 'Thought wond'rous honest, tho' of mean Degree, / And strangely lik'd for her Simplicity' (19-20). However, in time, this Muse becomes used and corrupt. Pope is irritated by Philips's fame but even more by the fact that such fame is bestowed on such lack of artistry.

This point is a Scriblerian one, too. In The Art of Sinking in Poetry (1728), Philips is most quoted in the section on 'The Infantine' which is a state 'when a Poet grows so very simple, as to think and talk like a Child ...' (p.55). Indeed, Philips is mentioned by name in The Memoirs of Martinus Scriblerus (1729), a work originally motivated by a desire to highlight the 'Works of the Unlearned' as Pope proposes in his letter to Spectator 457 (August 14, 1712): 'Several late Productions of my own Country-men, who many of them make a very Eminent Figure

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1. TE, 6:123

2. TE, 6:137-39.

in the Illiterate World, encourage me in this Undertaking.' (4:114). Parnell's The Book-Worm (1721) and Swift's Apollo's Edict make similar comments.<sup>1</sup> His The Distrest Mother met with two notable burlesques in Gay's The What-D'Ye-Call-It (1715) and Fielding's The Covent-Garden Tragedy (1732), each sceptical about the existence of such chaste sentiments as Philips cherishes in the play and by burlesquing his delicacies of style implicitly emphasising its bloodless attitudinizing.

To some extent, Philips courted such divisiveness. The lachrymose insistence on emotional involvement with his subject, especially in his several Epistles, is quite unHoratian. The Lament for Queen Mary (1695)<sup>2</sup> is certainly a 'doleful Elegy': '(If Sobbing will permit thy Verse to flow) ' (23-24). The late Queen is not however transfigured by memory and deified. Furthermore, she is praised for her unregal virtues:

Her Crown She wore with no Affected State;  
 Nor did Her Great Perfections Pride create:  
 She'd condescend, yet lose no Majesty,  
 And be Majestick with Humility;  
 Familiar, yet not Fond; free of Access,  
 But yet not Mean for all her Easiness ...

[11.40-45]

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1. Parnell hunts a virulent devourer of his library: a 'ravenging Beast of Prey,' (2). He picks out an exclusive collection that should be rid of the pest, those 'Bards of antient Time' (12):

Bring Homer, Virgil, Tasso near,  
 To pile a sacred Altar here;  
 Hold, Boy, thy Hand out-run thy Wit,  
 You reach'd the Plays that D[enni]s writ;  
 You reach'd me Ph[ilips']s rustick Strain;  
 Pray take your mortal Bards again. [11.43-48]

(Poems on Several Occasions, (London, 1721), pp.135-36). Swift's poem pillories the 'guides to true Simplicity' (32): Theocritus and Philips.

2. Poems, pp.82-84.

The poem itself demonstrates how 'free of Access' she could have been in poetic terms. In comparing Philips's elegy with Congreve's Mourning Muse of Alexis (1695) the difference emphasises how intimate and Modern Philips is attempting to be.<sup>1</sup> Congreve's pastoral graces the occasion with impersonal conventions. Alexis mourns with Menalcas in attendance and the grief can easily modulate into grander notes that sound louder and more imposing than the single poetic "voice" that Philips uses. Philips needs near-Gothic ornaments to elevate his lyric opening:

See Phoebus now (as once for Phaeton)  
 Has mask'd his Face, and put deep Mourning on;  
 Dark Clouds his sable Chariot do surround,  
 And the dull Steeds Stalk o're the Melancholy Round.  
 [11.66-69]

This is the same strategy of intimate familiarity that is found in "To A Friend who Desired me to Write on the Death of King William" (1702)<sup>2</sup>. There the humble and plain persona pleads sincerity by deliberately avoiding the allusive and imitative conventions that he would have had to have incorporated in the memorial if a formal elegy had been attempted: 'My sighs I to myself in silence keep, / And inwardly, with secret anguish, weep ' (11-12). By keeping the poetic anthem private Philips adopts a casual

1. "The Mourning Muse of Alexis. A Pastoral. Lamenting the Death of our late Gracious Queen Mary of ever Blessed Memory.", Complete Works edited by Montague Summers, 4 vols., (New York, 1964), 4:39-44. Congreve, though invoking both the 'Sicilian Bard, or Mantuan Swain' (20) and 'the British Colin's mourning Muse' (22), really imitates classical pastoral gestures, especially those of Eclogue 9. See especially 11.193-210.
2. Poems, pp.85-86.

approach to the subject, even to the effacement of William altogether. The poem instead adumbrates his personal poetic manifesto of the 'artless Idiot, not a study'd fool' (46). This is a consistent motif. In To Lord Carteret, departing from Dublin (1726)<sup>1</sup>, the departing politician is asked to accept the poem as a token of good will: 'The voice of nature, undebas'd by skill, ...' (46). Even when adopting the Pindaric manner in his Ode To the Right Honourable William Pulteney, Esq., (1723)<sup>2</sup>, Philips digressively interpolates a short apology for the habit of Ode-writing:

What laws shall o'er the Ode preside?  
 In vain would art presume to guide  
     The chariot-wheels of praise,  
 When fancy, driving, ranges free,  
 Fresh flowers selecting like the bee,  
     And regularly strays,  
 While nature does, disdain'g aids of  
     skill,  
 The mind with thought, the ears with  
     numbers, fill.

[ll.41-48]

It was this open refusal to accept the aids of inherited skills that brought down on Philips's head Pope's charges of clumsiness and insipidity in the Variorum.

The sobriquet of Namby-Pamby, however, was earned by a style closer in development from the Pastorals of 1709. In a series of tender Odes written between 1724 and 1727, Philips extended in a logical direction the stylistic requirements of artlessness and sympathetic involvement. In To Miss Charlotte Pulteney, in her Mother's Arms (1724)<sup>3</sup>, the infant becomes the non plus ultra of unpremeditated emotion:

1. Poems, pp.102-3.

2. Poems, pp.120-22.

3. Poems, p.123.

Sleeping, waking, still at ease,  
 Pleasing, without skill to please,  
 Little gossip, blithe and hale,  
 Tatling many a broken tale, ...

[11.5-8]

This 'Simple maiden, void of art, / Babbling out the very heart' (11-12) can be a May-day linnet 'Flitting to each bloomy spray' (22). This transparent simplicity of style and sentiment actually imitates the lisping of the child and surrenders the artifices of "improving" art to describe sincerity and innocence. It is indicative of Philips's opinion of the pastoral form that such charm is best described in terms of the "tender" pastoral. This is the same in To the Honourable Miss Carteret (1725)<sup>1</sup> which praises the immature virginal beauty of the child in terms of Maytime:

By the next-returning Spring,  
 When again the linnets sing,  
 When again the lambkins play,  
 Pretty sportlings full of May,  
 When the meadows next are seen,  
 Sweet enamel! white and green, ...

[11.17-22]

This might have passed for work of the left hand and thus specimens of nursery verse. However, Philips also wrote Odes celebrating less amenable subjects in the same style. To Signora Cuzzoni (1724)<sup>2</sup> addresses the 'Little Siren of the Stage, / Charmer of an idle age, ...' (1-2) and goes on to describe her in terms that given any other context would have been most offensive: 'Empty warbler, breathing lyre, / Wanton gale of fond desire' (3-4). To the Right Honourable Robert Walpole Esq. (1724)<sup>3</sup> is an even less fit-

1. Poems, pp.109-12.

2. Poems, p.107.

3. Poems, pp.124-26.

ting vehicle for tender verses, who despite being  
to publick zeal, / Minister of England's weal,' (1-2) is  
greeted with defiantly private bonhomie:

Have you leisure for a song,  
Tripping lightly o'er the tongue,  
Swift and sweet in every measure,  
Tell me, Walpole, have you leisure? ...  
Something, rather, sing with ease,  
Simply elegant to please.

[11.3-6,9-10]

These Whig families are not addressed by chance. Philips went to Denmark in January, 1708/9 to be Daniel Pulteney, the British Envoy's, secretary. His first cousin, William Pulteney, to whose family some of these poems are addressed was made Secretary-at-War on George I's accession. Lord Carteret was related to the Pulteneys by marriage and was to form a powerful rival to Walpole in the Whig cabinet from 1725 on. Carteret was the new Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, appointed just two months before the first poem to his daughter and his first act on taking the post was to publish a proclamation offering a reward of £300 for the discovery of the writer of the anonymous fourth Drapier's Letter, addressed 'to the whole people of Ireland'. The writer was Swift, and, although both men regained some measure of friendship later, there is little doubt that Carteret, as both Walpole and Pulteney, not only linked Philips's name to the Whig cause, but enlisted the active dislike of Swift.

Although there are pastoral references in these children's verses, it could be claimed that they are not designed to reflect any particular pastoral theory at all. The same metre, however, is found in The Stray Nymph, counted as a pastoral by Philips in his 1748 collection.<sup>1</sup>

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1. Poems, p.77.

The poem with slight differences had appeared in The Free-thinker 17 (December 19, 1718) and there called 'A Pastoral Idyllium', which reinforces the Theocritean associations of brevity and "simplicity".<sup>1</sup> The Stray Nymph shows a striking resemblance to Signora Cuzzoni and the young Miss Pulteney. She has the freshness of spring-buds 'And her breath, Oh 'tis a gale / Passing o'er a fragrant vale,' (13-14). Philips searches for her in shepherd's garb:

Every thicket, every grove,  
Have I ranged, to find my love:  
A kid, a lamb, my flock, I give,  
Tell me only doth she live.

[11.3-6]

To the classical reader, the persona best fits the forlorn goatherd of Idyll 3 or the pathetic Cyclops of Idyll 11, lovers that Theocritus invites the reader to despise for their weakness as well as feel for their distress.

The parodic chorus that greeted these sentimental displays of intimacy with Whig families has been well documented. What added to the political force of these juvenile verses was the fact that Philips, probably with Addison's help, had for a time been tutor to George I's grandchildren in 1714, a post dignified by the title of sub-preceptor. It would have been impossible not to have associated Philips's brand of pastoral "simplicity" with a bourgeois Whig taste, a dereliction of a poet's duty to honour the past and ensure the transmission of its values to the present. M.G. Segar puts the matter in some kind of perspective in his edition of Philips's poetry when he claims that 'The hostility of Swift and Pope ... did not alter the fact that Philips was surely

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1. The Free-thinker, 1:41.

building up for himself the sort of position of security that usually rewards loyal and consistent adherence to a dominant political cause.' (p.xlvii). "Pastoral" Philips had perhaps not produced poems for posterity but for gaining a place, however humble, in the Whig jurisdiction and gaining a popular audience in his own generation, they were successful. In reinforcing and accelerating the drift of the whole pastoral genre from classical models to "modern" lyric forms, they stand as a convenient and influential example.

## CHAPTER 5

The Significance of the Classical Imitation and Pope's Pastorals

In the middle of Tonson's Miscellany, two poems appear in praise of Pope's Pastorals. The more notable is Wycherley's "To my Friend, Mr. POPE, on his Pastorals."<sup>1</sup> So pleased must Pope have been to receive such public praise that the poem survives in his Works (1717). Wycherley's praise highlights an image of Pope as craftsman deploying his reading with such art that it appears Nature. Pope is presented as 'Young, yet Judicious; in your Verse are found/ Art strengthening Nature, Sense improv'd by Sound.' (5-6) a contrast with those Wits 'whose Numbers glide along/ So smooth, no Thought e'er interrupts the Song;' (7-8). This vapid formalism addresses itself 'not to the Head, but to the Ear;' (10) and concludes in being 'most Musically dull' (12). This satiric barb does not strike Philips directly but, in retrospect, seems close enough in spirit to the Pope of Guardian 40 and the Dunciad, especially in the hint of moral condemnation of such word-music: 'As smoothest Speech is most deceitful found,/ The smoothest Numbers oft are empty Sound,..' (15-16). Pope, by comparison, unites both 'Wit and Judgement', and, in terms reminiscent of Pope's own in his Essay on Criticism, this alloy is due to his acknowledgement that contemporary poetry is indelibly marked by a classical tradition:

Your strains are Regularly Bold, and please  
 With unforc'd Care, and unaffected Ease,  
 With proper Thoughts, and lively Images:  
 Such, as by Nature to the Ancients shown,  
 Fancy improves, and Judgement makes your own;  
 For great Men's Fashions to be follow'd are,  
 Altho' disgraceful 'tis their Clothes to wear. [11. 20-26]

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1. Poetical Miscellanies: the Sixth Part (1709), pp. 253-56.

Wycherley's praise defends the Pastorals from those detractors who would find their subject matter "low" and therefore distasteful. He grounds this apology on the fact that the poems are not mimetic in the strictest sense, that is, that they afford a reader knowledge of rural life. Far from being an imitation of Nature, the Pastorals are "natural" imitations of traditional pastoral models. It is only by adopting these 'great Men's Fashions' that a mean is to be found between the polished style where Arcadia speaks the Language of the Mall' (28) and a mode that is fashioned 'More nicely than the Common Swain's' (37). Allusions to the "unchanging" canons of literature were a way, Wycherley explains, of allowing the work to overcome its material and lift its style out of the contingencies and expediencies that specifically form the accents of the beau monde or alter the habits of the 'common swain'. However, this does not prevent Wycherley involving the argument in a certain contradiction, a doubt introduced by the very fact of "new" Pastorals being written at all. It would seem more consistent if the nature discovered in the past were merely translated as Dryden had done in 1697. To attempt new pastoral poetry would involve an assumption that a new age needed its own bucolics to reflect new circumstances, especially as Wycherley claims that '... the true Measure of the Shepherd's Wit / Shou'd, like his garb, be for the Country fit;' (34-35). This parallel between the decorum exacted by 'the Country' and the pastoral style that would best fit it only works if 'the Country' is seen as a literary institution not a reality open to transformation by the vagaries of economic life. In this case it could be seen as unchanging because it was Art, an Art that, in the midst of much change, would still stress continuity and the permanent Platonic Ideas that determine changes. This is why Wycherley seems to be driven to a desperately artificial conclusion: that the "common swain's" 'pure and

unaffected thought' must be artificially elevated above the real vocabulary and style of contemporary shepherds: 'So, with becoming Art, the Players dress, / In Silks, the Shepherd and the Shepherdess;...' (38-39). This conscious concealment serves an institution that does not reflect political or historical development but rescues the past:

Yet still unchang'd the Form and Mode remain,  
Shap'd like the homely Russet of the Swain.  
Your rural Muse appears to justify  
The long-lost Graces of Simplicity;  
So Rural Beauties captivate our Sense  
With Virgin Charms, and Nature's Excellence. [11. 40-45]

This is a careful piece of Ancient writing. Literary forms are frozen in the interests of an individual truth and are likened to an essentially permanent 'homely Russet' which is subject to no tides of taste or fashion. Therefore, Pope's 'rural Muse' must recover the 'long-lost' Graces that cannot now be "natural" and actually exist but can only be created by Art. It is in this sense, this retrospective creation, that the initial sensuous enjoyment of 'Rural Beauties' and their virginal allurements can be preserved. Wycherley closes the poem by anticipating a new Virgil who might 'soon take a higher Flight' (53) and presumably attempt the Epic.

The anonymous contributor of To Mr. Pope. By another Hand (p. 257) that immediately follows Wycherley's advertisement is little different in sentiment. As one of the earliest critical analyses of the poems, it reads as little more than their author's own preface. It rightly identifies the wider implications of the seasonal framework, appreciating the successive ages of Man in 'Spring of Youth', 'ripen'd Man', 'glowing Flame, damp'd with Autumnal Storms..' and the 'lost Hopes, departed love, and endless Tears' of Winter (1-4). Indeed, there are many of Pope's own ideas in the description. The proper pastoral style is where 'the just Thoughts' that are supplied by the 'Sylvan Muse' should 'sink without creeping, without soaring Rise' (7-8). Indeed,

the style should not excite sensually. The original pastoral poet is a latter-day Apollo born to subdue the 'rough Deucalion-Race' of the Countryside and instil the 'Use of Reason' by fixing the Empire there of 'the Poet's Art' (11-12). This dominion is not established by native wit or the light of personal reason for this Apollo-like state is a recall of Ancient example to aid the present:

Such first were Poets, such the Ancient Wit;  
 Thus Maro, and the soft Sicilian writ;  
 Thy early Guides, who tun'd thy Infant Voice,  
 Refin'd thy Numbers first, and fixed thy Choice,  
 With Art like theirs, thy humble Subject's wrought,  
 So smooth the flowing Verse, so tun'd the beauteous Thought.  
[11. 21-26]

With two such introductory poems, it could be argued that Pope needed no "Discourse" to preface his Pastorals.

The "correctness" of such 'Ancient Wit' Pope may have learnt, on the other hand, from influences nearer to his own time. William Walsh had provided the most recent series of self-defined pastorals before 1709 in his Pastoral Eclogues from his collected Letters and Poems, Amorous and Gallant (1692).<sup>1</sup> These were reprinted in the Annual Miscellany for 1694, on their own in 1708 and then in Tonson's Miscellany, the Fourth Part in 1716. Walsh is significant in any review of the pastoral tradition and its transmission from the Restoration to the eighteenth century not only in his popular influence but also in his friendship with Dryden and Pope during the crucial years when Dryden translated Virgil and Pope wrote his pastorals. Johnson, indeed, believed that Walsh (instead of Chetwood)<sup>2</sup> had contributed the Life of Virgil and Preface to the Pastorals which precede Dryden's translation. Dryden

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1. pp. 110-24 (Eclogue I : pp. 110-13, Eclogue 2 : pp. 113-16, Eclogue 3 : pp. 117-20, Eclogue 4 : pp. 120-24).

2. Lives of the English Poets, edited by George Birkbeck Hill, 3 vols. (Oxford, 1905), 1 : 329. Johnson also claimed that Walsh, 'however studied...discovers some ignorance of the laws of French versification.'

called Walsh 'without flattery...the best critic of our nation' in his Postscript to the translation of the Aeneis (1697)<sup>1</sup> and Pope dedicated his Essay on Criticism (1711) to him: '...the Muses' Judge and Friend, Who justly knew to blame or to commend;...' (729-30). Such pivotal influence on both Dryden's Virgil and Pope's first published work inexorably helped alter the appreciation of the bucolic tradition. Just as Steele and Addison fostered the climate of critical opinion that embraced Philip's work, Walsh was among those, including Trumbull, Garth, Wycherley and Congreve, at Will's Coffee House who performed the same service for Pope. Amongst that set Dryden stood pre-eminent, so if only on autobiographical evidence alone there is clearly a traditional line of pastoral poetry.

If the accuracy of Pope's chronology is to be believed, there is evidence from Pope's own letters that Walsh may have seen first drafts of the Pastorals as early as April 1706, with the possible exception of "Autumn".<sup>2</sup> Walsh was also of some political prominence as a Whig member of Parliament and gentleman of the horse to Queen Anne. Pope was perhaps aided practically in the printing of the poems by his influence with Tonson. Much of the summer of 1707 Pope spent at Walsh's home at Abberley, the last summer before the latter's death next March. Sherburn ventures the idea that not only the Pastorals but also the Essay on Criticism was discussed there.<sup>3</sup> The precise nature of Walsh's advice is well recorded. Pope told Spence that Walsh used 'to encourage me much, and used to tell me that there was one way left of excelling, for though we had had several great poets, we never had any one great poet that was correct - and he desired me to make that my study and

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1. Essays, 2 : 246.

2. See Jacob Tonson's letter to Pope (April 20, 1706), Correspondence, 1 : 17.

3. This is certainly Sherburn's view in The Early Career, pp. 51-57.

aim.<sup>1</sup> This "correctness" seems the only method by which a modern poet could escape from the immense shadow cast by the past. Courthope's explanation of this term as 'propriety of design and justice of thought and taste' Sherburn interprets as just plain propriety or decorum.<sup>2</sup> Certainly "correctness" involved cool-headed revision and a freedom from rhapsodic frenzy. That Pope was not a servile student is obvious from his letter to Walsh on July 2, 1706:

I am convinc'd as well as you, that one may correct too much; for in Poetry as in Painting, a Man may lay Colours one upon another, till they Stiffen and deaden the Piece. Besides to bestow heightning on every part is monstrous: Some parts ought to be lower than the rest; and nothing looks more ridiculous, than a Work, where the Thoughts, however different in their own nature, seem all on a level:... [1 : 18-19]

Too much decorum and too much notice of generic models, Pope felt, lead to monotony. Indeed, Pope proceeds to demonstrate the more "natural" and spontaneous side of his writing by believing that 'sometimes our first Thoughts are the best as the first squeezing of the Grapes makes the finest and richest Wine' (1 : 19). Even this Grape-juice needs to ferment, however, before fine wine can be made. Pope is obviously worried about the indebtedness which such imitation would visit the poet with, as he immediately queries the 'liberty of Borrowing' by claiming that 'A mutual commerce makes Poetry flourish; but then Poets like Merchants, shou'd repay with something of their own what they take from others; not like Pyrates, make prize of all they meet' (1 : 20). Even at this early point, Pope's refusal to endorse the rigid pastoral coherence of the lyric is obvious. Some lines should be lower than

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1. Anecdotes, I : 32.

2. The Early Career, p. 57.

the rest to introduce climactic or surprising effects, and, although literal imitation is dull and mindless, the recognition of past masters is necessary for poetry to "flourish". Walsh then assures his new protegee that the "rules" are mere guides: '...a Man may correct his Verses till he takes away the true Spirit of them; especially if he submits to the correction of some who pass for great Critics, by mechanical Rules, and never enter into the true Design and Genius of an Author.'<sup>1</sup> The critical term here is that of 'Author', taken here to mean a "creator". Walsh's "correctness", therefore, was not totally to Pope's taste as lacking in invention, and, if adopted literally, conducive also to the writing of a regular pastoral but a very dull one.

In turning to Walsh's Preface of 1692, this "correctness" is not quite that of the syllable counter of Pope's correspondence. The terms of reference are classical but with the passionate force of the grander lyric. In granting that most of his poetry is 'Amorous Verses', he draws a crucial distinction between the Ancients and Moderns in this respect, awarding the palm of 'nature' to the former for including sentiments 'as are natural for every Man in love to think.' The Moderns may be ~~surprising and glittering but never 'tender, passionate or natural'~~. By Moderns here, Walsh is by no means anticipating Philips; rather, he is shunning the 'forc'd Conceits, far-fetch'd Similes, and shining Points' (p. vi) more discernible in Petrarch and Donne. Sincerity is a major criterion, for whilst granting the individual brilliance of Donne, Waller, Suckling and Cowley, 'Softness, Tenderness, and Violence of Passion' - the spirit of Catullus, Tibullus, Propertius or Ovid - is missing.

This antipathy to excessive artifice only just squares with the homiles to correctness that Pope records if such "correctness" is seen

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1. Correspondence, 1 : 21 (Sept. 9, 1706).

as a rendition of such "natural", and therefore universal, sentiments as are read in the works of the Ancients. This same "passionate" theory of classical appreciation is evident from his passages on the pastoral, which alongside elegies and 'Lyrick Verses' (that is, 'Songs, Odes, Sonnets, Madrigals and Stanzas') seem most suitable for the discussion of love. This does not mean that erotic verses are 'high' poetry for it is exactly because pastoral is considered the 'lowest' that it is accounted 'most proper for Love.' It is strangely separated from the elegy in that it is 'looser and not so sonorous...the Thoughts more simple, more easy and more humble' (p. vii). Considering the frequency of elegiac sentiments in classical pastoral this marks a particularly Modern reading, which does not add to the reputation of pastoral poetry at all. The main cause of this demarcation stems directly from the impoverished subject matter. Elegies are considered courtly as no real rustic would deserve such praise and regret. The 'smooth, clear, tender, and passionate' fits country amours far more exactly, yet it should also give rise to an endorsement of 'the Truth, Sincerity, and Innocence that accompanies that sort of Life' (p. viii). Hence it is lodged uneasily between elegy and lyric. Whilst an elegy '~~ought to be so entirely one thing, and every verse ought so to depend~~ upon the other', the lyric may 'consist of many parts that are entire of themselves.' This is classical in conception, but, in demanding an emotional decorum due to contemporary, not Golden Age, shepherds, it has a strong Modern element.

The series of Pastoral Eclogues which derive so much disproportionate comment in Walsh's Preface plus the elegiac "Delia lamenting The Death of Mrs. Tempest, who Died Upon the Day of the Great Storm",<sup>1</sup>

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1. First published in Dryden's Poetical Miscellanies, the Fifth Part (1704), pp. 609-16.

the inspiration for Pope's "Winter", do not comprise all of his work in the genre. The Golden Age Restored, 1703 demonstrates how Eclogue 4 could still embody political polemic.<sup>1</sup> The heavy irony with which Walsh greets an incoming Tory administration shows no hint of the erotic demands of Ancient pastoral which 'renders the Soul soft and humble'. The 'Saturnian age of gold' now brought to pass is a High Church creation funded by French gold: 'France, that this happy Change so wisely has begun, / Shall bless the Great Design, and bid it smoothly run' (69-70). The Pollio is obviously considered unpastoral, unfit because too imposing to sound a shepherd's woodnotes wild. This may be deduced from the slight epigraph Paulo majora canamus: ('Let us sing a somewhat loftier strain'), which implies that the "low" bucolic references should be severed from the greater world of public life. This attenuation of the full range of pastoral poetry compresses most of the available classical themes into a compass that comprises just the lyric, with faint additions of the elegy. Eclogue 1 announces itself as inspired by the Sicilian Muse. This is certainly true of some ingredients chosen from Idyll 1 in the adoption of the motif of love's suffering. However, in Damon's song, there is more of the rejection felt by the unsuccessful suitor of Amaryllis in Idyll 3. Just as Walsh has removed the heroic characteristics of Idyll 1, he has likewise excised the wry amusement of Idyll 3. Virgil's Eclogue 8 to which both of these models contribute is a more likely presence. Damon there sings a song of thwarted love and yet in the self-absorption that such a refusal has induced and the goatherd's unglamorous appearance imported from Idyll 11 as well as Idyll 3, there is a detachment

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1. Poems on Affairs of State: Augustan Satirical Verse, 1660-1714, 7 vols., volume 6 edited by Frank H. Ellis (New Haven, 1970), 6: 491-505.



quite foreign to the lyrical treatment that Walsh engineers. This is clearer in his Eclogue 3 which he acknowledges to have been 'Taken from the Eighth Eclogue of Virgil', which reads as a scarcely modified translation. Eclogue 2 is a distant relation of Idyll 11, where the Cyclops, Polyphemus, ludicrously sues for Galatea's love. Lycon is perhaps brought in from Eclogue 5 as advisor and the evidence of pastoral neglect suggested by Bucaeus's situation in Idyll 10 vivifies the suggestions that Polyphemus is similarly distracted. The clearest debt is to Eclogue 2 where Corydon's homosexual passion for Alexis soothes itself in the duration of the song. Although these are clear signals that Walsh's models are "correct", there is little doubt that his interpretation of propriety is very much more straitened than the classical. Firstly, Eclogue 2 is uttered by Thyrsis 'the gaiest one of all the Swains, / Who fed their Flocks upon th' Arcadian Plains' (1-2). This does not stop his cellars being stocked with 'The richest Wines of Greece' (65). Absent is the hint of homosexuality abhorred in the "Preface" and also the incongruity of his pretensions to Galatea's favour culminating in the fruitless suicidal gesture at the poem's close. These uncommon details would have nullified any attempt at presenting the pastoral as typical, and have allowed them to appear more as a dramatic spectacle. Eclogue 4 shows Walsh turning his hand to an amoeban pastoral between Strephon and Damon with Lycon as judge. There is a little of Virgil's Eclogue 3 about the contest. The phrase 'Alternate Verse delights the rural Muse' (3) is related to Palaemon's 'alternis dicetis; amant alterna Camenae' (59) ('In turns shall you sing; alternate songs the Muses Love.') There is no stake, however, and little cutting edge to the contest. Furthermore, there are chance details culled from

Eclogue 7 and Idylls 5,6,8, and 9. This eclectic combination creates a less specific classical flavour to the pastorals and yet there is obviously an avocation of its authority for the opening lines locate the herdsmen well within the Virgilian pattern: 'Stephon and Damon's flocks together fed, / Two charming Swains as e'er Arcadia bred;' (1-2). Both singers are typical in their freshness and prime condition, however much they may complain of love's injustice. Arcadia for Gallus in Eclogue 10 was a cruel contrast with his own care-worn condition. Strephon and Damon wear their cares for the duration of the contest and then discard them.

In "Delia", Walsh's adaption of Idyll 1 and Eclogue 5 breaks new ground in two directions. Firstly, the tenderness of Walsh's lament is assured by substituting 'Delia, the queen of beauty' (8) for Daphnis the man the Nymphs had cherished. In place of the powerful and controlled grief of the whole countryside, Delia is mourned by just one 'tuneful Swain':

Clasp'd to my glowing Breast, thou may'st revive,  
I'll breathe such tender Sighs shall make thee live;  
Or, if severer Fates that Aid deny,  
If thou canst not revive, yet I may die. [11. 97-100]

Secondly, it is the chastity of Delia that is her most valued asset, and it is this quality which, if any, is singled out for praise:

O, early lost! O, fitter to be led  
In cheerful Splendour to the Bridal Bed,  
Than thus conducted to th'untimely Tomb,  
A spotless Virgin in her Beauty's Bloom! [11. 87-90]

Considering that the nominal recipient of this accolade is the memory of a wife, Mrs. Tempest, then Walsh's special pleading is all the more exceptional. Daphnis could not have summoned such tenderness or have symbolized purity or beauty.

Walsh's own Eclogues merely quote Theocritus or Virgil as impeccable references rather than attempt variations and extend their models.

The real inspiration is the Restoration song where the address is sweetened and the loved one purified by pastoral ingredients. Without any ballast of intellectual interest, the form may recognize other traditions but in reality censors them. Eclogue 1 offers the pitiful scene of Damon bidding farewell to Daphne. The necessary interest is supplied by Daphne's most unpastoral observation:

Had you amon the rest at first assail'd  
 My Heart, when free, you had, perhaps, prevail'd.  
 Now if you blame, Oh blame not me, but Fate,  
 That never brought you till twas grown too late. [11. 23-26]

Even this has a dramatic complication that is untraceable in Philip's work. What is more familiar is the tender pathos of the closing lines, culminating in 'Grief stops my Tongue, and Tears o'erflow my Eyes' (62). Here is no vespertinal gentleness where man and nature at sunset seem to be in accord, but an abrupt full-stop imposed by no internal logic.

In Eclogue 4, two further non-classical elements are in evidence. Firstly, the reciprocation of statement and response that implies true skill and craftsmanlike concentration, in short, the admirable virtuoso performances of Eclogue 3 or Idyll 4, provide no basis for the part-song of Damon and Strephon where 'No Passions discompose their Souls, but Love.' (6). They both strive to obtain 'the Prize of Beauty' not 'the Merit of their tuneful Lays' (17). Therefore, it is as lovers and not poets that these shepherds appear in the poem. Secondly, Walsh cannot so simplify his pastorals that urbane wit is displaced. Lycon dubs their efforts 'amorous War', and describes the objects of their love in terms of erotic advice:

Flavia deserves more Pains than she will cost;  
 As easily got, were she not easily lost.  
Sylvia is much more difficult to gain;  
 But, once possess'd, will well reward the Pain.  
 We wish them Flavias all, when first we burn;  
 But, once possess'd, wish they would Sylvias turn. [11. 73-78]

No Arcadian shepherd would treat his Flavia as a possession or be so

wanton. On the other hand, the coarseness of Battus and Corydon in Idyll 4 wants such lightness of touch and worldly wisdom. Walsh's Eclogues show a robuster attitude to love than Philip's but this does not derive from classical models at all. For all his insistence on imitation, he can hardly be said to have imitated in a representative fashion. Such "correctness" stems from a desire to create a pathetic landscape out of suitably delicate rustics, yet with a graceful urbanity reinforced by classical allusion.

This is not quite the pastoral view of Pope's work. It is significant that Walsh's practical example and his own definition of "correctness" should have influenced Pope only marginally. The earliest comments on the Pastorals are fulsome in their praise. George Granville, later Lord Lansdowne, wrote to one "Harry" (c. 1705 or 1706) claiming that 'If Pope goes on as he has begun, in the Pastoral way, as Virgil, first try'd his Strength, we may hope to see English Poetry vie with the Roman and this Swan of Windsor sing as sweetly as the Mantuan.'<sup>1</sup> Walsh himself confessed to Wycherley (April 20, 1705) that the 'Preface' he had seen, presumably a first draft of the "Discourse", was 'very judicious and very learned' and yet the 'Verses' were 'very tender and easy.'<sup>2</sup> He then proceeds to confirm how imitative the poems were even in the early drafts: 'He has taken very freely from the Ancients, but what he has mixt of his own with theirs, is no way inferior to what he has taken from them. 'Tis no flattery at all to say, that Virgil had written nothing so good at his Age.'<sup>2</sup> This promise is of no small order; Pope's appearance as the English Virgil, with

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1. Reprinted in Pope: The Critical Heritage, edited by John Barnard (London, 1973), p. 59.

2. Critical Heritage, pp. 59-60.

his foot on the first step of the Gradus ad Parnassum smacks of a vocational desire to emulate Ancient example and canonize the learned pastoral in the face of a frequent aversion to the form as "low" and easy.<sup>1</sup>

This judgement is only emphasised the more Pope himself chose a suitable showcase for his first printed work. In 1717, at the precocious age of 29, he oversaw the publication of his Works. It is here that the "Discourse" is seen for the first time, and some extensive annotation added to the main text. If the 1709 appearance in Tonson's Miscellany had been a carefully contrived entrance on the literary scene of a "correct" and learned craftsman, the 1717 edition has a rather different significance. Primarily, the Works is a gesture of self-confidence and maturity, and given the recent altercation with those at Button's, a vindication of a taste in poetry not just pastorals. This is spelt out in the "Preface" to the volume. Whilst admitting that the 'Ancients (to say the least of them) had as much Genius as we', Pope also allows that, with more pains and time, contemporary authors 'cannot fail to produce more complete pieces.'<sup>2</sup> This sounds like fence-sitting, but as the "Preface" continues, it becomes obvious that the authentic touchstones for excellence are Ancient ones and so when he claims that, with time and energy, Modern authors might surpass them, their modernity is a purely nominal possession, for they would need to out-Virgil Virgil to create a more acceptable Aeneid. This is underpinned by the lament, often made at this time, that as the classical languages had survived so long, they had become a literary lingua franca, thus ensuring their transmission from age to age. This prag-

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1. See Wycherley's fulsome praise in his letter to Pope dated May 17, 1709 (Correspondence, 1 : 58-59).

2. TE, 1 : 6.

matic apology for the Ancients brings forth a ritual humility in Pope: '...the utmost we can hope, is but to be read in one Island, and to be thrown aside at the end of one Age' (1 : 7).

Pope then passes to an unequivocal statement of his poetic philosophy. In the midst of his first major classical translation, the Iliad, Pope writes as one who can testify to the efficacy and survival of traditional literary values, not only as a practitioner but also as a reader too: 'I fairly confess that I have serv'd myself all I could by reading: that I made use of the judgement of authors dead and living.' "Correctness" exists in reading properly as well as profiting by it in writing creatively oneself. Therefore, it comes as no surprise that Pope almost forces an institutional appreciation on the reader: 'In this office of collecting my pieces, I am altogether uncertain, whether to look upon myself as a man building a monument, or burying the dead?' (1 : 9). Posterity is the goal and craft is the means. Tradition is a means of expressing the individual talent not stifling it:

All that is left us is to recommend our productions by the imitation of the Ancients: and it will be found true, that in every age, the highest character for sense and learning has been obtain'd by those who have been most indebted to them. For to say truth, whatever is very good sense must have been common sense in all times; and what we call learning, is but the knowledge of the sense of our predecessors. Therefore those who say our thoughts are not our own because they resemble the Ancients, may as well say our faces are not our own, because they are like our fathers:... [1 : 7]

The individual work is not autonomous, but is rather the nodal point of a cultural ideal. Its virtues include the illustration of continuity, and also the exclusion of marginal genres (such as ballad or lyric) or the attempts to include them in the accepted canon. Most striking is its implicit recognition that Walsh's sentimental pastoral is not Ancient enough. In the Pastorals of 1709, even more in their

appearance in 1717, Pope admires Walsh but has significantly chosen to do otherwise.

#### Pope's Pastoral Theory

"A Discourse on Pastoral Poetry" seems to present little difficulty given the manifesto outlined above.<sup>1</sup> As a critical document, it is an eclectic amalgam of much received opinion about the form. Failing a classical treatise on the pastoral, Pope turns most to both Rapin and Fontenelle and attempts to harmonize them and so synthesize a theory that, although familiar in spirit, is perhaps original in application. Audra and Williams, appreciating Congleton's bipartite division between the 'rational' (Fontenelle) and 'neo-classic' (Rapin), are highly complimentary, regarding it as 'the culminating statement of "neo-classic" theory... The "neo-classic" position has grave weaknesses, it should be admitted, yet it is to Pope's Discourse that one must look for the most flexible, balanced, and polished statement of that position.' ( 1 : 20). This may be so if the "Discourse" is accepted as a piece of genre-based consolidation, a summary of the influences Pope had admired. There are particular problems, on the other hand, if it is read as a philosophically coherent document, for the balance ~~sought between the Golden Age of Rapin and the rural tranquility of~~ Fontenelle is at best an uneasy compromise rather than a new synthesis. Pope states that his design is to 'comprize...the substance of those numerous dissertations that Criticks have made on the subject, without omitting any of their rules in his own favour' ( 1 : 23). According to his footnotes, he explicitly draws on the work of Heinsius, Fontenelle, Chetwood, Dryden and, mostly, Rapin. In his major conclusions, however, he takes note of Rapin above all.

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1. The full text is in TE, 1 : 23-33.

Rapin's two main premises state that all contemporary pastoral poetry imitates the practice of Theocritus, and, especially, Virgil, and that thereby it describes life as lived in the Golden Age.<sup>1</sup> This is Pope's own conclusion if notice is only taken of certain passages. He reasons that

since the instructions given for any art are to be deliver'd as that art is in perfection, they must of necessity be deriv'd from those in whom it is acknowledged so to be. 'Tis therefore from the practice of Theocritus and Virgil, (the only undisputed authors of Pastoral) that the Criticks have drawn the foregoing notions... [1 : 29]

The Spenserian strain of bucolic is not expressly included and even Theocritus sins against the modesty of the genre. Virgil is most commended for his judgement and regularity, although it is admitted that he might be criticized for a certain pastoral indecorum and a lack of Theocritean simplicity. Theocritus might have written better pastorals yet the Eclogues seem better poems. In following Virgil's example, therefore, Pope sails close to surpassing the pastoral genre altogether. This is a mere hint for Pope more consistently treats Ancient example as an abstract pattern, a homogeneous statement of the "natural" facet of poetic composition called Pastoral not a series of differing practices: ~~'Among the moderns, their success has been greatest~~ who have most endeavour'd to make these ancients their pattern' (1 : 30). Pope then yokes the literary convention of the Golden Age with the Ancient pastoral. This is by no means an accurate association; Cos and Arcadia were forms of this ideal but these places are not only mythological. Only in Eclogue 4 is the Golden Age mentioned explicitly and then it is only as a future state. It is in Rapin that Pope recognizes the usefulness of the myth: 'Pastorals were the invention of the simp-

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1. See pp. 25 - 31 .

licity and innocence of that Golden Age, if there was ever any such, or certainly of that time which succeeded the beginning of the World.<sup>1</sup> By 1717 the hesitancy has disappeared:

If we would copy Nature, it may be useful to take this consideration along with us, that Pastoral is an image of what they call the Golden age. So that 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 a notion of quality was annex'd to that name, and the best of men follow'd the employment. [1 : 25]

Pastorals, for Pope, are not mimetic of anything other than a particular literary ideal. They are not validated by perceptual reality but rather by the skill with which the Ancient pastoral is imitated. The addition of the Golden Age ensures that the less corporeal Idylls and Eclogues drop out of view.<sup>2</sup> This non-mimetic apology would have been sufficient. Notwithstanding this, Pope attempts to incorporate some of the modern sentiments of Fontenelle who had expressly required the only imitation to be of nature, even if a little beautified. The concept of the classical imitation and the Golden Age is refuted by Fontenelle so the mixture of ideas has to be particularly well assorted.

Pope is at some pains to credit his sources. Fontenelle is the first authority quoted and occurs in his notes once more. Rapin's treatise is only cited once. Fontenelle's influence can only be seen exclusively in two passages. The first is in the second paragraph of the "Discourse." Fontenelle accounts for the first appearance of the genre by claiming that the 'primitive Shepherds, amidst the Tranquility and Leisure which they enjoy'd, bethought themselves of singing their Pleasures and their Loves.'<sup>3</sup> As the keeping of flocks was probably

1. Treatise, p. 14.

2. Rapin's view is unremittingly idealistic: 'Pastoral belongs properly to the Golden Age' because 'Poetry fashions its subject as Men imagine it should be, and not as really it is...' (p. 37).

3. Of Pastorals, p. 277.

the first occupation, therefore, the form is not sanctioned by literary originality but a logical supposition based on naturalistic assumptions. Pope's version follows Fontenelle closely: 'The original of Poetry is ascribed to that age which succeeded the creation of the world: And as the keeping of flocks seems to have been the first employment of mankind, the most ancient sort of poetry was probably pastoral' (1: 23). It is therefore "natural" that the pastoral was the product of their leisure-hours. Pope has two directions open to him at this point, for the fascination and pleasure from reading these early songs could on the one hand derive from a sympathetic involvement with their as yet uncorrupted state or a more intellectual appreciation of the artistic commemoration of a cultural ideal. Pope weights the balance in favour of the latter. In tracing the development of the form, he recognizes that it has now been 'improv'd to 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). This is no Modern conclusion based on Fontenelle's treatise but an ingredient which mitigates some of its radical ideals. Firstly, it produces a pastoral that has already achieved its perfection of form and therefore does not allow progression or development. Secondly, the Ancients have handed down to contemporary poets an 'image' of happiness not a series of rhetorical traps to excite a sensual reading. Lastly, this 'image' is not composed by culling suitable details from observation but is an exemplary one, instilling 'esteem' for the past. Far from balancing both Rapin and Fontenelle, as Pope appears to, this is really Fontenelle in the service of Rapin. Indeed, many of the 'foregoing notions' that critics have deduced to form a perfect idea of the pastoral form, are these neo-classical opinions which pose as "innocent" facts of literary life.

Pope is more respectful of Fontenelle in the second passage which bears the signs of Modern influence. The whole "Discourse" betrays a certain nervousness about the patent artificiality of Rapin's Golden Age. The possibility that this would mean that pastoral poetry was a mere formalistic exercise was a very real possibility. Even so, Pope's unswerving allegiance to the value of imitation could have supplied a value even for this artifice. However, an unnecessary literal-mindedness is evident in the middle passages. In confirming the traditional brevity of the Idyll or Eclogue, there is no hint that there is any aesthetic advantage from it: 'we cannot suppose Poetry in those days to have been the business of the ancient shepherds, but their recreation at vacant hours' (1 : 26). This reasonable conjecture would be superfluous if it were admitted that these 'ancient shepherds' were inhabitants of the Golden Age and just part of the imaginative fabric of the myths that all true pastoralists share. Pope desires more and wishes to render this poetry "naturally". It is clear that this "nature" stems not so much from the carefully-wrought form as from the plausibility of the participants depicted, that is, by a non-artistic yardstick: 'But with a respect to the present age, nothing more conduces to make these compositions natural, than when some Knowledge in rural affairs is discover'd. This may be made to appear rather done by chance than on design, and sometimes is best shown by inference; lest by too much study to seem natural, we destroy the delight.' (1 : 26-27).

The morality is a form of circumstantial plausibility, an aid not only to a measure of verisimilitude but a supply of delight in itself. This small section is a bridge to the interpolation of some acknowledged Fontenellian material which introduces the possibility that a sensitive reading might also have to 'observe' as well as read about the countryside: 'For what is inviting in this sort of poetry (as Fontenelle

observes) proceeds not so much from the Idea of a Country life itself, as from that of its Tranquility.' This perception is heavily censored in the interests of a pleasurable impression of "natural" form - rural life with the work taken out. Pope, however, is quite workmanlike in recognizing the inevitability of fiction: 'We must therefore 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). What is more Pope cites this thought as Fontenelle's in the notes, therefore publicizing the Modern side to the argument. The esteem for past virtue must also be pleasurable and so must involve a 'design'd scene or prospect' (1: 28) which, to avoid the monotony of a moral that is too plain, must also be introduced with a certain variety. If it was only Golden Age Shepherds that Pope described, the illusion would not be necessary and their misery negligible as earlier he had the 'ancient shepherds' celebrating their own 'felicity' in their leisure-hours.

The second Modern passage Pope incorporates is rather indigestible material. Its consistent creed is neo-Aristotelian in that coherent form is of prime importance. The pastoral form should be clearly separated from the "lower" species of song or even the erotic pastorals of Fontenelle and given its classical status. This "gentrification" of the genre is, in effect, the reinstatement of the knowledgeable poet to the world of letters. Although the "Discourse" appears as Pope's first finished critical piece, there is evidence from his letters and the Essay on Criticism (1711) that it is not so much the rules that mattered as the classical reverence for form and clear, simple but varied, expression. This is why he distrusted Walsh's advice to cultivate correctness alone which he felt was too near to an admiration for purely 'mechanical Rules' and which prevented the

aspiring artist entering into 'the true Design and Genius of an Author.'<sup>1</sup>

A reconciliation between the life and vigour of genius and the economical simplicity of true design would entail careful work and would be the distinguishing mark of a poet as opposed to a mere versifier.

This principle can be traced in his dislike for Crashaw, 'whose works may just deserve reading':

All that regards Design, Form, Fable, (which is the Soul of Poetry) all that concerns exactness, or consent of parts, (which is the body) will probably be wanting; only pretty conceptions, fine metaphors, glitt'ring expressions, and something of a neat cast of Verse, (which are properly the dress, gems, or loose ornaments of poetry) may be found in these verses... These Authors who write 'for diversion only' shou'd be consider<sup>2</sup>d as Versifiers and witty Men, rather than as Poets.

The substantial skills are those which involve a concentration of attention and a degree of interrelatedness and which disregard the 'loose ornaments' of poetry. Ornamentation itself and the 'Rapture and fire' of Homer, for example, are, on the other hand, necessary 'but only so in the cultivation of a plan or design.'<sup>3</sup> Similarly, in discussing his own correction of Wycherley's poems, his central concern is to achieve concentration, force and simplicity.<sup>4</sup> This is not to say that Pope despised technical perfection; his own discussion of versification displays his respect for necessary 'rules'. These 'rules' however were only a means to an end. In his letter to Cromwell of May 7, 1709, Pope agrees with his friend's advice against the hiatus but is hesitant about its prescriptive force: 'I thought your Observation true enough to

1. Correspondence, 1 : 21.

2. Correspondence, 1 : 109-10. (December 17, 1710).

3. See his letter to Ralph Bridges (April 5, 1708), Correspondence, 1 : 44.

4. Correspondence, 1 : 16.

be past into a Rule, but not a Rule without Exceptions, nor that ever it had been reduc'd to Practise' (1 : 57). This pragmatism lies behind Pope's long letter on versification to Cromwell of 25 November, 1710. "Rule" 7 clearly demands a recognition of the part the subject matter has to play in determining style, that is, the poet should not attempt a modish elegance in every composition but develop a variety of styles to be deployed according to the context: '(7) It is not enough that nothing offends the Ear, that the Verse be...Coulante; but a good Poet will adapt the very Sounds, as well as Words, to the Things he treats of. So that there is...a Style of Sound...This is evident ev'ry where in Homer and Virgill...' (1 : 107). The "Soul" of poetry is near to the Aristotelian concept of "action": a central axis round which the wit of the creator provides pleasing variety, always tempered by a judicial talent for recognising what is relevant to the main design. Charles Sanders's work on Essay on Criticism corroborates this evidence of Pope's early poetic theories.<sup>1</sup> In drawing several comparisons between Pope's Essay and similar work by George Granville (Lord Lansdowne), Roscommon and Mulgrave, Sanders discovers a Pope peculiarly alive to very recent readings of Homer and Vida, and willing to create a new synthesis out of by no means complementary theses. Just as Pope attempts to imitate Rapin, Fontenelle, Chetwood and Dryden in his "Discourse", Sanders illustrates his attempt to alloy the varied conclusions of several earlier verse-essayists and concludes that Pope's "Nature" is both ideal and created, and not assembled empirically:

Comparable to marriage or managing the Muse's steed,  
Nature is an ideal state involving two agents: Judge-  
ment, sagacious without frigidity, simple without

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1. "'First Follow Nature' : An Annotation", English Studies, 49 (1968), 289-302.

vulgarity, profound without obscurity; and Wit, or imagination, conceding that exemplary flawless 'grace beyond the reach of art', all the more effective in conjunction with its 'antithesis'. [p. 302].

To imitate is to attempt to find those authors who, by standing the test of time, can truly be said to have had access to Truth. Their survival testifies to that fact. The poet must, therefore, embody their design and spirit. "Nature" is no relaxation of artistic control in contradistinction with "Art", but rather a mean which sets limits and outlines the possible and true. As Pope has it in the Essay on Criticism, 'Nature to all things fix'd the Limits fit' (52) and is herself 'restrained/ By the same laws which first herself ordain'd' (90-91). It is Nature, not Homer or Virgil alone, that ordains law. Therefore, it is really Nature, embodied in the Ancients, that deserves emulation, the spirit not the letter that breathes life into the "rules".

#### Pope's Artifice in his Pastorals

It is only recently that Pope's Pastorals have been read as more than a rococo piece of decoration. As Audra and Williams explain, 'criticism of the Pastorals has tended from the beginning to prize the craftsmanship revealed in their verse and to minimize the worth of their substance.' (1 : 50). This has often led critics to suppose that their artifice is exclusive of a serious commitment to anything other than a self-regarding hubris. Bonamy Dobrée voices this disparagement in terms that expect instant acquiescence:

Artificial? Why, of course. What else should they be? They were precisely the same sort of thing as Dryden's Shepherds and Shepherdesses. On those terms we can like them...Serious and passionate? Why no; not with respect to the life supposedly represented,<sup>1</sup> but with respect to the poetry, a thousand times yes.

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1. Alexander Pope (London, 1952), p. 23.

'The life supposedly represented' Dobrée wishes to divorce from the 'poetry'. This distinction is only worthwhile if the reader expects his pastoral poetry to be the songs of shepherds and not poets. Recent critical interest has not been so concerned with the Pastorals' mimetic validity.<sup>1</sup> Indeed it is only by starting from Pope's own assumption that their formal qualities were significant in their own right that a serious reading can be recovered. The probability is that the melancholy loves of Hylas and Aegon or the parched Alexis were considered an adequate expression of the formal, imitative techniques of the poetry, not vice versa. The "reality" is the form.

The "Discourse" has much to say that is not deliberately imitative about matters of design. Indeed, as Pope dismisses Crashaw, so he wishes to state his own definition of what truly constitutes pastoral poetry; 'There are not, I believe, a greater number of any sort of verses than of those which are called Pastorals, nor a smaller, than of those which are truly so,' (1 : 23) is the first sentence. This sorting is often carried out using criteria of coherent design and

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1. See especially Reuben Brower, Alexander Pope : Poet of Allusion (Oxford, 1959), pp. 15-34; Thomas R. Edwards, Jr., This Dark Estate: A Reading of Pope (Berkeley, Ca., 1963), pp. 12-22; Martin C. Battestin, "The Transforming Power : Nature and Art in Pope's Pastorals", Eighteenth-Century Studies, 2 (1969), 183-204; Elizabeth Gurr, Pope (Edinburgh, 1971), pp. 7-11; David Durant, "Man and Nature in Alexander Pope's Pastorals", Studies in English Literature, 11 (1971), 469-85; Pat Rogers, "Rhythm and Recoil in Pope's Pastorals", Eighteenth-Century Studies, 14 (1980-81), 1-17. Brower identifies the 'sheer delightfulness of sound for its own sake, an English equivalent for Theocritean sweetness' (p. 23), and Edwards adopts Empson's term to describe Pope's shepherds: the 'pastoral of innocence' or an 'image of perfect humanity' (p. 19). This formal expertise has been selected to prove Pope's desire for a chaste, eternal sphere over against the temporal, yet natural (Battestin) or alternatively to illustrate the dissatisfaction he felt with such an artificial form (Durant). Pat Rogers has demonstrated the almost Renaissance fascination with the conceit of the music of time. Pope's choice of form and its supposed innate derivativeness is the central conclusion of Foster Provost, Pope's Pastorals : An Exercise in Poetical Technique (Baton Rouge, La., 1954) and Leonard Moskovit, "Pope and the Tradition of the Neoclassical Imitation", Studies in English Literature, 8 (1968), 445-62.

compact thought. Poems are, as a whole, images of the Golden Age. In each poem 'a design'd scene or prospect is to be presented to our view' and the verse should be 'properly of the heroic measure', although also striving to be smooth and 'the most easy and flowing imaginable' (1 : 28-29). Theocritus is criticised for descriptions that are too long such as that of the Cup in Idyll 1. 'Regularity and brevity' are Virgilian virtues whereas Spenser's Eclogues do not have that concentrated, spare quality. He is also 'too allegorical' and 'not concise enough'. However, Spenser is to be praised for his advance in formal matters, namely the inclusion of the Calendar-motif whereby 'he compares human life to the several seasons, and at once exposes to his readers a view of the great and little worlds, in their various changes and aspects' (1 : 32). He therefore contains change in a cyclical structure; human life, as Pope himself realized by the inclusion of the "Messiah", may have its rebirths as well as Nature. The "allegorical" is distrusted both for its loose "action" and the frequency with which it implied the proximity of an uncreated public "world". This might be the motive behind Pope's distrust of Spenser's example. The Calendar afforded too many similar divisions which led to a certain redundancy of description - whence it comes to pass that some of his Eclogues (as the sixth, eighth, and tenth, for example) have nothing but their titles to distinguish them'. Pope's alternative is a gain in compressed significance, for the year has not that variety in it to furnish every month with a particular description, as it may every season' (1 : 32). It is then that Pope proceeds to outline his own design, claiming that he has only admitted those themes suitable for a true pastoral. This emphasis on orderly material and the correct imitation of those past examples which embody pastoral "nature" is a gesture of praise for the virtues of continuity and transcendence. The poems both

demonstrate a self-consciously ordained classicism and an idealized withdrawal from the contingent and historical.

The Pastorals are an imitation not of a particular model but of Pope's own conception of the Pastoral tradition. It is as an abstract order, cleared of the mitigations of contact with anarchic reality that the Pastoral is imitated. In Essay on Criticism, he imagines Virgil's consultation of Homer's 'bold design' (136) to be both a lesson in the rules and also 'Nature's fountains' (133). This is consistent with the claim in his Guardian paper 173 (Sept. 29, 1713) that his own taste for 'the amiable Simplicity of unadorned Nature' in gardens was in effect 'the Taste of the Ancients.'<sup>1</sup> In an earlier Guardian contribution (12, March 25, 1713) he analyses the pleasure that a reading of imitations produces. In terms that point forward to the "Preface" to his Works (1717), the influence of classical culture is reified by recourse to the image of heredity: the new imitation is a copy in the same sense as a child bears the marks of family resemblance: 'Such Copyings...give that kind of double Delight which we perceive when we look upon the Children of a beautiful Couple; where the Eye is not more charm'd with the Symmetry of the Parts, than the Mind by observing the Resemblance-transmitted from Parents to their Offspring, and the mingled Features of the Father and the Mother! This pleasure is a 'superaddition' in that the prime requisite is still mimetic in a more direct sense: 'But over and above a just Painting of Nature, a learned Reader will find a new Beauty superadded in a happy Imitation of some famous Ancient, as it revives in his Mind the Pleasure he took in his first reading such an Author.'<sup>2</sup>

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1. Prose Works, p. 145.

2. Prose Works, pp. 90-91.

Pope's highly imitative Pastorals are an attempt to write "naturally" in a pastoral mode, wearing the traces of influence boldly to add not only authority but also an extra source of pleasure. In performing this, there was a greater chance that such pastorals would be coherent and concentrated.

Even before Pope's annotations were introduced in 1736, the Pastorals were obviously testimonies to a time-honoured literary tradition. The very first lines of "Spring" place Pope in relation to his sources of inspiration:

First in these Fields I try the Sylvan Strains,  
Nor blush to sport on Windsor's blissful Plains:  
Fair Thames flow gently from thy sacred Spring,  
Whilst on thy Banks Sicilian Muses sing;  
Let Vernal Airs thro' trembling Osiers play,  
And Albion's Cliffs resound the Rural lay. [11. 1-6]

The most ancient springs of pastoral influence ('Sicilian Muses') are to water 'Windsor's blissful Plains', not merely any generalized native image but specifically Pope himself, fresh from his years of reading near Windsor. The references to the Thames and Windsor are not really an attempt to naturalize the form at all; a 'sacred spring' flows into the Thames redolent of Sicily. Pope may commence by announcing that he is to 'try' the 'Rural lay' specifically in 'these' Windsor fields and yet, as Pope himself noted in 1736, this is an imitation of the opening lines of Eclogue 6. The opening couplet is thus an explanation of why Pope will not 'blush' to visit 'Sylvan strains' on the 'blissful' plains of Windsor. Windsor loses its localized significance and becomes as emblematic as 'Albion's Cliffs', more akin to the 'green Retreats,/ At once the Monarch's and the Muse's Seats' which can embody Edenic splendour found in Windsor Forest (1713). As Pope claimed that the first part relating to the country was written at the same time as the Pastorals, the "Windsors" may not be so dissimilar. In any case, the opening couplet also suggests not just Virgilian

influence, but Dryden's translation as well: 'I First transferr'd to  
Rome Sicilian Strains:/ Nor blush'd the Dorick Muse to dwell on  
Mantuan Plains ' (1-2).<sup>1</sup> The command to the Thames (3) is even an  
 allusion to Spenser's Prothalamion: 'Sweete Themmes runne softly, till  
 I end my Song.'<sup>2</sup> Windsor is looking 'green in description' and yet  
 for all that, for all the "natural" Vernal Airs that rustle the Osiers,  
 it is an emblem of Varus's/Trumbull's retreat from public affairs.

There are similar openings to the remaining three seasons. Pope  
 was clear in his intentions in the note of 1736. The opening lines of  
 "Summer" were to recall Spenser's "Januarye", "Autumn" to recall  
Eclogue 1 and "Winter" Idyll 1. This scheme may have been slow in  
 maturing. Although Pope is canvassing Walsh's opinion on the eventual  
 opening lines of "Summer" in 1706, the version of 1709 and 1717 is  
 quite different:

A Faithful Swain, whom love had taught to sing,  
 Bewail'd his Fate beside a silver Spring;  
 Where gentle Thames his winding Waters leads  
 Thro' verdant Forests, and thro' flow'ry Meads.<sup>3</sup>

Spenser is only rehabilitated in 1736. The technique is then seen to  
 be consistent. Pope is manifestly emulating past examples and re-  
 asserting those themes that are most fit for Pastoral. His choice is  
 not surprising. Audra and Williams claim that 'Pope's Pastorals  
 follow the general patterns of classical pastorals...' which is only  
 partially accurate as there is no representative of either Theocritean  
 bawdy or Vigilian interest in politics (1 : 42). Given this reduced

1. Eclogue 6, Poems, 2 : 894.

2. Poetical Works, pp. 601-2.

3. This version and the history of the early drafts can be found at  
TE, 1 : 71, 477-82.

range, Pope does introduce some popular types. "Spring" is an amoebaeian eclogue as is "Autumn", the one based on competition the other not. "Summer" is a love-complaint, and "Winter" an elegy in memory of a dead shepherdess. These conventions suggest the continuity of certain pastoral attitudes. However, the basic framework of each of Pope's eclogues is not formed on the pattern of any one poem. As with the "Discourse", Pope's procedure is rather more eclectic than in the imitation strictly interpreted. "Spring" promises Pope's version of Silenus's song, but turns out to be less ambitious material, resembling the contests of Eclogues 3 and 7 and, indirectly, Idylls 4 and 5. The tradition of melancholic love-complaints is evoked by "Summer", which, despite the revised opening, is really a series of appropriate allusions to not only Spenser's "Januarye" but also Idyll 11 and Eclogue 2. Although Pope claimed in 1736 that "Autumn" was 'like the 8th. of Virgil', it is also a near relation to both Idylls 2 and 3. The sources of "Winter" are a little more diverse. Idyll 1 provided Virgil's ground-work for Eclogue 5 in its lament for Daphnis, the inventor of bucolic song. To these obvious sources, Pope added Oldham's translations of Bion and Moschus and, in a gracious gesture, a series of overt allusions to Walsh's Delia.

This range of allusions is not merely scholarly ingenuity but part of a concerted effort to tap the energy of an unlocalized pastoral spirit. In suggesting the continuity of a whole tradition, it was necessary to avoid adapting one particular poem or one special master, and although that spirit is apparently classical, it does not exclude more recent pastoral work. This mixture has appeared an aesthetic mistake, ever since Joseph Warton: 'A MIXTURE of British and Grecian ideas may justly be deemed a blemish.'<sup>1</sup> This impropriety can only be

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1. An Essay on the Writings and Genius of Pope, volume 1 (1756), reprinted in Pope : The Critical Heritage, p. 384.

felt in a reading antagonistic to classical influences and the desire to revalue it in relation to the present. More serious is Johnson's charge that the Pastorals wanted invention: 'The imitations are so ambitiously frequent that the writer evidently means rather to show his literature than his wit.'<sup>1</sup> What remains is musical versification and an ear for harmony.

What has not often been granted is the extent to which Pope can actually distance and extend his inheritance. In the commendatory verses that preface his Works, Pope is fulsomely praised, none more so than by Thomas Parnell. In "To Mr. POPE", he pits Virgil and his fellow Scriblerian:

How might he tune th'alternate reed with thee,  
Perhaps a Strephon thou, a Daphnis he; ...  
Smile, all ye valleys, in eternal spring,  
Be hushed, ye winds! while Pope and Virgil sing. [11. 33-34, 45-46]<sup>2</sup>

There is no hint here of the Eclogues combining with or effacing the new 'Sylvan Strains'. Parnell's admiration, as Wycherley's, stems from Pope's capacity to rival Virgil not publicize him. There is therefore a sense of a positive modification which is the possible advantage that the imitation will enjoy over the imitated.

Part of Warton's objection had been to Pope's lack of originality in rural description, the lack of a 'single rural image that is new.' This had accompanied a manifest lack of sympathy with, and inaccuracy in understanding, the Golden Age metaphor: 'That the design of pastoral poesy is, to represent the undisturbed felicity of the golden age, is an empty notion, which, though supported by a Rapin and a Fontenelle, I think, all rational critics have agreed to extirpate and explode.'<sup>3</sup>

1. Lives of the Poets, 3 : 224.

2. Poems on Several Occasions, pp. 107-8.

3. Pope : the Critical Heritage, p. 383.

He bases this on the assumption that Theocritus had actually presented a faithful version of Mediterranean beauty. Pope did not believe this nor did he allow the Golden Age or 'Tranquility' motif as much prominence as it assumes in the "Discourse". Alexis is parched by unrelenting sun as well as unrequited love. Aegon's threat to commit suicide is not dismissed as melodramatic attitudinizing, and Thyrsis feels 'Sharp Boreas' blow and all Nature decay in the clutches of time. In all the poems except possibly "Spring" there is an attempt to confront the gesture of withdrawal from the public world with the threat that all sublunary security is temporary.

Part of this withdrawal is undertaken by alluding to the classical past. "Spring" contains echoes of the contests between Damoetas and Menalcas of Eclogue 3 and between Corydon and Thyrsis of Eclogue 7. From Eclogue 3 there is taken the decorative details of Daphnis's bowl and his own ignorance of its figures, Delia's flirting with Strephon and the riddles that close the responses. From Eclogue 7, besides the several stylistic arrangements, there is the regenerative force heralded by Delia's smile. "Summer" gestures towards the self-absorption of the Cyclops and Corydon and especially their alienation from the natural processes that bring relief. "Autumn" is a more direct remodelling of the concerns of Eclogue 8: Damon's despair at Nysa's betrothal to Mopsus and Alphisiboeus's success in securing Daphnis. The elegiac design of "Winter" carries echoes of the mourning flocks and eventual transcendence that is the lot of Daphnis in Eclogue 5. However, more striking is the number of more modern, even contemporary, influences not credited by Pope in 1736, especially Dryden's translations, Congreve's The Tears of Amaryllis and, in "Winter", Walsh's Delia. This is to say nothing of the compliment to Waller and Granville in "Spring" (46). Certainly, Pope's study had not convinced him that the spirit of the lyrical Virgil had died.

What Pope's Pastorals lack in variety of perspective, they gain in the boldness of their design and the refusal to allow the individual image to detract from the more abstract framework. The Twickenham editors observe that the scenery gathers 'man and his concerns into the larger harmonies of Nature' (1 : 54). It can only suggest this if the work transcends its influences that would tie it to other aims. However, Pope needed to suggest the presence of classical culture by certain external allusions, an achievement highlighted by the eventual annotation that accompanied the poetry. His variations from Ancient examples stressed that it engaged a later age in a living contact, not as a dead letter, yet the similarities suggested just enough that it was still a source of strength and authority.

This symbiotic relationship is best illustrated in practice. It is possible that Pope's own definition of "correctness" lay in matters of versification.<sup>1</sup> The laboured metrics of the Pastorals would seem to suggest an author anxious to please in his first published piece. On the other hand, this studied grace of expression has a significance beyond its formalistic gestures. Virgil was admired for his compression of meaning and harmonious style. If English was to aspire to the timeless condition of the Latin tongue, it would have to imitate these qualities, even with its lack of inflection and its frequency of auxiliary words. Warton had been irritated by the literariness of this mode of imitation where Pactolus and Thames, Windsor and Hybla jostle each other in a pastiche of 'blemished' and obviously artificial descriptions:

It is somewhat strange that in the pastorals of a young poet there should not be found a single rural image that is new, ...The ideas of Theocritus, Virgil,

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1. See especially the central passage in the Essay on Criticism, 11. 337-83, and Geoffrey Tillotson, On the Poetry of Pope (Oxford, 1938. 2nd. ed., Oxford, 1950), pp. 17-26.

and Spenser are indeed, here exhibited in language equally mellifluous and pure, but the descriptions and sentiments are trite and common...

The 'correct and musical versification' signified 'harmony' and earned Warton's qualified praise for the lengthening of the 'abruptness' of Waller and also contracting the 'exuberance' of Dryden.<sup>1</sup> This new pastoral idiom was deliberately a "literary" inspiration, not an aid to observation.

Pope alters his source material as it passes into the Pastorals. The modernization is only to be expected of any imitation but in this case, there are several instances where the desire to update the original is not the only one. In "Spring", the full range of subjects that arise in Eclogues 3 and 7 are not represented. The pre-contest banter of Menalcas and Damoetas does not remain, the duo pocula become the heavily emblematic bowl (35ff.) and the contest is due to artistic pride rather than powerful emotions. In short, Daphnis and Strephon are much more the youthful Arcadians, Corydon and Thyrsis, of Eclogue 7, but without the former's decisive victory. Pope has retained many of the Golden Age details and dropped the counterbalancing reminders that the singers work. The same principle of selection moulds Hylas and Aegon in "Autumn". Alexis in "Summer" shows no return of sanity as Polyphemus or Corydon do in Idyll 11 and Eclogue 2 and "Winter" is too eclectic a construction of elegiac beauties to bear the mark of Eclogue 5 or Idyll 1 for long. Pope has streamlined Virgil and Theocritus, and imitated in the main the content of the songs in the contests or displays not the framing devices that offset such lyricism.

This appropriation of classical models is in the service of a less

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1. Pope : The Critical Heritage, pp. 383, 386-87.

specific imitation but rather on behalf of the practice of imitation in general. This is true even of the pastoral motifs such as the pathetic fallacy. Its occurrence is typical enough to warrant only the slightest suggestion of tradition to make the point forcibly enough that such writing had the strength of the past behind it. In "Summer", Alexis's passion is expressed by the heat of the sun and his misery by his surroundings:

Ye shady Beeches, and ye cooling Streams,  
 Defence from Phoebus, not from Cupid's Beams;  
 To you I mourn; nor to the Deaf I sing,  
 The Woods shall answer, and their Echo ring.  
 Ev'n Hills and Rocks attend my doleful lay,  
 Why art thou prouder and more hard than they?  
 The bleating Sheep with my Complaints agree,  
 They parch'd with Heat, and I inflam'd by thee.  
 The sultry Sirius burns the thirsty Plains,  
 While in thy Heart Eternal Winter reigns. [11. 13-22]

The syntactical compactness which the heroic couplet enforces on the material is frequently antithetical. Here the contrast between the shade offered by "nature" and the unnatural heat still felt within and with which sheep sympathize, and between the Summer's fire and the loved one's wintry heart seems specifically to be reminiscent of Angelot's grief for the death of Albino in Philips's Pastoral 3 or Lobbin's plaint of Pastoral 1. The nearest contemporary model, however, is Walsh's Eclogue 2, a similar mixture of Eclogue 2 and Idyll 11:

Now while the Flocks and Herds to Shades retire,  
 While the fierce Sun sets all the World on Fire;  
 Through burning Fields, through rugged Brakes I rove,  
 And to the Hills and Woods declare my Love.  
 How small's the Heat! how easy is the Pain  
 I feel without, to what I feel within! [11. 11-16]<sup>1</sup>

Not only are Pope's antitheses more prolonged and numerous, but they are deliberately studded with allusions. It has often been remarked

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1. Letters and Poems, p. 113-14.

that Pope is directly represented by the Alexis of "Summer", who in Eclogue 2 is the object of love's pain not its subject. This identification, however, is not in order to impersonate a despairing lover entirely, for much of the poem reflexively expresses the difficulties inherent in poetic creation within a daunting tradition. Alexis is to receive the °Flute...which Colin's tuneful Breath/Inspir'd when living, and bequeath'd in Death ° (39-40). Far from inspiring the recipient with confidence as it had done with Philips, the gift may now lie for ever silent due to love's reverses (44), and yet many of the aspirations of Alexis are literary rather than purely amorous ones. "Summer" contains no mention of the beloved and yet Walsh called his Eclogue 2 after Galatea and Dryden's Eclogue 2 is entitled "Alexis". There is little doubt that Pope's main emphases are on the Art that such amorous intrigue calls forth rather than its dramatic interest.

There is one section that bears a consistent resemblance to Eclogue 2 and that is the closing eight lines:

But see, the Shepherds shun the Noon-day Heat,  
 The lowing Herds to murm'ring Brooks retreat,  
 To closer Shades the panting Flocks remove,  
 Ye Gods! and is there no Relief for Love?  
 But soon the Sun with milder Rays descends  
 To the cool Ocean, where his Journey ends;  
 On me Love's fiercer Flames for ever prey,  
 By Night he scorches, as he burns by Day. [11. 85-92].

Once again, Pope's modernization leaves much of the original on the cutting-room floor. Eclogue 2 concludes with the evening mildness that allows Corydon to adopt a less fixated view and so place the dementia into which he has descended in a wider perspective:

"semiputata tibi frondosa vitis in ulmo est.  
 quin tu aliquid saltem potius, quorum indiget usus,  
 viminibus mollique paras detexere iunco  
 invenies alium, si te hic fastidit, Alexim." [11. 70-73]<sup>1</sup>

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1. 'Your vine is but half-pruned on the leafy elm. So, why not at least set about plaiting something you need, with twigs and pliant rushes? You will find another Alexis, if you're scorned by this one.'

No such parallel between the lover and his surroundings remains in "Summer". Instead Pope has amplified, perhaps with Dryden's help, line 68 and placed such desperation at the end:

me tamen urit amor; quis enim modus adsit amori?<sup>1</sup>

Dryden was also attracted by the racked lover, to the extent that his Corydon is given a defiance he shares with Pope's "Alexis".

Cool Breezes now the raging Heats remove;  
Ah, cruel Heaven! that made no Cure for Love!  
I wish for balmy Sleep, but wish in vain:  
Love has no bounds in Pleasure, or in Pain. [11. 99-102].<sup>2</sup>

So compulsive was this energy that Dryden could not prevent his Corydon's repentance from love's frenzy to be complete or to find it without excuse: 'On willow twigs employ thy weaving care;/And find an easier love, though not so fair ' (107-8). In "Summer", there are two examples of how Pope uses imitation. Firstly, as a generalized technique that testifies not only to the classical past but also to its efficacy in the present as evidenced by the efforts to complement the various borrowings and also choose some of them from more modern sources. Secondly, he suggests a model in the classical canon only to streamline it, strip it of its prevalent dramatic interest and keep its melodies in the same key. Frequently, what seems a close version of the original only exists allusively in Pope's Pastorals to demonstrate how it is being modified. The opening to "Winter" imitates Theocritus's first bucolic line:

Thyrsis, the Musick of that murm'ring Spring  
Is not so mournful as the Strains you sing,  
Nor Rivers winding thro' the Vales below,  
So sweetly warble, or so smoothly flow. [11. 1-4]

and imperceptibly modulates into the lines from Eclogue 5 (83-84) where

1. 'Yet I am still burned for love; for what limit can be placed on love?'

2. Poems, 2 : 880.

Mopsus praises Menalcas's apotheosis of Daphnis and likens it to 'Saxosas inter decurrunt flumina vallis'.<sup>1</sup> Dryden smoothed out the stream's course: 'winding Streams that through the Valley glide ' (131).<sup>2</sup> What Pope adds to Theocritus and Dryden's Virgil, is a hint of mournful cadence that assuages the violence of grief in soothing sounds. From Mopsus and Thyrsis to Lycidas is a long way but it is adequately mapped by its allusive associations. Thyrsis's first quatrain creates a manifesto for the poem, and its modernizing, built on imitative material:

Here shall I try the sweet Alexis' Strain,  
That call'd the list'ning Dryads to the Plain?  
Thames heard the Numbers as he flow'd along,  
And bade his Willows learn the moving Song. [11. 11-14]

Alexis's strain is no reference to either "Summer" or Eclogue 2 but rather Congreve's The Mourning Muse of Alexis. Elwin and Courthope claim that this couplet is closely modelled on Garth's Dispensary (1699): 'As tuneful Congreve trys his rural Strains, Pan quits the Woods, the list'ning Fawns the Plains ' (IV. 215-16).<sup>3</sup> This "modern" source of pastoral inspiration is, however, only brought to light by means of an allusion: as "naturalization" of Eclogue 6 which Pope noted in 1736: 'Audiit Eurotas, iussitque ediscere lauros ' (83).<sup>4</sup>

The willows that symbolize grief in English conventions supersede the laurels of the Greek Eurotas. The mode is the same even if the individual details differ. The same gesture occurs in "Spring":

STREPHON

O'er Golden Sands let rich Pactolus flow,  
And Trees weep Amber on the Banks of Po;  
Blest Thames' Shores the brightest Beauties yield,

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1. '...streams tumbling down amid rocky glens.'

2. Poems, 2 : 893.

3. See the annotation in TE. 1 : 89.

4. 'Happy Eurotas listened and bade his laurels learn by heart.'

Feed here my Lambs, I'll seek no distant Field.

DAPHNIS

Celestial Venus haunts Idalia's Groves,  
Diana Cynthus, Ceres Hybla loves;  
 If Windsor-Shades delight the matchless Maid,  
Cynthus and Hybla yield to Windsor-Shade. [11. 61-68]

One glance at this mixture of Greek and British ideas may absolve Pope from the blemishes Warton observed. The two cultures are quite clearly demarcated here, and if anything, Pope seems to promise a less mythologized vein of description, eschewing the exotic beauties of golden sands and Amber wept from Roman trees. However this is less direct a declaration the more the two quatrains are examined. Strephon announces a theme and Daphnis responds to it; the theme is not pursued past this one facet of a multi-faceted contest. In short, it does not commit Pope at all to a naturalistic pastoral. Indeed, Daphnis's response is an increase in learned composition, its texture thick with classical conventions - an attempt to cap the other contestant, not utter a serious aesthetic belief. Daphnis gives Pope an opportunity (66) to demonstrate a Virgilian concentration of meaning. This concision is allied to a lyrical repetition (67-68). Daphnis is indeed showing his command of the poetic craft. This disavowal, however temporary, of the mythological fictions of the past was a later idea of Pope's. His note for line 61 in 1736 runs: 'It stood thus at first, Let rich Iberia golden fleeces boast,/ Her purple wool the proud Assyrian coast,/ Blest Thames's shores etc...' It might also have occurred to Pope to associate that most nationalistic of poems, Denham's Cooper's Hill (1642), with the poem, for lines 165-68 run:

Though with those streams he the Thames no resemblance hold,  
 Whose foame is Amber, and their Gravel]Gold;  
 His genuine, and lesse guilty wealth t'explore,<sup>1</sup>  
 Search not his bottom, but survey his shore...

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1. This resemblance is noted at TE, 1 : 66. Compare Windsor Forest, 11. 355-76 (especially 11. 363-66).

This updating of his own classical reading even led Pope to attempt a semi-parody of Virgil's closing comments in Eclogue 7:

CORYDON

Populus Alcidae gratissima, vitis Iaccho,  
 formosae myrtus Vencri, sua laurea Phoebos:  
 Phyllis amat corylos; illas dum Phyllis amabit,  
 nec myrtus vincet corylos nec laurea Phoebi...

THYRSIS

...saepius at si me, Lycida formose, revisas,  
 fraximus in silvis cedat tibi, pinus in hortis. [ll. 61-64, 67-68]<sup>1</sup>

Pope here strives to elevate his version and relegate the debate in Eclogue 7 to non-symbiotic bickering. Unlike the imitative elements in "Winter" (11-14) this version aims to overcome the original's "lower" idiom and demonstrate a divergence in spirit if not influence.

Sometimes Pope can allude to famous lines and use them for quite different ends. The first passage of Aegon's lament for 'perjur'd Doris' in "Autumn" has the often-admired closing description in Eclogue 1 inscribed in a context that appears, but is not, valedictory:

Resound ye Hills, resound my mournful Strain!  
 Of perjur'd Doris, dying I'll complain:  
 Here where the Mountains less'ning as they rise,  
 Lose the low Vales, and steal into the Skies.  
 While lab'ring Oxen, spent with Toil and Heat,  
 In their loose Traces from the Field retreat;  
 While curling Smokes from Village-Tops are seen,  
 And the fleet Shades glide o'er the dusky Green. [ll. 57-64]

This vespertine twilight accompanies Aegon's song throughout 'till th'Approach of Night' (97). The complaint is tightly structured by the encroaching recognition that the death of his hopes of winning Doris back runs parallel to the death of the day. Certainly the clearest allusion seems to be to the conclusion of Eclogue 1: 'et iam summa procul villarum culmina fumant/maioresque cadunt altis de montibus

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1. 'COR: The poplar is most dear to Alcides, the vine to Bacchus, the myrtle to lovely Venus, and his own laurel to Phoebus. Phyllis loves hazels, and while Phyllis loves them, neither the myrtle nor laurel of Phoebus shall outdo the hazels...TH:...but, if you, lovely Lycidas, visit me, the ash in the woods and the pine in the gardens would give place to you.'

umbrae ' (82-83).<sup>1</sup> Pope here is obviously much influenced by John Caryl's translation for volume one of Miscellany Poems (1684): 'And curling Smoak from Village tops ascends', (p. 254) a rendition that Dryden found useful: 'And curling Smoke from Cottages ascends.'<sup>2</sup> However, blended with these by now almost formulaic lines, there is an ingredient from the close of Eclogue 2 as well: 'aspice, aratra iugo referunt suspensa iuveni,/et sol crescentis decedens duplicat umbras ' (66-67).<sup>3</sup> Philips had tried his hand at this Virgilian gloss as well. Pastoral 2's conclusion makes graphic use of Eclogue 2 after an obvious allusion to the magnanimity of Tityrus from Eclogue 1:

And now behold the Sun's departing Ray  
O'er yonder Hill, the Sign of ebbing Day:  
With Songs the jovial Hines return from Plow,  
And th'unyok'd Heifers, pacing homeward, low. [11. 130- 33]<sup>4</sup>

Pope's version is more careful to imitate a plural model. Its diversity is even more remarkable if Wakefield's note to lines 61 to 62 is credited, where he cites Comus: 'Two such I saw, what time the labour'd Oxe/In his loose traces from the furrow came ' (290-91).<sup>5</sup> As in most of Pope's allusions, one model is not enough.

The loosest kind of imitation is of identifiable themes or objects, which while not requiring much verbal borrowing can still refer the reader back to the original. Pope bids farewell to the pastoral form much as Virgil and Spenser had signed off. "Winter"

1. 'Even now the house-tops over there are smoking and longer shadows fall from the mountain-heights.'
2. Poems, 2 : 877.
3. 'See, the bullocks drag home by the yoke the heavy plough, and the retiring sun doubles the lengthening shadows.'
4. Poems, p. 16.
5. See TE, 1 : 84.

concludes with an epilogue not to Thyrsis's elegy for Daphne but to Pope's pastoral "period":

See pale Orion sheds unwholesome Dews,  
 Arise, the Pines a noxious Shade diffuse;  
 Sharp Boreas blows, and Nature feels Decay,  
 Time conquers All, and We must Time obey.  
 Adieu ye Vales, ye Mountains, Streams and Groves,  
 Adieu ye Shepherd's rural Lays and Loves,  
 Adieu my Flocks, farewell ye Sylvan Crew,  
Daphne farewell, and all the World adieu! [11. 85-92]

This leave-taking of the form was a measure of the poet's aspirations.

"E.K." points out that the last six verses of "December" are 'a conclusion of all' and that in them the poet 'comprehendeth briefly all that was touched in this booke.'<sup>1</sup> Pope in 1736 was to take a commentator's liberty and claim the same: 'These four last lines allude to the several Subjects of the four Pastorals, and to the several scenes of them, particularized before in each.' (1: 95).

Colin has broken his pipe in "Januarye" and Daphnis, the spirit of pastoral verse, in dying, had threatened the death of country song in Idyll 1, but this is a personal leave-taking, a private bench-mark noted and publicized. Virgil's Eclogue 10 has two endings, one is Gallus's own, harried by the God of Love:

"...tamquam haec sit nostri medicina furoris,  
 aut deus ille malis hominum mitescere discat.  
 iam neque Hamadryades rursus neque carmina nobis  
 ipsa placent; ipsae rursus concedite silvae...  
 omnia vincit Amor: et nos cedamus Amori." [11. 60-63, 69]<sup>2</sup>

the other is Virgil's own: 'Haec sat erit, divae, vestrum cecinisse

1. Poetical Works, p. 467.

2. 'As if this could heal my frenzy, or as if that god could learn pity for human sorrows! Now once more, neither Hamadryads nor even songs attract me; once more goodbye, woods! ...love conquers all; let us, too, yield to love!'

poetam, / dum sedet et gracili fiscellam texit hibisco, / Pierides; '...'

( 70-72).<sup>1</sup> Virgil as shepherd then leaves the perilous shade of the juniper and gathers his replete goats homewards under the evening star: Hesperus. Pope's own valediction as Thyrsis is similarly seeking pastures new but the last lines are as much a thematic summation of the pastoral scheme as Pope's own direct farewell. It is Time, not Love, that conquers all in "Winter", and, as such, closes a seasonal round that started (and will start again) with "Spring".

This concern with the interweaving of the individual poems was what Pope had found diminished in Spenser's own pattern. He had also in the "Discourse" objected to the length of Theocritus's descriptions, especially of the goatherd's cup in Idyll 1. Its lack of cross-reference to the rest of the poem, especially Thyrsis's lament for Daphnis, could mean that the pastoral would not have been taken seriously, in Aristotelian terms. Virgil's attempt in Eclogue 3 at cup description involves two cups yet shows a desire for spare economy as well:

...pocula ponam  
fagina, caclatum divini opus Alcimedontis;  
lenta quibus torno facili superaddita vitis  
diffusos hedera vestit pallente corymbos. [11. 36-39]<sup>2</sup>

Inside, Virgil hints at their being a calendar for the reaper and ploughman. Pope, using Dryden's amplification of this detail (where there was shown the 'Seasons of the sliding Year...')<sup>3</sup>, organizes the cup description, which like Dryden he names a 'bowl', so that it becomes an emblem of the Pastorals as a whole: orderly, yet inter-

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1. 'These strains, divine Muses, it will be enough for your poet to have sung, while he sits at rest, and twines a basket of slender hibiscus.'

2. '...I will stake two beechen cups, divine Alcimedon's embossed work. On these a pliant vine, placed there by the engraver's skill, is entwined with spreading clusters of pale ivy.'

3. 3.62, Poems, 2: 882.

fused with a variety that is still significant given the overarching framework - a concordia discors:

DAPHNIS

And I this Bowl; where wanton Ivy twines,  
 And swelling Clusters bend the curling Vines:  
 Four Figures rising from the Work appear  
 The various Seasons of the rowling Year;  
 And what is That, which binds the Radiant Sky,  
 Where twelve bright Signs in beauteous Order lye? ["Spring" 11. 35-40]

The variety of the seasons is absorbed into a higher patterning, the 'rowling Year' and the result is 'beauteous Order'. Pope was to note with approval that 'The Subject of these Pastorals engraven on the bowl is not without its propriety' (1 :84) . In order to create this ironic resonance, Pope had to step outside the Pastorals for some of his sources. Dryden's translation of Georgics 1. 328-29, dwells on the cosmographical balance of Virgil's universe: 'And cross their limits cut a sloping way,/Which the twelve Signs in beauteous order sway.' The 'rowling Year' Pope had interpolated from another passage in Dryden's translation: a passage on the reaper's calendar: 'Observe what Stars arise or disappear;/And the four Quarters of the rolling Year! (348-49)<sup>1</sup> Met together in the description of Strephon's bowl, these several details combine to lend a significance to the ~~Goatherd's stake and an added emphasis to Menalcas's description.~~

The Pastorals, therefore, stand in sharp contrast not only to Philips's own work but also to that of Walsh and Congreve. The varied perspectives and unities that the practice of imitation gave rise to provided Pope with several advantages. Primarily, there is much that the form implicitly signifies. By choosing to imitate several models from antiquity, he upholds the inherent values of imitation and the

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1. Poems, 2 : 927.

continuity of a Humanist culture, and not on the other hand the excellence of any one work alone. This does not prevent Pope modernizing Virgil and Theocritus, or to allude to more contemporary sources, for the desire to represent the Sicilian Muse on the banks of the Thames does not dishonour the classical legacy at all. Indeed, the Ancients' theory of historical cycles would involve the reappearance of the past in the present. Philips's "progressive" Pastorals do allude to the past only to render it superannuated and superseded. In any case, the choice of Spenser as an example was to confront the earliest styles with a less universal native Doric that aimed a little too closely at verisimilitude. Secondly, Pope's earliest work displays an interest in the construction of a "Nature" that can function not as the perceptually "real" but as a standard, not mimetic in the lower senses but exemplary. Specifically the "natural" is observed in those artists who have stood the test of time and attracted the attention of the literate down the ages. The more the individual talent annexes itself to and establishes a clear relationship to this tradition the more it will display a confidence in its truth.

Pope did not remain in 'Windsor-Shades' for long. Windsor Forest (1713) pretends to a descriptive style but is nearest to being a Georgic poem,<sup>1</sup> Essay on Criticism (1711) is Pope's own poetic Essay after Vida and Boileau. Greater themes nearer to the Epic beckoned. The closing lines of "Winter" match the discontent with the form (prescriptively interpreted) that is observed in the last paragraph of Guardian 40, that is, if the 'rural crew' demand a descriptive talent for the smooth and soft, then it is as well to attempt more

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1. See John Chalker, The English Georgic : A Study in the Development of a Form (Baltimore, 1969), pp. 74-88.

taxing duties. As it is, the potential contradiction in his pastoral theory expresses a desire to imitate both Rapin and Fontenelle, two radically divergent theorists. It has been observed that the "Discourse" is at best a fallible introduction to the Pastorals, and that the series of correspondences between the great and little worlds demanded an undue emphasis on elements at variance with both the Golden Age and rural tranquility, and more in line with Walsh's example of amorous pathos. Pope was to adopt more exalted and less facile texts to exemplify this when he lighted on Ovid's Heroides to provide the inspiration for Eloisa to Abelard (1716). There is then the occasional desire to dispense with the more confining and juvenile apprenticeship that Pope felt he ought to serve. This is both a conventional gesture and one experienced in the reading of the Pastorals. The motto to the series is chosen, as are several of the allusions, to associate the poetry with a "higher" species of expression: 'Rura mihi, et rigui placeant in vallibus amnes, / Flumina amem, sylvasque, inglorius!' (Georgic 2 : 485-86)<sup>1</sup>

This pose cuts across the suitable pastoral humility as it is chosen from the famous 'O fortunatos mimium;...' passage (Georgic 2 : 458ff.), often quoted alongside Horace's Epode 2 as sources for the species of retirement poetry that describes the withdrawal of public figures from the greater world. They do not become shepherds but, armed with a small library and a worthy circle of friends, these figures become symbols of the embattled condition of true cultural values allowed to grow in the country because free of the contamination

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1. 'Let my delight be the country, and the running streams amid the dells - may I love the water and the woods, though fame be lost.'

of ambition and commercial expediency.<sup>1</sup> This retreat from the contingent and the accidental is a salient feature of Pope's early verse. Frequently there is an impulse towards the creation of a heterocosm, a perfect palace of art. His imitation of Cowley's The Garden (c. 1709) delights in how Nature is seen to arrange itself in orderly patterns which blend with one another: 'There in bright drops the crystal Fountains play,/ By Laurels shielded from the piercing Day:' (21-22).<sup>2</sup> Daphne still 'vindicates her shade' from Apollo and 'turns her beauties from th'invading beam' (25). This immersion of the self into an artfully-wrought alternative is the delight of his The Gardens of Alcinous, from the Seventh Book of Homer's Odyssees (1713).<sup>3</sup> Here 'order'd vines in equal ranks appear/ With all th'united labours of the year, . . .' (17-18). Variety is ensured if it is limited 'with a green enclosure all around.' (4). It is this embracing framework that shields the 'Beds of all various herbs' from the passage of flux and decay that lie outside. Granted this, these 'beds' may be 'for ever green' and thereby 'In beauteous order they terminate the scene' (26-27). This pattern is found in art which keeps the anarchy of unnatural life at bay. This fondness for the retreat from public concerns transforms Windsor Forest until all that is left is its symbolic function. These 'green Retreats' are composed out of varied contours which contrast with each other. However, this strife is no reversion to chaos but rather a harmonious confusion:

Where Order in Variety we see,  
And where, tho' all things differ, all agree.  
Here waving Groves a checquer'd Scene display,

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1. For example see John Pomfret's The Choice, 11. 29-68. For a fuller documentation of the Retirement tradition in Pope's development, see Maynard Mack, The Garden and the City: Retirement and Politics in the Later Poetry of Pope, 1731-1743 (Toronto, 1969), pp. 77-115.
  2. TE, 6 : 47.
  3. TE, 6 : 103.

And part admit and part exclude the Day;... [11.15-18]<sup>1</sup>

This balance of contending opposites is possible in poetry, especially poetry in heroic couplets. London, however, is not poetic material yet. In his A Farewell to London In the Year 1715, it becomes 'damn'd' and 'distracting' (1), a place where 'The love of Arts lies cold and dead/In Hallifax's Urn' (25-26) and where friends betray friends.<sup>2</sup>

These are, indeed, merely embellishments and variations on the theme of retreat. Pope, however, took to the motif as one of his earliest influences. His Ode on Solitude (c. 1700) is a clear contribution to the Beatus Ille tradition:

Happy the man, whose wish and care  
A few paternal acres bound,  
Content to breath his native air,  
  In his own ground. [11. 1-4]<sup>3</sup>

Here, the trees in summer shade him yet this is no complete holiday for study and meditation are vital ingredients. There is still yet more conclusive evidence that links Pope's early poetry with this pervasive ideal. In revising Wycherley's poems during the years 1706 to 1710, he inserted several passages that reflect not only the desire for independence from the distractions of a writer's life, but the essentially reactionary dislike of radical change. The following lines of Pope's appear in The Various Mix'd Life (1728-29), a poem that advocates a mean in all things:

The Stream of life shou'd more securely flow  
In constant Motion, nor too swift nor slow,  
And neither swell too high, not strike too low;...  
...Around in sweet Meanders wildly range,

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1. TE, 1 : 149-50.

2. TE, 6 : 128-30.

3. TE, 6 : 3.

Kept fresh by Motion, and unchang'd by Change. [18-20, 25-26]<sup>1</sup>

'Motion' not 'change' is necessary and a wild torrent may even make a sweet meander in a river's course to the sea if the 'Native Channel' is secure enough. More revealing are Pope's lines in For Solitude and Retirement against the Publick. Active Life (1728). Removed from the grandeur and strife of public life, Man can enjoy the fruits of life in repose and recognize the true value of the creation. The riches of this existence contrast with the material wealth of the 'Patrician Board' (25). There is much of the Arcadian about this observer, especially in his detached gaze in the direction of agricultural labour.

He

Wak'd by the Morning-Cock, unseals his Eyes,  
 And sees the Rusticks to their Labours rise;  
 And in the Evening, when those Labours cease,  
 Beholds them cheery eat the Bread of Peace:  
 Sees no foul Discords at their Banquets bred,  
 Nor Emulations, nor Disgusts succeed:  
 But all is quiet, jocund, and serene,  
 A type of Paradise, the Rural Scene! [11. 32-39]<sup>2</sup>

This rhapsodic note is very much the voice of Virgil's Georgic 2 not the Eclogues, and yet the Pastorals show a particularly distinctive capacity to describe bucolic life in metaphors of enclosure and self-sufficient autonomy similar to the preoccupations of the poems above.

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This association is evident in the opening lines of the series.

"Spring" is 'Inscrib'd to Sir William Trumbal' who, Warburton had noted in 1751, had 'lately resign'd his employment of Secretary of State to King William'.<sup>3</sup> Trumbull had in fact retired in 1698. He had

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1. TE, 6 : 56. Indeed, Pope counsels the reader that the 'stream of life' should certainly not always 'glide thro' gloomy Vales, and rove/('Midst Flocks and Shepherds) in the silent Grove;...' (21-22), a clear distinction between the life of pastoral unreflective ease and the life of contemplative Retirement.

2. TE, 6 : 58.

3. TE, 1 : 60.

been near to greatness in 1684 when Godolphin had been promoted and was knighted the same year. In 1695, he gained his high office and was made a Privy Councillor, yet three years later he retired to his seat at Easthampstead, declining at least two further offers of office, until his death in 1716. Trumbull was obviously a patron and a (perhaps unwanted) advisor of Dryden's classical work, for he is mentioned in the Postscript to his Virgil in glowing terms.<sup>1</sup> Pope gained his acquaintance in 1705 and doubtless read his Pastorals to the retired statesman nearly fifty years his senior. He appears in "Spring" as the epitome of retired dignity, 'too Wise for Pride, too Good for Pow'r' who was enjoying 'the Glory to be Great no more' (7-8). What is more, Trumbull adds a certain piquancy to the choice for "Spring" of 'Windsor-Shades', having been born there and also having returned there in his retirement.<sup>2</sup> This function is especially emphasised for its power to join the powerful themes of rural retreat to the pastoral tradition. In Windsor Forest, an earlier version of lines 235 following he dubs Trumbull one of the Happy Men:

Happy the man who to the Shades retires,  
 But doubly happy, if the Muse inspires!  
 Blest whom the Sweets of home-felt quiet please;<sup>3</sup>  
 But far more blest, who study joins with ease.

Pope was to honour his memory in similar terms in 1717 when he published in his own Miscellany Written over a Study; out of Maynard, in English for Sir W. Trumbull:

Tir'd with vain hopes, and with complaints as vain,  
 Of anxious love's alternate joy and pain,...

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1. Essays, 2 : 242-43.

2. Pope notes this fact in 1736; see TE, 1 : 61, n. 12.

3. Reprinted at TE, 1 : 171.

...Here both contented and resign'd, I lye;  
 Here learn to live; nor wish, nor fear to die. [11. 1-2, 5-6]<sup>1</sup>

This is a quite overt set of allusions to retirement poetry yet there is a deeper level at which the Pastoral poem itself was seen as a form to set against the world, public or otherwise.

Virgil's Eclogues are shot through with unArcadian details. There is hardly a poem where the limits of Arcadia are not set and its reality thereby questioned. Pope attempts the reverse. No such questions are begged. Only Time breaches the fortified 'Shades', and its orderly symmetries. The most obvious device was that provided by the pastoral tradition itself: the amoebian structure of "Spring" and "Autumn". Theocritus's Shepherds had sung competitively for gain whereas Pope's sing to inherit the power of greater song. Just immediately after the compact portrayal of Strephon's bowl, Damon commences by wishing to absorb his song into the diurnal round of the seasons:

Then sing by turns, by turns the Muses sing,  
 Now Hawthorns blossom, now the Daisies spring,  
 Now Leaves the Trees, and Flow'rs adorn the Ground;  
 Begin, the Vales shall Echo to the Sound. [11. 41-44]

Strephon responds by invoking Phoebus's inspiration alongside the influence of Waller's Strains, or Granville's moving Lays! (45-46).

These literary models complement "natural" appearances; Pope's dawning powers will combine these two influences within the bipartite structure of "Spring". Symmetries and reciprocal relations abound elsewhere. Daphnis wishes them to imitate the dawn birdsong: 'Why sit we sad, when Phosphor shines so clear,/And lavish Nature paints the Purple Year?' (27-28). The lamb staked by Strephon 'his dancing Shade

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1. TE, 6 : 168.

surveys' in a nearby fountain (33-36). Delia's laughter causes Strephon to 'search around,/And by that laugh the willing Fair is found' (55-56) and her smile causes instant sunshine (69-72). Daphnis caps that by claiming that 'If Sylvia smile, new Glories gild the Shore,/ And vanquish'd Nature seems to charm no more' (75-76). Art can surpass even the most perfect natural scenes. In "Autumn", the tapestry of Nature is woven in darker colours but it still answers to the sentiments of both Hylas and Aegon. For Hylas, the 'gentle Gales' will bear his every sigh to Thyrsis: 'For him, the Lymes their pleasing Shades deny;/For him, the Lillies hang their heads and dye' (25-26). Aegon, however, is condemned to gaze on the fruits of harvest-time and note the stark contrast between his own fate and the orderly progress of Nature. Alexis in "Summer" shares this Weltschmerz, harbouring the 'Serpent love' within his breast (68). The death of Daphne in "Winter" is the culmination of this progressive separation from Nature. Human mortality is the reality that, regrettably, Art cannot ignore and yet even this can be transcended by the Sylvan Muse when Thyrsis traces Daphne's apotheosis:

But see! where Daphne wond'ring mounts on high,  
 Above the Clouds, above the Starry Sky.  
 Eternal Beauties grace the shining Scene,  
 Fields ever fresh, and Groves for ever green! [11. 69-72]

This is enough to dissolve grief and reinstate the power of the idealized imagination that need not leave the groves of poetry. As Battestin points out, this is fully consistent within the scheme to depict Man's fallen state and his habitation in an Age of Lead. Trumbull 'is himself a living parable of this softly didactic theme of pastoral, which addresses a courtly and urbane audience to recommend a return to original innocence in the state of Nature.'<sup>1</sup> This

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1. The Providence of Wit, p. 63.

is as much a consequence of his choosing to write within the pastoral tradition anyway. What is significant is the lengths Pope goes to stress the artificial in his Pastorals and to "show the working" in an equation of present and past. In order to accomplish this fully, non-pastoral material, especially the retirement tradition of the Georgics and Horace's Epode 2, is also imitated. In a fundamental way, Pope has written poems that testify to the belle nature of the earliest poets' simplicities of style not just to the felicities of one particular poem.

There is one appendix to this exercise in imitation. The closing consolation offered by Thyrsis had celebrated Daphne's translation to a higher realm. Lycidas had intimated that her Name, Honour and Praise would live in song. This redemptive function, by logical extension, would result in devotional verse, art which inspires enough to promise an enjoyment of the Golden Age above. The result was the "Messiah", published on May 14, 1712 in Spectator 378.<sup>1</sup> The poem deserves consideration with the Pastorals because Pope chose to append it to the four earlier poems in his Works as part of the series. This may have been retrospective opportunism as the "Discourse" does not cater accurately for this fifth "pastoral". The Golden Age is celebrated but it lies in the future not the past and, more to the point, Pope's criticism of Spenser that he treated 'matters of religion in a pastoral style' would surely indicate that the "Messiah" was 'something better'. In Guardian 40, he was to suggest that Virgil's Pollio had been 'given up' as a true pastoral by 'the Criticks in general',<sup>2</sup> but the irony here cloaks what might have appeared as a

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1. TE, 1 : 111-22. The Spectator paper can be found at Spectator, 3 : 419-22.

2. Prose Works, p. 98.

serious hypothesis. Spence, however, testifies to the fact that the poem came to be regarded by its author as a pastoral. Pope apparently mentioned that the 'last' pastoral was his favourite: the "Messiah".<sup>1</sup> This conviction is strengthened by a later comment on pastoral style that implies that Pope regarded the later poem as an acceptably sublimer version of pastoral: 'Though Virgil in his pastorals has sometimes six or eight lines together that are epic, I have been so scrupulous as scarce ever to admit above two together, even in the Messiah.'<sup>2</sup> The passage also shows how seriously Pope addressed himself to generic principles during composition. Although there is doubt, it all stems from the "Discourse" and is answered by subsequent comment.

Pope's own "Advertisement" which first appeared in 1717 is equivocal about the kind of poem it prefaced. He perceives what had often been noticed before that the Pollio was very similar to portions of Isaiah which would not seem surprising as 'the Eclogue was taken from a Sybilline prophecy on the same subject.' If anything, Pope only admits that the "Messiah" is an imitation of Holy Writ and is not clear in describing it as a pastoral:

One may judge that Virgil did not copy it line by line, but selected such ideas as best agreed with the nature of pastoral poetry, and disposed them in that manner which serv'd most to beautify his piece. I have endeavour'd the same in this imitation of him, tho' without admitting any thing of my own; since it was written with this particular view, that the reader by comparing the several thoughts might see how far the images and descriptions of the Prophet are superior to those of the Poet. [1:111]

This devotional motive leads Pope to a humble profession that he added nothing to Isaiah - that would have been tampering with divine inspir-

1. Anecdotes, 1 : 175.

2. Anecdotes, 1 : 176.

ation. Notwithstanding this "innocence", Pope's technique of including extensive passages of both Isaiah and Virgil for cross-reference is not in the interests of translation but rather imitation. The pious hope that Isaiah would come out of the exercise better than Virgil suggests that it is Isaiah rather than the Pollio that is the principle source of inspiration.

Steele took a liking to the poem. It was introduced as an anonymous piece in the Spectator, written by a 'great Genius, a Friend of mine, in the Country; who is not ashamed to employ his Wit in the Praise of his Maker' (3 : 419). This "country"-voice Steele obviously saw as penning a hymn, rather than a pastoral or an imitation alone. His reading indicates no recognition of its pastoral qualities. In a letter from him to Pope of July 1, 1712, Steele compliments the young poet for preserving a 'sublime and heavenly spirit throughout the whole.' He does, however, advance one objection:

There is but one line I think below the original,  
 He wipes the tears for ever from our eyes. 46 (1712)  
 You have express'd it with a good and pious, but not  
 with so exalted and poetical a spirit as the prophet.  
 "The Lord God will wipe away tears from off the faces..."  
 Your poem is already better than the Pollio.

Steele's enthusiasm influenced Pope for he revised the couplet,

'Before him Death, the grisly Tyrant flies; / He wipes the Tears for ever  
 from our Eyes.' for the 1717 volume where it reads,

No Sigh, no Murmur the wide World shall hear,  
 From ev'ry Face he wipes off ev'ry Tear.  
 In adamantin Chains shall Death be bound,  
 And Hell's grim Tyrant feel th'eternal Wound. [11. 45-48]

Pope obviously felt it necessary to lend a more "poetic" character to

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1. Correspondence, 1 : 146.

the lines and rely less on sublime simplicity, and this in spite of a definite cooling of relations between Steele and himself by 1717. The result is the Pope of the Homer translation rather than the pastoral poet of 1709.

There is evidence on the other hand that Pope originally conceived of the poem as an emulation of the Pollio. A letter from Caryll of May 23, 1712 includes a reference to his "imitation of Pollio" and Pope replies, referring to the "eclogue on the Messiah in imitation of Pollio..."<sup>1</sup> Caryll's interest was excited however by the divine subject matter. Before reading it, he enthused at the prospect, as he had ever thought 'church-musick the most ravishing of all harmonious compositions, and must also believe sacred subjects, well handled, the most inspiring of all poetry' (1 : 33). Pope's task, therefore, was to suggest not only that even Virgil was surpassed by the Divine Spirit but also that he now felt himself equal to combining both styles in a new Imitation. As has been noted before, it was possible for the poetical dimension of this pastoral alone to remain into the eighteenth century. Walsh, himself, had written a political allegory of the Golden Age. Pope's attempt is a complete alternative. ~~This Golden Age is ordained by God, no temporal ruler.~~

This deliberate divinization of the Pollio is suggested by its first full title: "MESSIAH./ A Sacred Eclogue, compos'd of several Passages of Isaiah the Prophet/ Written in Imitation of Virgil's Pollio." Subsequent appearances saw the poem entitled merely as "A/ Sacred Eclogue,/ Imitation of VIRGIL'S POLLIO." Virgil was also part of the annotations for the first time in the 1717 edition. From a perhaps

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1. Correspondence, 1 : 142, 144.

devotional appearance to find acceptance from Steele, the poem was given a more complex texture in subsequent manifestations. The reader would have been in no doubt in 1717 that the eventual poem was an Imitation in its own right, if not by the title then through the extensive annotated parallels provided at the foot of the page, a strategy for directing the reader arrived at earlier than with the other pastorals.

The task of creating a new synthesis out of such venerable material is a daunting one, and yet Owen Ruffhead's Life (1769) is adamant in claiming success for the attempt:

Upon the whole, it is not too much to say of these pastorals "the most conspicuous" of these being the Messiah, that though they are professedly imitations of the ancients; yet there are a few passages, which our poet has borrowed, without improving them; as the reader may judge, by comparing the imitations with the originals...

Much criticism has considered the poem at best a partial success.

Ruffhead was answering Warton's opinion that 'the dignity, the energy, and the simplicity of the original are in a few passages weakened and diminished by florid epithets, and useless circumlocutions.'<sup>2</sup>

By 1802 and Wordsworth's Appendix to the Lyrical Ballads such deviation from the simple strength of the Biblical 'original' was due to an unwise dabbling in 'poetic diction' which was both 'extravagant and absurd.'<sup>3</sup> Romantic criticism predictably found the artifice of Pope's

1. Critical Heritage, p. 463.

2. Joseph Warton, An Essay on the Writings and Genius of Pope, 2 vols., (volume 1 : 1756), p. 11. Recent criticism has echoed these sentiments. See Edward L. Surtz, "Epithets in Pope's Messiah", Philological Quarterly, 27 (1948), 209-18. 'In a word, the failure of the Messiah arises not from the ineptness, but from the redundancy, of Pope's epithets' (p. 217). More sympathetic accounts are catalogued at TE, 1 : 105-7 and in Brower, pp. 38-40.

3. The Prose Works of William Wordsworth, edited by W.J.B. Owen and Jane Worthington Smyser, 3 vols. (Oxford, 1974), 1 : 162.

embellishments obtrusive and unnecessary. As with the Pastorals, however, this artifice forms much of the poem's significance, especially in its manipulation of the sublimer pastoral strains of the Pollio. Battestin has valuably demonstrated how 'the themes and symbols which had earlier defined the temporal and spiritual condition of fallen men are now recalled in order to be contradicted.'<sup>1</sup> The fashionable melancholy is cast aside and in its place is an acclaim, often maintained at fever-pitch, for the original Edenic harmony of Man with his surroundings. It is significant that Pope's Virgilian material, and therefore the pastoral element, is scarce after line 84. Pope's note for line 85 in 1717 directs the reader to an appreciation of Isaiah's superiority over Virgil:

The thoughts of Isaiah, which compose the thoughts that follow to the end of the poem, are wonderfully elevated, and much above those general exclamations of Virgil which make the loftiest parts of his Pollio. Pope then quotes lines 5, 9, 12 and 52 of Eclogue 4. The reader needs only turn to the passages of Isaiah, as they are cited in the margins of the preceding Eclogue...[1 : 120]

The last twenty lines of the poem are a careful remodelling of the early verses of Isaiah, chapter 60 where the Golden Age is stripped of its pagan myths. Pope hints at the return of Virgil's sublimer pastoral style in the very last line only to christianize its beliefs and creeds: '...tuus iam regnat Apollo.' (10)<sup>2</sup> becomes '...thy own Messiah reigns!' (108). The poem then enacts the decline in influence of the pagan mythologies - a demise announced in the opening lines:

Ye Nymphs of Solyma! begin the Song!  
To heav'nly Themes sublimer Strains belong.

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1. Providence of Wit, p. 75.

2. 'Thine own Apollo now is King!'

The Mossie Fountains and the Sylvan Shades,  
 The Dreams of Pindus and th'Aonian Maids,  
 Delight no more. . . . [11. 1-5]

This is not only a farewell to the Gods of the Pollio, but to its classical sources of inspiration. More material is the parody of the opening invocation of the Pollio which, in Dryden's version, runs:

Sicilian Muse begin a loftier strain:  
 Though lowly Shrubs and Trees that shade the Plain,  
 Delight not all. . . . [11. 1-3]

The dividing line between imitation and parody is much thinner in the "Messiah" than in the Pastorals and here the clear parallels between Isaiah and Virgil's treatment afford Pope the opportunity to moralize his song at the pastoral's expense. If the Pollio were not worthy enough in its own right, the inspired material would not be so much praised. The pastoral element honours divine writing. In the process, some of the more domestic details of the Pollio which contrast with the sublimer strains are sacrificed. The Pollio competes with Isaiah in its higher registers. This "voice" can achieve a certain self-conscious hyperbole that is near to wit. Just as Virgil included the detail of the ram changing its fleece to blushing purple and saffron yellow, Pope verges on a note of gleeful wonder too:

The Dumb shall sing, the Lame his Crutch forego,  
 And leap exalting like the bounding Roe. . . .  
 The Steer and Lion at one Crib shall meet;  
 And harmless Serpents lick the Pilgrims' Feet. [11. 43-44, 79-80]

The inspiration for the one, however, is the Song of Solomon 2 : 8-9<sup>1</sup>  
 and the other Isaiah 65. 25.<sup>2</sup>

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1. 'The voice of my beloved! behold! hee cometh/leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills./My beloved is like a Roe, or a young Hart:...' (Authorized Version).
  2. 'The wolfe and the lambe shall feede together, and the lyon shall eat straw like the bullocke: and dust shalbe the serpents meat.' (Authorized Version).

CONCLUSION

The <sup>46</sup>Messiah<sup>47</sup> marks one particular side of Pope's pastoral writing. In itself, it is self-consciously elevated, self-conscious because it marks its sources of imitation quite clearly from its first appearance. Pope turns his hand to the 'something better' that in Guardian 40 he had found in Virgil's work above Philips's and Spenser's. Accordingly, the pastoral element is by no means clearly discernible. "Messiah" completes the scheme of the Pastorals by abolishing Time's tyranny: 'No more the rising Sun shall gild the Morn, / Nor Evening Cynthia fill her silver Horn ' (99-100) but this is no classical conclusion even if it does admit the Golden Age. The Golden Age of the Pollio had been envisioned by a shepherd's song and appeared in the fields first. Pope's Eden restored assumes a cosmic dimension that is not just embedded in the pastoral metaphors but is displayed openly. Implicit in this altered perspective is a parody of the Virgilian material. Imitation in the Pastorals had supplanted and elevated a shepherd's song, but the same allusions in devotional poetry, such as "Messiah", served to appropriate and eventually supersede it.

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## CHAPTER 6

John Gay, Country Ideology and the Mock-Pastoral

In the previous two chapters, Pope and Philips were differentiated in their pastorals not only by the use of the terms of Ancient/Modern but also by Tory/Whig. To some extent, these terms are interchangeable. It is possible to quote sections of Sir Robert Filmer's Patriarcha (published posthumously, 1680) alongside John Locke's contract theory to illustrate a wide divergence of ideology and, consequently, historical perspective. These two models illustrate the extremes of political assumption in the years 1680-1700, a particularly frenetic period leading up to the Revolution Settlement and including the early debate over its maintenance. To apply the terms Tory/Whig in a wider analysis, however, is, where not positively misleading, vague and undemanding. On the other hand, it is necessary to stress some original divergence between the theorists espoused in those years if the Ancient/Modern model is to be fully comprehensible in its appearance in the eighteenth century. As this involves discovering certain opposed theories of history, tradition and their critical taxonomies, it has a bearing on any investigation of the pastoral's survival during the first decades of the century. Furthermore, even if the Tory/Whig distinction forms no coherent shorthand for the whole of the period, its initial premises need establishing for two reasons: firstly, it is a distinction shared by many of the most influential ideologues from 1700 to 1730 and secondly, is a way of charting a more basic and enduring polarity between historical theories of "imitation" and contractual "liberty".

The Validity of the Distinction between Tory/Whig (1680-1714)

(a) Tory Ideologies of Order and Providence

Filmer's Patriarcha was a work stemming from another age, written to confute Hobbes's social compact theory.<sup>1</sup> Whilst agreeing with his demand for a strong absolutist monarchy, Filmer stresses the need for a ruler, unlike Hobbes's, who is set above temporal laws and a people's rights of redress. A king could never be punished even if breaking divine law. The only possible sanctions against him were those of a divine retribution administered in the next world not this.<sup>2</sup> Originally written to defend Charles I, his writings were revived in the 1680s by the Tory interests grounded on a secure hereditary succession, a warning to another Charles.

Filmer's reappearance in the 1680s helped clarify and authorize two associated Tory doctrines: direct divine ordination and indefeasible hereditary succession. Therein lay order and the requirement that subjects should both obey passively (if disposed to question) and abjure use of arms to defend their "rights" if counter to the system inaugurated by their monarch. These doctrines

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1. Hobbes's Leviathan (1651) had stressed the necessity for a voluntary social contract as the only means by which political stability could be achieved and an incessantly competitive "state of nature" avoided (Chapter 13, edited by C.B. MacPherson (Harmondsworth, 1968), pp. 183-88). This is the prelude to the codification of natural rights and laws. The right of nature is defined as 'the Liberty each man hath, to use his own power, as he will himselfe, for the preservation of his own Nature; that is to say, of his own life; and consequently, of doing any thing, which in his own Judgement, and Reason, hee shall conceive to be the aptest means thereunto' (p. 189). Social life involved the voluntary waiving of such rights in the interests of self-preservation: the contractual renunciation of most individual liberties and the transference of them to the hands of a strong monarchy (pp. 190-93).
  2. See Patriarcha and other Political Works of Sir Robert Filmer, edited by Peter Laslett (Oxford, 1949), pp. 62, 93, 126. Filmer did not lack interpreters in the 1680s; see William Hickee, Jovian (1683), pp. 199-212 or Samuel Parker, Religion and Loyalty (1684), pp. 100-1.

of non-resistance and passive obedience stressed the strictly limited nature of individual rights. All men were subject to their kings as to their parents, and, by extension, to the hegemonic traditions and laws all inherited.<sup>1</sup> The greatest unease was experienced at the prospect of the "mob", the unacceptable face of social revolution. The commonalty, to Roger North in his A Discourse on the English Constitution (1682?), were seen as 'too often the unhappy instruments to beat down truth in all kinds, and set up error; for they are not more fickle in their religion, than they are unto their government, or rather governors, from whom they are apt to be seduced ...'.<sup>2</sup> As H.T. Dickinson puts it, the Filmerian thesis and its influence 'fulfilled the need to find a political and social order which was above considerations of mere expediency, which was superior to time and circumstance, and which did not depend upon particular historical developments or national peculiarities'.<sup>3</sup> As such, it promised a validated, not just an expedient, stability. It would have been extremely lame to argue that the Stuarts had direct biblical authority for their rule, but, bolstered by an appeal to the covert operations of divine providence, it could be argued that the transmission of regality, if not specifically of Stuart stamp, had survived and ensured an eventual return to the true heir.<sup>4</sup> Radical thought of the 1640s was frequently rationalist; Filmer's admittedly mythical lineage of patriarchal sources of power (back to Adam) had promised

1. See Patriarcha, pp. 66-72, 81-84, 86-94.
2. Although written in the 1680s, North's Discourse was first published in The Scholar Armed, 2 vols. (2nd ed., 1800) (1: 264).
3. Liberty and Property: Political Ideology in Eighteenth-Century Britain (London, 1977), p. 18.
4. See Patriarcha, pp. 57-62, 74-75. These passages are very close in sentiment to the more extreme view in his The Anarchy of a Limited or Mixed Monarchy (1648), pp. 6-7, 12-13.

a more historical vindication enshrined in primeval constitutions. Less attractive to his age was the proposition that law followed the will of the king (and thus of God), not the contemporary context.

This Royalist position hardly survived the events of 1688. James II's departure to France meant that orthodox Toryism was de facto sympathetic to a foreign power and closely allied to potential Catholic mutiny. The resolution of the Commons on January 18, 1689 declared that James II had abdicated, leaving the throne vacant.<sup>1</sup> As the strongest political aspirant was William of Orange, the Tory reverence for authority had to be squared with scruples about its possible illegitimacy. Filmer could still be quoted in this respect, having acknowledged the depositions of the past as only possible by God's grace.<sup>2</sup> The Revolution was thus an unexpected manifestation of Providence and in this James's poor record regarding those Tory landowners hopeful of preferment was an ally.<sup>3</sup> Tory principles were kept intact by the useful distinction between William as king de facto

1. The debate over the wording of 'abdicated' rather than 'vacant throne' can be followed in The Eighteenth Century Constitution, 1688-1815: Documents and Commentary, edited by E. Neville Williams (Cambridge, 1960), pp. 20-26. The Bill of Rights (1689) makes James's culpability clear, he 'having abdicated the government, and the throne being thereby vacant' (a necessary compromise), the succession is best served by inviting the 'Prince of Orange' to succeed 'whom it hath pleased Almighty God to make the glorious instrument of delivering this Kingdom from popery and arbitrary power' (p. 27).
2. See Patriarcha, p. 62. Filmer's de facto apology for divine right is ingenious: 'It skills not which way Kings come by their power, whether by election, donation, succession or by any other means, for it is still the manner of the government by supreme power that makes them properly Kings, and not the means of obtaining their crowns' (p. 106). Filmer's argument attracted Anglican support. See Gilbert Burnet, A Sermon preached ... on 31 Jan. 1688/89 (1689), pp. 3, 13, and Francis Atterbury's "The Wisdom of Providence manifested in the Revolutions of Government", in Sermons and Discourses on Several Subjects and Occasions, 2 vols. (1723), 1: 258.
3. See J.R. Jones, Country and Court: England, 1658-1714 (London, 1978), pp. 229-33.

and as de jure. By 1701 and the Act of Settlement, self-declared Tory members gave support to the proposal that the Protestant House of Hanover should succeed Anne should she die childless. James's death in 1701 and William's in 1702 salved Tory consciences as it could now be argued that with Anne on the throne some measure of indefeasible hereditary succession had come to pass.

Recent research has demonstrated the longevity and vitality of Jacobite allegiance.<sup>1</sup> As late as 1714, Dickinson estimates that perhaps as many as a hundred Tory members wished to see the Pretender succeed Queen Anne.<sup>2</sup> Indeed in the last months of her reign there is evidence that hopes were high for a repeal of the Act of Settlement and for a parliamentary resolution in favour of the succession of James Edward Stuart. The theory of Divine Right, even in defiance of much of the events of recent history, could still rally influential support, even if its absolutist Filmerian emphases were now muted.

The Tory political position was founded upon an abstract sanction for central authority to which the law was a necessary adjunct in suppressing the anarchy of mob rule. Francis Atterbury, the most revered and outspoken of Tory divines, in 1710 (anonymously) equated the 'voice of the people' to 'the cry of hell, leading to idolatry, rebellion, murder, and all the wickedness the devil can suggest ...'.<sup>3</sup> Order could be maintained by Providence, but preferably by a strong temporal ruler. As the benefits of the Whig Revolution Settlement were obvious and the taint of Jacobitism unattractive, Tory ideology

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1. See the papers in Ideology and Conspiracy: Aspects of Jacobitism, 1689-1759, edited by Eveline Cruickshanks (Edinburgh, 1982) and also Linda Colley, In Defiance of Oligarchy: The Tory Party, 1714-60 (Cambridge, 1982), pp. 29-41.

2. Liberty and Property, p. 41.

3. The Voice of the People, no Voice of God (1710), p. 6.

could be adapted to substitute an Ancient Constitution in place of its present administrator, unfortunately limited by political opportunism: a temporary state of affairs until the evidence of James II and the actual historical context had dimmed.<sup>1</sup> This fundamentalist appeal extended to a heartfelt need to protect the Established Church from Nonconformist adulteration. The Whigs would suffice to shield it from Catholicism.

This association of ideas and the strength of its adherents is clearly demonstrated during the trial of Dr. Henry Sacheverell in February-March, 1710 for his supposedly seditious sermon The Perils of False Brethren, Both in Church and State, delivered on November 5, 1709 at St. Paul's. At the request of the Lord Mayor, it was published on November 25. Geoffrey Holmes estimates its distribution to have been 100,000 copies.<sup>2</sup> The Whig ministry's calamitous attempt to impeach Sacheverell was motivated by a desire to demonstrate the stability of the principles underlying the Settlement and also a confidence that Tory opinion had diluted sufficiently to allow them to do it. Unfortunately for the prosecuting Junto, the trial became a focus of pent-up discontent. Riots broke out and one mob intending to storm the Bank of England, the foremost symbol of Whiggery in London, had to be prevented by the Queen's Horse Guards.<sup>3</sup> Although found

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1. The seeds of such constitutional Royalism are identified in Isabel Rivers, The Poetry of Conservatism, 1600-1745: A Study of Poets and Public Affairs from Jonson to Pope (Cambridge, 1973), pp. 148-65. G.V. Bennett has illustrated the immense impact such an appeal had on Anglican thought in The Tory Crisis in Church and State, 1688-1730: The Career of Francis Atterbury, Bishop of Rochester (Oxford, 1975), pp. 104-9.
  2. The Trial of Dr. Sacheverell (London, 1973), p. 75. Holmes deals with the immediate context of the sermon at pp. 48-62. See also Bennett's The Tory Crisis, pp. 109-18.
  3. For an account of the rioting and the Tory management of it, see Angus McInnes, Robert Harley, Puritan Politician (London, 1970), pp. 121-24.

guilty, Sacheverell was all but exonerated amidst massive Tory rejoicing. In October, the Whig ministry fell.

What is most significant as regards the development of Tory ideology is the lack of direct reliance on divine right. Sacheverell is enough of a Filmerian to gain strength from the 'steady belief of the subject's obligation to an absolute, and unconditional obedience to the supreme power, in all things lawful, and the utter illegality of resistance upon any pretence whatsoever'. More often however it is the constitution shared by both Church and State that is in danger. 'So that ... whosoever presumes to innovate, alter, or mispresent any point in the articles of the faith of our Church ought to be arraign'd as a traitor to our state; ...'. The 'firmest and best-settl'd constitution in the world' was under an obligation to cast out the 'monsters and vipers' sheltering within: those who would call the Church 'unfashionable, superannuated, nay ... utterly inconsistent with the right liberty, and property of the PEOPLE; who have as our new preachers and politicians teach us, ... the power invested in them, the fountain and original of it, to cancel their allegiance at pleasure, ...'.<sup>1</sup>

Indeed, at the trial, Samuel Dodd, one of the defence counsels, could ~~assert an unexceptionable compromise, not quite consistent with the~~ emphases of the sermon itself, but representative of the Tory defence. The 'strength of the nation' lay not in the people, an unsurprising statement, but a body near allied: the 'collective body of the people assembled in Parliament', besides the Queen.<sup>2</sup>

Tory history developed a narrative, therefore, that drew most sustenance from a static conception of obligation and constitutionally

1. The Perils of False Brethren, Both in Church and State, reprinted in Politics and Literature in the Eighteenth Century, edited by H.T. Dickinson (London, 1974), p. 12.

2. The Tryal of Dr. Henry Sacheverell (1710), p. 203.

limited individual rights. Political affairs constantly consulted an established order. Change was explained by the providential inscrutability of the Divine Will, occasionally administering harsh lessons on the dangers of populist anarchy. With the death of Anne, as J.R. Jones puts it, the Whigs' political ascendancy was due 'primarily to their technical superiority as a political party' which, whilst drawing on a minority of the political nation, could exploit the Tories' prevarication over the Jacobite succession.<sup>1</sup>

The pastoral form in its neo-classical mode formed part of a graduated and discrete series of expressive possibilities. The learned poet showed mastery of his model, frequently Virgil, in order to modernize his memory not to supersede it. As already noted in the translations of Dryden and the Pastorals of Pope this classical past was conceived as a timeless lingua franca. In Dryden's case imitating Virgil's style as well as his topics proved an implicit critique of debased contemporary culture. For Pope, the principle of imitation itself provided the groundplan for pastoral writing of 1709. In both cases it would be inexact to find fully-blown and comprehensive Tory ideology in their writing. Indeed, the very terms were open to broad interpretation in 1697 and 1709. Addison wrote the headnotes to Dryden's Eclogues, Swift professed himself a Whig, two of Pope's most influential counsellors were, or had been, in Whig politics: William Walsh and William Trumbull, and, in any case, Pope is consistent in the years leading up to 1717 in claiming a certain freedom from electioneering.<sup>2</sup> In espousing an Ancient loyalty to observing and commemorating the genera and decora of

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1. Country and Court, p. 355.

2. This persona of Pope's is dealt with at length in John M. Aden, "Pope and Politics: 'The Farce of State'" in Writers and their Background: Alexander Pope, edited by Peter Dixon (London, 1972), pp. 172-79.

classical culture, however, there is more consistency. In ideological terms, the Tory reverence for abstract authority over against the numerous heterogeneity of contemporary life bears comparison with Ancient premises, and frequently underpinned them. As George de T. Lord has pointed out with reference to Absalom and Achitophel (1681), Dryden's inclination to present the contemporary event sub specie aeternitatis by means of classical, Roman historical or Old Testament analogues is, in effect, a Royalist/Tory hypothesis: 'Thus no contemporary event or issue is seen as unique, and the participants ... are generally reduced to types'.<sup>1</sup> In Dryden's case, Catholicism appealed because of its immutable form. Rationalism, in both Religio Laici (1682) and The Hind and the Panther (1687), is a gift to the seditious in the nation.<sup>2</sup> Dryden opposes it with the Established Church in the earlier poem and a Catholicism in the later closely allied to political equilibrium. The layman's faith in 1682 'does our Lusts oppose: / Unfed by Natures Soil, in which it grows' (158-59). This 'stubborn patience' (163) will eventually curb 'Sense and Sin' (160). Effectively, it will negate Experience as well as Reason as reliable evidence. Differing scriptural interpretation was really down to the half-lights of 'Wit and Eloquence' (373), a contrast to the 'Majestick and Divine' style of the divine Word (152) 'whose Force

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1. "'Absalom and Achitophel' and Dryden's Political Cosmos", in Writers and their Background: John Dryden, edited by Earl Miner (London, 1972), p. 159. For an extended study of Dryden in this light, see Alan Roper, Dryden's Poetic Kingdoms (London, 1965).
  2. Religio Laici can be found at Poems, 1: 302-22, The Hind and the Panther at Poems, 2: 467-537. Reason in 1682 was a faulty guide in matters of faith, but treasonous in matters politic as it encouraged the 'poor Worm' to 'offend Infinity' (93). Man, not God, then presumed to be 'Justice in the Last Appeal; / Thy easie God instructs Thee to rebell:' (95-96). By 1687, this aversion has settled on the 'unerring Guide' of Catholicism for its reproof (I, 65), for 'What weight of antient witness can prevail / If private reason hold the publick scale?' (I, 62-63).

is still the same / As the first Fiat that produc'd our Frame<sup>o</sup> (154-55).  
 In 1687, the Church of England is less immutable. Indeed Anglican  
 church government becomes the ecclesiastical equivalent of rule by  
 Trimmers:

Like tricks of state, to stop a raging flood

Or mollify a mad-brain'd Senate's mood:

Of all expedients never one was good. [II, 272-74]

As William Myers points out,<sup>1</sup> Tradition becomes reified as the theo-  
 logical equivalent of the 'Ark' of the English constitution: 'An old  
 possession stands, till Elder quitts the claim' (II, 237).

Pope's political bias in early career has recently been analyzed  
 in the work of John M. Aden and Howard Erskine-Hill.<sup>2</sup> Both stress  
 his covert Toryism. This surfaces in "Spring" in his attempt to  
 imitate the riddles of Eclogue 3 (104, 106). 'Say, Daphnis, say in  
 what glad Soil appears / A wondrous Tree that Sacred Monarchs bears?'  
 (85-86) is a clear reference to the Royal Oak of Charles. 'Nay tell  
 me first, in what more happy Fields / The Thistle springs, to which  
 the Lilly yields?' (89-90) would seem to allude to the House of Stuart,  
 perhaps in French exile.<sup>3</sup> In chapter 4, it was noted that Pope's  
~~whole strategy in providing pastorals for his age recognized the~~  
 necessity of an eclectic yet moulded tradition: a recreation of  
discordia concors. With the completion of the series with his  
 Messiah, however, he favours a transcendent divine ordering, a sublime  
 rebuke for the rustic pastoral form. Dryden had been able to assume

1. Dryden (London, 1973), pp. 119-20.

2. John M. Aden, Pope's Once and Future Kings: Satire and Politics  
 in the Early Career (Knoxville, Tenn., 1978); Howard Erskine-Hill,  
The Social Milieu of Alexander Pope (New Haven, 1975) and  
 "Alexander Pope: The Political Poet in his Time", Eighteenth-  
 Century Studies, 15 (1981-82), 123-48.

3. See Aden, pp. 62-63 for fuller explication.

a heroic "voice" for his pastorals because they were Virgil's. Pope had no such insurance.

Direct Tory influence on Pope (as Gay) becomes apparent from 1711 onwards. In that year they both met and a year later they made acquaintance with Swift, Arbuthnot and Farnell, closely followed by Harley, St. John, and Atterbury. In 1713, Pope commemorated the Peace of Utrecht in Windsor Forest (a treaty inspired by a Tory administration's desire to alleviate the country-interest's taxes).<sup>1</sup> This is obvious from the dedication to Lord Lansdowne, one of those actively responsible for its terms. Windsor Forest provides a suitably mythical structure for Ancient and Tory ideology, being at once 'the Monarch's and the Muse's Seats' (2).

Ancient preconceptions are linked to Tory ideology up to 1714. Indeed, the Ancient literary position all too easily became the aesthetic branch of the Tory party. For both Dryden and Pope, an abstract authority beleaguered by the Hydra-headed mob meant that imitation of the past and withdrawal from experiential perception were imperative. For Dryden, the Whigs of the 1680s were an 'Arbitrary Crowd' (142) in The Medall: A Satyre Against Sedition (1682), vulnerable to gusts of unruly passion:

Almight Crowd, thou shorten'st all dispute;  
 Pow'r is thy Essence; Wit thy Attribute!  
 Nor Faith nor Reason make thee at a stay,  
 Thou leapst o'r eternal truths, in thy Pindarique way!

[II. 91-96]<sup>2</sup>

For Pope, retirement from such contact proved the same attraction.<sup>3</sup>

1. Windsor Forest's Tory bias is demonstrated in J.R. Moore, "Windsor Forest and William III", Modern Language Notes, 66 (1951), 451-54, MLN, 1: 137, and Aden, pp. 63-64. Aden's comments on the contemporaneous Temple of Fame (pp. 90-96) suggest that it, too, reflects Tory hopes for the Utrecht Peace.

2. Poems, 1: 250-61.

3. See Pope's Ode to Solitude and Windsor Forest, 11. 237-56.

(b) Whig Ideologies of Contract

It is one major fallacy of the polarization of Tory and Whig that the former are stigmatized as all landed gentry clasping at a feudal past and the latter progressive City-men frequenting the Bank of England. Whig historians of the nineteenth century were too apt, in Herbert Butterfield's phrase, to study 'the past with direct and perpetual reference to the present'.<sup>1</sup> This inevitably over-dramatizes the contrast between those who could be seen to further "progress" and those who hindered it. In this system, likenesses between the past and present are significant whereas unlikenesses much less so, and no one term wins contemporary assent more than the Whig slogans of "Liberty".<sup>2</sup> However, this is as much an ideology as Tory "feudalism". Most active Whigs of the period shared many of the supposedly Tory assumptions: a belief in the necessity of an ordered society by which to protect the privileges and property of the wealthy and influential. Very few were republicans, even if one predominating Whig interest was a distrust of absolutism and the theory of passive obedience that accompanied it. H.T. Dickinson has argued for a "Tory" Whig ideology: 'Thus, while the tactical mistakes of the Tories drove them into the political wilderness on the accession of the Hanoverians in 1714, their strength during the previous two reigns had ensured that the Whigs who triumphed over them were men of a decidedly conservative stamp'.<sup>3</sup> It

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1. The Whig Interpretation of History (London, 1931), p. 17.

2. See Henry K. Miller, "The 'Whig' Interpretation of Literary History", Eighteenth Century Studies, 6 (1972), 80-84.

3. Liberty and Property, p. 58. This point is also emphasized in J.H. Plumb, The Growth of Political Stability in England, 1675-1725 (London, 1967), pp. 165-75 (although it is also stressed how Tory interests were suppressed by political management), H.T. Dickinson, Walpole and the Whig Supremacy (London, 1973), pp. 93-106, and W.A. Speck, "Whigs and Tories dim their glories: English political parties under the first two Georges", in The Whig Ascendancy: Colloquies on Hanoverian England, edited by John Cannon (London, 1981), pp. 51-70.

is one thing to argue that both Whigs and Tories were men of substance, willing to support most forms of central authority in order to enjoy their liberty and quite another to minimize the ideological split between them. It was one fundamental tenet of Whiggism that regal power was not arbitrary and unlimited and that, consequently, the individual had some inalienable rights, usually to life, liberty and property. It would have been fruitless to rely on Ancient authority to verify this. Consequently, the Whigs opposed a Tory party powerful in the public's eyes, if not always in government, by reason and appeals to the laws of nature. Practical expediency was distinguished from idealist authority.

John Locke's role during the Exclusion Crisis (1679-81) had been to refute the Adamic genealogy of Patriarcha.<sup>1</sup> In the Two Treatises on Government (published 1690, but composed earlier), he denied the analogy between the power of kings and the authority of fathers, for it was clear that children attain an age of reason and can revoke paternal authority. The basis of such authority is consent not compulsion, a contract not passive obedience.<sup>2</sup> Both J.P. Kenyon and Dickinson point out that the revolutionary potential of this conclusion and that of Algernon Sidney's Discourses concerning

1. This is demonstrated by John Dunn, The Political Thought of John Locke: An Historical Account of the "Two Treatises of Government" (Cambridge, 1969), pp. 58-76 (on Filmer) and pp. 96-119 (on the difference between Hobbes and Locke's conceptions of the "state of Nature"). Dunn concludes that the difference between Filmer and Locke was that the former 'needed a concrete continuing authority in which people could be wrapped. Like crabs they could live only in a continuous God-given shell. But to Locke they were more like hermit-crabs: the shells they needed, their instincts made available to them' (p. 76).
2. Two Treatises of Government (1689) I, paragraphs 6, 11, 52-53, 55, 60-66. See also Algernon Sidney, Discourses Concerning Government (3rd edition, 1751), pp. 27-45, or James Tyrell, Patriarcha Non Monarcha (1681).

Government (1693) could never have been adopted wholesale by any party needing to influence a sufficient consensus for power.<sup>1</sup> What were more seminal were their interim conclusions: firstly, that legitimate government was artificial, "created" by a mutual understanding between a monarch and his subjects; secondly, that reason and the laws of nature were sufficient guides to adjudicate such rule and, lastly, that liberty did not mean licence, for the 'state of nature has a law of nature to govern it, which obliges every one; and reason, which is that law, teaches all mankind, who will but consult it, that, being all equal and independent, no one ought to harm another in his life, health, liberty, or possessions'.<sup>2</sup> Up to the Revolution Settlement, therefore, the gap between Whig and Tory was really between differing sources of authority rather than the need for it.

This position is specifically Modern in its concern to question the bases of tradition. To contemporaries, Locke's Fellowship of the Royal Society (conferred in 1668) and his close friendship with Robert Boyle were significant marks of Whiggery. Indeed in 1683, he had been obliged to flee to Holland and lost his Studentship in Oxford a year later. It was only with the Revolution that Locke returned to government circles, as a member of the Board of Trade from 1696.

The Royal Society, and Boyle in particular, fostered a desire to experiment and verify perception. Boyle's Some Considerations Touching the Usefulness of Experimental Naturall Philosophy (1671) had as its third aim the enabling of converse between, on the one hand, 'Gentlemen

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1. J.P. Kenyon, Revolution Principles: The Politics of Party, 1689-1720 (Cambridge, 1977), pp. 35-60, and Liberty and Property, pp. 70-79.

2. Two Treatises, II, paragraph 63. See also Locke's objections to those without property described in C.B. Macpherson, The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism (Oxford, 1962), pp. 194-262, and Sidney's reverence for the opinion of 'freemen' (Discourses, p. 75).

and Scholars' and, on the other, 'Tradesmen'. This, it was argued, would qualify Royal Scholars 'to ask Questions of Men that converse with Things ...'. The sixth aim, 'which is the main of all', was to 'rowse up the Generality of those that are any thing inquisitive, and both loudly excite and somewhat assist the Curiosity of Mankind'.<sup>1</sup> To Dryden, in Religio Laici, this investigation showed fruitless lack of faith in the divinity:

We grant, 'tis true, that Heav'n from humane Sense  
 Has hid the secret paths of Providence:  
 But boundless Wisdom, boundless Mercy, may  
 Find ev'n for those be-wildred Souls, a way:

[II, 186-89]

Furthermore, the Deistical probing of natural phenomena was a tampering with Tradition, our 'unerring Guid' given that 'th' original Scripture has been lost' (277-78).

The 'consent' of those who actually obeyed or practised traditional functions in society could also mean a tradition open to the navigation of present usage. Locke's own view of language, expressed in the third book of his Essay concerning Humane Understanding (1690), runs congruent to his support for the Revolution.<sup>2</sup> However, common usage, which 'regulates the meaning of Words pretty well for common Conversation;...' is not as verifiable as Locke would have it. Indeed such linguistic democracy is not suitable for philosophical discourse: 'Besides, the rule and measure of Propriety it self being no where established, it is often matter of dispute, whether this or that way of using a Word, be propriety of Speech, or no.' Although Locke's political writings

1. Second tome, "Preamble", no pagination.

2. III, 9, viii. (An Essay Concerning Human Understanding (5th edition, 1706), edited by John W. Yolton, 2 vols. (London, 1961), 2: 79.)

had been too radical for Whig politics, for those more disposed to Modern conceptions of creative literature such ideas could be more safely accommodatcd.<sup>1</sup>

With the Revolution and the need to establish a more ecumenical basis for its undisturbed continuance, political Whiggism and the more Modern character of much pure philosophy and aesthetics diverged. Although the Two Treatises were reprinted in 1694 and 1698, references to the contract theory in formal Whig speeches were few and far between. Far more reliable was another strand of Whig thought: the reliance on the actual historical evidence (located in the Magna Carta) of an ancient constitution. This is crucially not the rational foundation for individual rights that Locke had defined. Indeed, when Benjamin Hoadly discussed contractual obligation in the second part of The Original and Institution of Civil Government Discuss'd (1710), it was Richard Hooker's less radical idea that was indicated, and no mention was made of a contract in the Declaration of Rights submitted to William and Mary in February, 1689.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, at a time when it was likely that Whig confidence would be high, at the trial of Sacheverell, Robert Walpole could reassure Parliament that 'Resistance is no where enacted to be legal, but subjected, by all the laws now in being, to the greatest penalties; ... when, and upon what never to be expected occasions, it may be exercised, no man can foresee; ...'<sup>3</sup> Such quietism is consistent with a Revolution Settlement which claimed that James had abdicated, not that the Convention Parliament had upheld a theory of consensual right.

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1. See Kenneth MacLean, John Locke and English Literature of the Eighteenth Century (New York, 1962), pp. 105-12, and John Barrell, English Literature in History, 1730-80: An Equal, Wide Survey (London, 1983), pp. 113-19.
  2. See Dickinson's discussion in Liberty and Property, pp. 73-74.
  3. The Tryal of Dr. Sacheverell, p. 92.

The War of the Spanish Succession (1701-13) was a war that William had to fight, but not so the Whigs. On James's death, Louis had recognized a James III as possessing an indefeasible right to the English throne. It was also a trade war as Louis's agreement at Ryswick (1697) to commercial concessions for the Dutch and a rapprochement with English interests proved fallacious. The Marlborough-Godolphin ministry needed home support for an expensive foreign war. Increasingly the Whigs were seen as the party of the "monied" interest and perhaps also of Tolerance for Protestant dissent. Now was not the time for pressing home a radical re-assessment of tradition. In the Bill of Rights William had been forbidden a standing army, yet one was maintained from 1697 to 1702. The Triennial Act was repealed in 1716 whilst many clauses of the Act of Settlement were not observed. The conservative nature of much Whig support in ideological matters by no means tallies with the partisanship shown in the General Elections from 1701 to 1715.<sup>1</sup> In this period until well into the 1720s, the Whig/Tory debate took a different form from that in both the Exclusion and Revolution crises. Increasingly, Ancient rhetoric reasserted an interest in Land as a source of power and authority, whereas more Modern ideals centred on trade and commerce in general.<sup>2</sup> It is also evident that the labels

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1. See W.A. Speck, Tory and Whig: The Struggle in the Constituencies, 1701-1715 (London, 1970), and James O. Richards, Party Propaganda Under Queen Anne: The General Elections of 1702-1713 (Athens, Ga., 1972), especially pp. 154-58.

2. The extent to which this division reflects a conscious Tory/Whig split has provoked much debate. For the thesis that the Tories were the victims of a growing social materialism, see Isaac Kramnick, Bolingbroke and his Circle: the Politics of Nostalgia in the Age of Walpole (Cambridge, Mass., 1968), especially pp. 39-55 on "Walpole and the New Economic Order". For an anti-Whig and Namierite perspective on the growth of party bureaucracy, see B.W. Hill, The Growth of Parliamentary Parties, 1689-1742 (London, 1976). Much study has been based on observing a Country/Court division on the grounds that that pointed to a more basic clash of interests than notional party loyalties. See Geoffrey Holmes, British Politics in the Age of Anne (London, 1967), pp. 148-82, W.A. Speck, "Conflict in Society" in Britain After the Glorious Revolution, 1689-1714, edited by Geoffrey Holmes (London, 1969), pp. 135-54 (for a succinct review of modern research on the demography of property), and Liberty and Property, pp. 91-118.

of Whig and Tory no longer had quite the substance they did in the Restoration, despite the growing efficiencies of a two-party bureaucracy. "Contract" and "Order" are expressed in new terms, be it Court/Country, City/Country or Monied/Landed Interests. Inevitably both those forms of poetry that involve "rural" description and, further, the whole strategy of filtering ideological interests through it are open to change, both with reference to the genres chosen and the corresponding readings for which they cater.

### Gay's The Shepherd's Week (1714) and the Landed Interest

The Shepherd's Week first appeared on April 15, 1714 as a slim octavo volume, equipped by non-burlesque engravings of country life. Immediately following his "The Proeme/To the Courteous Reader" Gay inserted his "Prologue. To the Right Honourable the Ld Viscount Bolingbroke", and a rash of annotation reminiscent of Scriblerian distaste for editorial pedantry. As with most sustained irony or parody, the work appears not just to have one target. This is not quite the same as claiming it to have none or to be merely negative. It could be argued that its main debate is with the formal qualities of both Modern and Ancient pastoral, an exposing of its pretensions to classic seriousness given the debased condition of contemporary rusticity on the one hand and a similar ridicule of the Modern bucolic project of sentimentalizing the Doric mode of Theocritus and Spenser on the other. If placed in a perspective that takes in the possible ideological positions of the years immediately preceding its publication, Gay's argument with the pastoral convention is not just a literary jeu d'esprit but a more serious task with certain political as well as literary obligations.

(a) Gay's Contact With the Landed Interest

Henry St. John, Viscount Bolingbroke, the work's dedicatee, had had already by 1713 a distinguished political career. From 1704 to 1708 he had served under Robert Harley as Secretary-at-War and from 1710 as Secretary of State in Harley's ministry. As Sheila Biddle and H.T. Dickinson point out, the evidence of his private life at this time is scanty, but his public role was better documented.<sup>1</sup> Due to the patronage of both Sir William Trumbull and Harley, he had installed himself as a Court politician first and an orthodox Tory second. Angus McInnes has demonstrated his emotional rather than philosophical Toryism, a commitment to 'landed values and gentlemanly ideals' and a voice for the 'earthy, inarticulate Tory squirearchy'.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, his influence on the peace campaign was lasting and effectual. J.A. Downie concludes that Swift's Examiner series of 1711 (and its sharpened criticisms of the conduct of the war by the late Junto) was greatly influenced by Bolingbroke, a prime mover in the October Club.<sup>3</sup> Peace, for the Tory party, was not an unequivocal proposition, but for Bolingbroke it became insistently necessary. He himself went out to France in 1712 to bring things to a conclusion, and such zeal widened the rift already formed between himself and Harley, now Earl of Oxford. A variegated weave of local interests made up the popular Tory support at this time, but the clearest pattern could be traced in the desire for land-tax relief, a consequence, in Tory terms, of

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1. Sheila Biddle, Bolingbroke and Harley (London, 1975), pp. 55-57 and H.T. Dickinson, Bolingbroke (London, 1970), pp. 2-8.

2. Robert Harley, p. 70.

3. Robert Harley and the Press: Propaganda and Public Opinion in the Age of Swift and Defoe (Cambridge, 1979), pp. 134-35. See also Bertrand Goldgar, The Curse of Party: Swift's Relations with Addison and Steele (Lincoln, Na., 1961), p. 57, and Bolingbroke, pp. 93-110 (for his part in the gaining of eventual peace).

continental peace.<sup>1</sup> Bolingbroke was finally to usurp Oxford's position in July, 1714, but during the writing of The Shepherd's Week was still the partisan yet obedient second-in-command, thwarted, indeed, of what would have been reckless diplomacy by the cooler head of Oxford. When the peace terms were communicated to the Commons in April, 1713, Tory backwoods support initially approved, for both the armed forces and the land tax would be cut. The nonied-interest were less enthusiastic in that France seemed to have received advantageous commercial terms. A coalition of "Hanoverian" Tories and the March Club boosted Whig opposition - enough to throw out the terms. Thus, the 1713 Treaty of Utrecht left the Tory party and Bolingbroke in particular with something of a Pyrrhic victory: Tory support for the principle of peace yet some measure of even Tory opposition to its anti-trading-interest emphases.<sup>2</sup> Utrecht went a great way towards ensuring that the Tories did well out of the 1713 general election, yet also contributed to the disunity in the face of the succession issue that would eventually pull the party apart in the early years of George I's reign. Even Atterbury's Hebraic rhetoric could not muster the support in 1715 that had immediately followed Utrecht.

Bolingbroke's appearance in Gay's "Prologue", therefore, is no neutral gesture. Swift was to remind him in 1723 that his lack of preferment in Hanoverian England was no doubt due to the 'originall Sin' inherited by 'the Dedication to your Eclogues'. In a letter full of urgent advice on how Gay should get preferment, Swift adopts the attitude of one out of place informing another in a like situation:

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1. See Liberty and Property, pp. 106-8 and Speck's "Conflict in Society", pp. 140-42.
  2. For a fuller account of the immediate causes of the Tories's decline, see Geoffrey Holmes, "Harley, St. John and the Death of the Tory Party" in Britain after the Glorious Revolution (ed. Holmes), pp. 216-38. The account of the peace negotiations and its terms are at pp. 223-26.

(... if all Courts have a Sameness in them ... Things may be as they were in my Time, when all Employments went to Parlment mens Friends who had been usefull in Elections ...'<sup>1</sup> Certainly, Gay in 1712 (serving as poet-secretary to the Duchess of Monmouth at Moor Park) was not in quite such a position as ten years later. This rare measure of patronage suited his poetic output: amongst others, Rural Sports appeared on January 13 and both Panthea and Araminta (pastoral elegies) appeared in Steele's Miscellany in December. In Gay's own georgic and first attempts at mock-pastoral, Virgil and Theocritus feature widely. The Shepherd's Week appears part of that scheme, and, overall, part of a pattern of rural praise that was to continue, with differing degrees of intensity throughout the 1720s as well.

To appreciate how sympathetic Gay was to the Tory squirearchy and to Bolingbroke's "Court" Toryism as well, it is necessary to establish first how Ancient the landed interest appeared in their desire to validate the gentry's rights. The "Country" interest formed a pressure group united only on local issues, the need for a speedy peace being a significant one. It derived much of its theory from "Old Whig" principles in the reign of Charles II.

J.G.A. Pocock has identified this group as "neo-Harringtonians", deriving their ideas from James Harrington's The Commonwealth of Oceana (1656), where landed property was the basis of political power and that changes in land ownership should therefore be accompanied by a transformation of the political structure.<sup>2</sup>

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1. Correspondence (Swift), 2: 443.

2. The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition (Princeton, 1975). See also Caroline Robbins, The Eighteenth-Century Commonwealthman (Cambridge, Mass., 1959), especially pp. 93-130.

Only thus could the "ancient constitution" be safeguarded against the corruption when the Crown and its placemen furthered their own self-interest. In its particulars, however, Harrington's ideals demanded a limited monarchy and the formation of a commonwealth. Its emphases showed a sensitivity more to absolutism than unchecked democracy. By 1708 this strand of "country" ideology had changed. Harley's orchestration of propaganda against what was seen as the Marlborough-Godolphin ministry's bellicosity, the "mock kings" turning war to their own advantage,<sup>1</sup> was more clearly authoritarian.

This Ancient appeal to the land as an enduring possession, the only essential measure of wealth and as an insurance of the peaceful continuance of a hierarchical order straddled party-lines. In context, those who espoused it in the 1680s and 1690s called themselves Whigs, whereas the 1708 variety were Tories temporarily out of office. The newest ingredient of the "country" rhetoric from 1710 onwards was its increasing proximity to the Tory version of patriarchal order in its polemical assault on the "monied" or commercial interests. In the decades immediately following the Revolution the rates of profit to be made from land were in general not as high as those to be earned from commerce, finance and office-holdings.<sup>2</sup> This situation was made worse by the land-tax, in time of war levied at four shillings in the pound, when an equivalent burden was not placed on other forms of wealth. War also demanded a bureaucracy, promoting careers for hundreds of financiers. This evidence told heavily against not only

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1. The influence of Harley on Swift's Conduct of the Allies (1711) is discussed in Robert Harley and the Press, pp. 104-6.

2. See Christopher Hill, The Century of Revolution, 1603-1714 (London, 1961), pp. 230-34 and, for fuller information on the origins of the Land Tax and its effects on both land and trade, see B.A. Holderness, Pre-Industrial England: Economy and Society, 1500-1750 (London, 1976), pp. 173-88.

Court interests but more specifically Whig ones as well, of whatever variety. Bolingbroke's "Patriotism" from 1723 onwards found its roots here. In a letter to the Earl of Orrery (July 9, 1709), he outlined an Ancient perspective on such Modern developments:

A new interest has been created out of their fortunes, and a sort of property, which was not known twenty years ago, is now increased to be almost equal to the terra firma of our island. The consequence of all this is, that the landed men are become poor and dispirited. They either abandon all thoughts of the publick, turn arrant farmers, and improve the estates they have left: or else they seek to repair their shattered fortunes by listing at court, or under the heads of partys. In the mean while those men are become their masters, who formerly would with joy have been their servants. <sup>1</sup>

This inversion of the "natural" order is apart from the 'listing at court' or electioneering in Bolingbroke's eyes. However, it was the Tories who in 1711 pressed for and finally achieved a land qualification of £600 p.a. to contest a country seat and £300 p.a. for a borough. The Whig aim was, therefore, to validate the whole system of public credit as a source of property. <sup>2</sup>

What the Whigs shared with the Tories, this notwithstanding, was the fear of an unlimited franchise. Daniel Defoe, a persistent

1. Reprinted in The Divided Society: Party Conflict in England, 1694-1716, edited by Geoffrey Holmes and W.A. Speck (London, 1967), pp. 135-36.
2. See W.A. Speck, Stability and Strife: England, 1714-1760 (London, 1977), pp. 123-26. On the significance of the war, see pp. 141-42.

defender of credit and trade, was not slow to recognize the primacy of landed property as a qualification for political authority.<sup>1</sup> John Locke never suggested that the labouring poor could take an active role in politics.<sup>2</sup> What the Radical Whigs or Commonwealthmen shared with most Country Tories under the umbrella of the landed interest was a desire to limit the wealth and property of the Crown and the aristocracy nearest to it. The model opponents to this were those independent proprietors, or as much Whig propaganda termed them: Freeholders, who owned just enough land to withstand the hegemonic absentee landlords.

Gay's direct link with the Landed Interest rests not on his dedication of The Shepherd's Week alone. The most popular and therefore successful pamphlets in the Tory campaign pressing for peace was Swift's The Conduct of the Allies, and of the Late Ministry, in beginning and carrying on the Present War (1711). Gay was friendly with Swift by mid-1711, a friendship cemented by Scriblerian collaboration, especially during the summer of 1714.<sup>3</sup> Swift's line on the war included a picture of England riven by the clash of "monied" and landed interests. Bolingbroke's influence may be seen in his active participation in the editing of The Examiner (November, 1710 - June, 1711), a Tory periodical. However, Swift had only recently sported Whig colours and indeed had sympathy with the Old Whig ideal of mixed government.<sup>4</sup> In The Examiner 35 (April 5, 1711), he defines the

1. See The Original Power of the Collective Body of the People of England, Examined and Asserted (1702), p. 18.
2. For Locke's opinions and a wider Whig perspective on property qualification, see Paschal Larkin, Property in the Eighteenth Century (Cork, 1930), pp. 58-91.
3. See Correspondence (Swift), 1: 414.
4. See A Discourse on the Contests and Dissensions Between the Nobles and Commons in Athens and Rome (1701), in A Tale of a Tub, With Other Early Works, 1696-1707, edited by Herbert Davis (Oxford, 1939), pp. 195-236.

Tory view very much in Old Whig terms, as welcoming a 'well-regulated Monarchy before all other Forms of Government'.<sup>1</sup> Any attempts at alteration would bring 'Blood and Desolation' to the whole island.

Swift, indeed, went further, painting the "monied" classes as nouveau riche hucksters: '... through the Contrivance and Cunning of Stock-Jobbers, there hath been brought in such a Complication of Knavery and Couzenage, such a Mystery of Iniquity, and such an unintelligible Jargon of Terms to involve it in, as were never known in any other Age or Country of the World' (Examiner 13, November 2, 1710).<sup>2</sup>

The Conduct of the Allies had drawn a picture of an "England" under immense threat from "stock-jobbers" and their like. The only alternative would have to be the regenerative influence of a more organic-rural community.

Swift's "Country" ethics both reflect and promote an ideology of order against incipient chaos. As has been seen, most traditional Whigs would also have done the same. However, Swift's Tory patrons had found an issue more pressing: how to concentrate the varied Tory interests away from the Court/Jacobite split that was to be so disastrous to their fortunes from 1715 to 1760. This involved ~~a certain mystification of the rights to landed property and the manufacture of wealth.~~ The particulars of the money market were supposed a foreign language to the "Freeholder" or, in Tory terms, the traditionalist Anglican squirearchy.<sup>3</sup> More familiar ground

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1. The Examiner and Other Pieces Written in 1710-11, edited by Herbert Davis (Oxford, 1957), p. 125.

2. The Examiner, pp. 6-7. See also Swift's description of the Whigs in The Conduct of the Allies Political Tracts, 1711-1713, edited by Herbert Davis (Oxford, 1951), pp. 41-44, 58-59.)

3. On the other hand, see Addison's attempt in his journal The Freeholder to counteract such Tory propaganda, especially his defence of an increase of the land tax in issue 20 (February 27, 1716) and his influential description of the Tory 'Fox-hunter' in issue 22 (March 5, 1716). See Joseph Addison: The Freeholder, edited by James Leheny (Oxford, 1979), pp. 121-25, 130-35.

included the mores and curriculum of what was seen as a nostalgic rural vision of enduring "natural" property. Past and present coalesced, as indeed it had to, if more contemporary failures to make Land become the desired economic terra firma (such as the Land Bank projects of the 1690s) were to be forgotten.

The prospect of a Tory peace, indeed, even prompted Pope to create in his Windsor Forest (1713) a particularly triumphant scenario for trade. From its most basic premises the poem portrays, on the other hand, a strictly limited, and orderly, growth of commerce, one deeply rooted in the prerogatives of 'Albion's Golden Days' (424). Although often taken to be more a georgic than a topographical poem, the Royalist nuances that survive even from the supposed 1704 drafts have been seen as at odds with the more democratic echoes from Virgil's poem.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, Pope takes over the hunting scenes and the imperialist bravura from this source but neglects the figure of the Freeholder/small farmer. The Tory assertion that the creation of order is out of man's control is embedded in the poem's very fabric, probably from one of its major influences: the Royalist Cooper's Hill (1642). Here, the diversity of life is allowed as long as it eventually is made to 'agree':

~~Where Order in Variety we see, / And where, tho' all things differ,~~  
all agree' (15-16). Industry exists as a personification, sitting 'smiling on the Plains' (41) and testifying not to the hard-won freedom of Virgil's husbandmen, but to the 'Peace and Plenty' that indicate 'a STUART reigns' (42). In both Swift and Pope, Gay had powerful friends, both overseeing Gay's earliest work by 1711. Their influence on his first poetry has often been noted.<sup>2</sup> What is less familiar is the view of Gay as, no less an Ancient or a Tory, producing his own versions of rural significance.

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1. See John Chalker, The English Georgic, pp. 72-89.

2. See for example the evidence of William Henry Irving, John Gay: Favorite of the Wits (Durham, N.C., 1940), pp. 37-40.

(b) Gay's Poetry, 1713-14

Gay's interest in the pastoral form was enough to characterize him. In the Scriblerian verses addressed to Oxford of Spring, 1714, Gay's couplet emphasizes the artificiality of such a taste: 'Leave Courts, and hie to simple Swains, / Who feed no Flock upon no Plains'.<sup>1</sup> The implied contrast between the public Tory role and the private retirement topos is evident here. It is also the contrast that most fascinates Gay during 1713 and 1714. This appears in a sterner guise in the "Epigrammatical Petition": "To the most Honourable the Earl of Oxford the Lord High Treasurer" (1714). Kerby-Miller dates this as June 5 and identifies it as a Scriblerian creation:

I'm no more to converse with the Swains  
 But go where fine People resort  
 One can live without Money on Plains  
 But never without it at Court. [ll. 1-4]<sup>2</sup>

The petition is for money to enable Gay to join (as secretary) the ministry's embassy to Hanover. This courtly badinage is not quite assumed with negligence, for this is Gay's greatest opportunity for a place in the forthcoming Hanoverian court. Pastoral gestures are seen to be polite attitudinizing compared to the less-than-polite exigencies of court preferment.

Gay's correspondence betrays no great liking for such bucolic serenity as he was supposed to have enjoyed at Moor Park. A letter to Parnell (April-May, 1714?) explores the same contrast between court gaiety and rustic insignificance: 'O Dear Doctor Parnelle, whats all your Trees, your Meadows, your Streams and Plains to a walk in St.

1. John Gay: Poetry and Prose, edited by Vinton A. Dearing with the assistance of Charles E. Beckwith, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1974), 1: 127.

2. See The Memoirs of Martinus Scriblerus, p. 357.

James's Park ...? do you imagine a Place beneath a shady Back of equal value, to a Place at Court?'<sup>1</sup> On the death of Anne in October, the embassy was recalled and Gay returned to no place or prospects.

The Shepherd's Week offers many alternative patterns of interpretation. Pope's comment to Caryll in a letter dated June 8, 1714, seems to offer the strongest indication of party interest as Philips's Whiggism is the subject and his withholding of Homer subscriptions the particular instance: 'It is to this management of Philips, that the world owes Mr. Gay's Pastorals.'<sup>2</sup> This has been taken by George Sherburn amongst others to support the view that Gay's intention was decided for him.<sup>3</sup> As much of this critical opinion is more focussed on Pope and the Scriblerians, then it could be argued that there was a brief to see Gay's work as in some way subsidiary. Oliver Goldsmith, however, was to conclude that 'Gay has hit the true spirit of pastoral poetry'.<sup>4</sup> Samuel Johnson praised its reality and truth to nature<sup>5</sup> and Pope's editor Warburton, whilst once again giving full weight to Pope's own comments, described the confusion enjoyed by contemporaries: 'the object of [the poems] was ill understood by those who were strangers to the quarrel. These mistook the Shepherd's Week for a burlesque of Virgil's Pastorals.'<sup>6</sup> It would seem that Gay could be appropriated as either Ancient or Modern: Ancient, in that Philips is the target, Modern, in that Virgilian "Art" is.

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1. The Letters of John Gay, edited by C.F. Burgess (Oxford, 1966), p.7.

2. Correspondence, 1: 229.

3. The Early Career of Alexander Pope, pp. 32-33.

4. The Beauties of English Poesy, edited by Oliver Goldsmith, 2 vols. (London, 1767), 1: 133.

5. Lives of the English Poets, 2: 282.

6. Pope, Works, edited by Elwin and Courthope, 10 vols. (London, 1871-89), 1: 234.

In chapter 4, it was argued that Philips's Modern pastorals attempted to counter the classical heritage by recourse to a nationalistic optimism centred on overt allusions to Spenser and Sidney and a recasting of Virgilian or Theocritean material. Adina Forsgren has demonstrated how Gay's Modern technique involved an attempt to canonize "lower" ballad forms and bring them into a critical relation with the more idealized "Art" of Virgil's Arcady.<sup>1</sup> Some of this dichotomy is a consequence of a certain crisis in the form. Philips's work was near to Restoration lyric, a "lower" form itself, whereas Pope's allusive range explored allusion itself rather than more normal pastoral themes such as City/Country or Art/Nature contrasts. From Pope's Ancient perspective (as Chetwood's or Rapin's), mastery of the pastoral was acceptable as the first rung on a ladder of artistic preferment. When a devotional thought struck him, the sublimities of Isaiah rather than the Pollio were more suitable. Indeed the extra expressive range of the georgic provided him with an allusive afflatus that the hollow reed of the pastoral, the Pollio excluded, could only reach fitfully. If the aspiring poet wished to imitate Virgil, then it would have been quite inappropriate to stay in "Windsor-shades" for long.<sup>2</sup>

Therefore, the neo-classical pastoral was vulnerable on two fronts: from the Modern perspective, its artistic glitter was too bright for the appreciation of direct sentiments, and, from the Ancient perspective, the rural humility of the tenui avena too "low" for the greater moral truths. The Shepherd's Week is a burlesque of the Modern form, constantly undercutting the Doric plangencies with more realistic awkwardnesses. However, it is by the very energy of this "unofficial"

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1. John Gay: Poet "Of a Lower Order", 2 vols. (Stockholm, 1964), 1: 143-48.

2. See Pope's farewell to Windsor at the close of Windsor Forest, ll. 427-34.

gusto that Gay develops a criticism of the whole form, an analysis very much in the same vein as earlier mock-pastorals.

In Steele's Miscellany, "Panthea: An Elegy" and "Araminta: An Elegy" are consecutive. This positioning emphasizes the nature of some of its irony. "Araminta: An Elegy" has as a sub-title: "A Town Eclogue"; "Panthea ..." has no such indication of parody. Indeed, the difference is very much a question of locale. Panthea mourns for the lost affections of Alexis who has gone to pay court to Galatea:

Beneath a Beech th' abandon'd Virgin laid,  
 In grateful Solitude enjoys the Shade;  
 There with faint Voice she breath'd these moving Strains,  
 While sighing Zephyrs shar'd her am'rous Pains.

[ll. 11-14]<sup>1</sup>

The obvious sources are Idyll 2, the urban mime of the forsaken Simaetha, Eclogue 2, Corydon's homosexual complaint for Alexis, Idyll 3, that of the snub-nosed goatherd, or, perhaps, Pope's recent version in "Summer". Gay himself was to develop the sources of Idyll 2 and, implicitly, Eclogue 8, in his "Thursday" of The Shepherd's Week. What is distinctive about "Panthea" is how consistently elegiac it appears when compared to its classical sources. It appears in Gay's two-volume Poems on Several Occasions (1720) not under the heading "Eclogues" (nearly all satires or burlesques) but under the more serious and sentimental section of "Miscellanies". It is also non-classical in its occasional indigenous touch. Beech-trees (11), 'Northern Winds the new-blown Roses blast' (51), the same roses lend 'grateful Fragrance' (71) whilst 'yellow Cowslips paint the smiling

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1. The full text can be found at Poetry and Prose, 1: 80-83.

Field' (72). Forsgren would even read Moor Park into the picturesque Gothic of the 'melancholy Cave' (89) of the last section.<sup>1</sup> Both Virgil and Theocritus had alleviated this mood by either a bathetic framework or a cautiously optimistic "turn" at the end of the lament. What Gay attempts is the unironic music of Pope's "Summer" elegy:

Why does the Sun dart forth his cheerful Rays?  
 Why do the Woods resound with warbling Lays? ...  
 Why do the Streams with murm'ring Musick flow,  
 And why do Groves their friendly Shade bestow?

[ll. 69-70, 73-74]

In place of the classical ironies, appears the pathetic fallacy.

The full significance of "Panthea" is only apparent in its relation to the companion poem. "Araminta" forms the urban alternative.<sup>2</sup> Araminta's hopeless plaint for Daphnis's regard intensifies the note of sudden infidelity and also highlights the glittering superficialities of the fashionable town. More closely modelled on Idyll 2, Gay more than once calls to mind Pope's Belinda from The Rape of the Lock (1712, 1714). Gay's mock=aubade is as careful to sketch in the specious attraction of la belle monde as Pope's:

~~Now Phoebus rose; and with his early Beams~~  
 Wak'd slumbering Delia from her pleasing Dreams; ...  
 With secret Joy she saw the Morning Ray  
 Chequer the Floor, and through the Curtains play;

[ll. 1-2, 5-6]<sup>3</sup>

Delia's wedding preparations partake of Belinda's "religious" toilet and the sylphs that maintain it:

1. Poet "Of a Lower Order", l: 194-95. See also Irving, p. 74.
2. The full text can be found at Poetry and Prose, l: 83-86.
3. Compare The Rape, I. 13-16.

In haste she rose; forgetful of her Pray'rs,  
 Flew to the Glass, and practis'd o'er her Airs:  
 Her new-set Jewels round her Robe are plac'd,  
 Some in a Brilliant Buckle bind her Waist;  
 Some round her Neck a circling Light display,  
 Some in her Hair diffuse a trembling Ray;  
 The Silver Knot o'erlooks the Mechlen Lace,  
 And adds becoming Beauties to her Face:  
 Brocaded Flow'rs o'er the gay Mantoe shine,  
 And the rich Stays her Taper Shape confine;  
 Thus all her Dress exerts a graceful Pride,  
 And sporting Loves surround th' expecting Bride, ...

[ 11. 9-20 ]<sup>1</sup>

In contrast, however, Gay does not keep this playful distance from the emotions expressed by Araminta. Delia's beauty may have captivated Daphnis, but Araminta is more critical of urban opportunity, wishing for 'some Retreat far from this hateful Town!' (86) and where 'Vain Dress and glaring Equipage' are dismissed as 'empty shows' (87-88). The contrast between the companion-pieces stresses the "natural" melodiousness of the rural scene and how its moral values underlie even urban amours.

This example demonstrates Gay's own distrust of, and yet delight in, the fabric of a city's gracious living. This same even-handed depiction of such glittering costume appears in The Fan (1713), an early attempt at the mock-heroic.<sup>2</sup> Lost in a panorama of the 'inconstant Equipage of female Dress' (I. 230), its description involves seducing one's Muse:

1. Compare The Rape, I. 121-48.

2. The full text can be found at Poetry and Prose, 1: 58-79.

Should you the Wardrobe's Magazine rehearse,  
 And glossy Manteaus rustle in thy Verse;  
 Should you the rich Brocaded Suit unfold,  
 Where rising Flow'rs grow stiff with frosted Gold;  
 The dazzled Muse would from her Subject stray,  
 And in a Maze of Fashions lose her Way. [l. 239-44]

Gay foresees his own poetry ensnared by the myriad of fashionable forms that urban prosperity can provide. Distinction and differentiation are blurred; irony is the only corresponding mode that could both revel in its depiction and yet withhold full assent. The picture is clearer after reading Gay's Guardian 149 (September 1, 1713), an apparently whimsical piece, proposing a sustained analogy between adorning the body with costume and the sentiments with the appropriate style.<sup>1</sup> Hidden in this is a satire on the superficialities that gain preferment: 'Dress is grown of universal Use in the Conduct of Life. Civilities and Respect are only paid to Appearance. Tis a varnish that gives a Lustre to every Action, a Passe-par-tout that introduces us into all polite Assemblies, ...' (2: 459). This irony is placed in a context that deliberately mitigates its saeva indignatio. Throughout, there is a contradiction or, at least, an ambiguity about Gay's target. Initially, when concluding that the 'sciences of Poetry and Dress' are closely allied, it would seem that the trivia of the dressmaker's trade and genteel taste are attacked. This becomes less so as the paper develops. Indeed there is more than once an ambiguous allusion to the standard authority for decorum: Horace's Ars Poetica. Horace's advice to the Pisones had included a serious parallel between the decorum of content and form in art, and the civilities of acceptable social behaviour, especially as concerns

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1. Poetry and Prose, 2: 459-64.

mourning.<sup>1</sup> Gay's version hovers very near to ridicule of this:

As different Sorts of Poetry require a different  
Style; the Elegy tender and mournful; the Ode gay  
and sprightly; the Epic sublime, etc. So must the  
Widow confess her Brief in the Veil; the Bride  
frequently makes her Joy and Exultation conspicuous  
in the Silver Brocade; and the Plume and the  
scarlet Dye is requisite to give the Soldier a  
Martial Air. [2: 461]

Eventually, Gay extends this series of allusions into territory made more familiar by Swift in A Tale of a Tub (1704), where the original suit of clothes left to Peter, Martin and Jack (the original Faith) is embellished or destroyed through error, not improvement.<sup>2</sup> Indeed Gay poses the possibility that clothes do indeed make all that is worthy of the fashionable Man: 'A Lady of Genius will give a genteel Air to her whole Dress by a well fancied Suit of Knots, as a judicious Writer gives Spirit to a whole Sentence by a single Expression'.<sup>3</sup> This particular analogy associates gentility with singularity of dress, ephemera and, most damning, a failure to perceive the simple, essential forms of life. The contrast between such urban gentility and 'the awkward Appearance of her Rural humble Servant' is very much to the disadvantage of the former (2: 462). Whether it is to the advantage of the latter is a moot point. As with many of Gay's rural references

1. Ars Poetica, ll. 220-50.

2. A Tale of a Tub, pp. 48-55.

3. The passage continues with another parody of Horace: 'As Words grow old, and new ones enrich the Language, so there is a constant Succession of Dress; the Fringe succeeds the Lace, ... the Head dress receives frequent Rises and Falls every Year; and in short, the whole Woman throughout, as curious Observers of Dress have remarked, is changed from Top to Toe in the period of five Years.' Compare Ars Poetica, ll. 58-62.

in his early poetry, its significance is satiric, highlighting the implicit frailties of Modern life without committing itself to an endorsement of the alternative. It certainly does not have the vigour of Swift's "In Pity to the Emptying Town" (c. 1709), a depiction of the inverted nature on show in the May Fair:

What a corrupted taste is ours

When milkmaids in mock-state

Instead of garlands made of flowers

Adorn their pails with plate.

So are the joys which nature yields

Inverted in May Fair;

In painted cloth we look for fields,

And step in booths for air. [ll. 5-12]<sup>1</sup>

In Swift's version the May Festivals of a rural culture are travestied by a debased "Art".

Gay is less guarded about the Country Interest, and its Ancient apology, in Rural Sports (1713), a celebration of rural tranquility in the face of a predatory urban culture.<sup>2</sup> It has been widely defined as a form of georgic.<sup>3</sup> This aspect of the poem is most certainly central to the 1720 version, when the sub-title of 'A Georgic' was used for the first time. The epigraph for the 1713 edition reads 'Agrestem tenui Musam meditabor Avena. Virg.', a conflation of two lines from the Eclogues (1.2 and 6.8), meaning 'I will woo the rustic

1. Jonathan Swift: The Complete Poems, edited by Pat Rogers (Harmondsworth, 1983), pp. 106-7.
2. The 1713 version is printed continuously in The Poetical Works of John Gay, edited by G.C. Faber (London, 1926), pp. 655-65. Poetry and Prose prints the 1720 text at l: 41-58.
3. See The English Georgic, pp. 141-63 and Dwight Durling, Georgic Tradition in English Poetry (New York, 1935), pp. 72-77.

muse on slender reed'. By 1720 a phrase from Memesian's Cynegetica has been preferred: 'Securi Praelia ruris / Pandimus' (2.3), ('We reveal the battles of the quiet countryside'). Whilst it would be misleading to claim that the two versions provide different poems, their emphases differ in two crucial areas. Firstly, the later work has less to do with the occasion of peace, signalled by extended comparisons between the violence of hunting and that of war and, secondly, more to do with a specifically georgic model.<sup>1</sup> What is most consistent about both is the dominance of retirement topoi. The countryside is a time-honoured reflection of what the city is not; in itself, if considered in isolation, its value is less clear. Indeed for Gay the inspiration is purely literary.

The opening section is clearly in the Happy Man tradition, the particular example on this occasion being Pope:

You, who the Sweets of Rural Life have known,  
 Despise th' ungrateful Hurry of the Town;  
 'Midst Windsor Groves your easie Hours employ,  
 And, undisturb'd, your self and Muse enjoy.

[1713, ll. 1-4]

Gay, on the contrary, composes this address to Binfield from the 'noisie town' (1713, 11): 'Where News and Politicks amuse Mankind, / And Schemes of State involve th' uneasie Mind' (1713, 15-16). The persona is of one who has 'courted Bus'ness with successless Pain, / And in Attendance wasted Years in vain;' (1713, 13-14). City life is divisive and essentially unstable:

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1. Chalker seems to take it as straightforward that the 1720 version supersedes the 1713 in that the 'Changes suggest how he wished the poem to be read' (p. 142). It is quite possible that both editions reflected different preoccupations.

Thus have I, 'midst the Brawls of factious Strife,  
 Long undergone the Drudgery of Life;  
 On Courtiers Promises I founded Schemes,  
 Which still deluded me, like golden Dreams.

[1713, ll. 25-28]

This persona of the disappointed courtier is strengthened by several associations. Firstly, there is the small vignette of the 'Rural Maid . . ., / In cheerful Labour . . .' (1713, 243-44), a passage installed as the climax to the 1720 poem (410-35). Here, once more, the superficiality of la belle monde is its necessary pendant:

Her Dress in a clean simple Neatness lies,  
 No glaring Equipage excites her Sighs;  
 Her Reputation, which she values most,  
 Is ne'er in a Malicious Visit lost:  
 No Midnight Masquerade her Beauty wears,  
 And Health, not Paint, the fading Bloom repairs.

[1713, ll. 255-60]

Secondly, Virgil's georgic muse is a constant companion, helping "Gay" to 'wander o'er the various Rural Toil, / And learn the Nature of each diff'rent Soil;' (1713, 292-93). Lastly, taking a certain allusive afflatus from both Georgic 2 and Eclogue 4, there is the panegyric to both peace and Queen Anne (1713, 357-75), a state of affairs to the advantage of rural prosperity and, given the Tory hopes at that time, to the disadvantage of the parasitical professions served by 'invasive War' (1713, 366). In this light, Anne is accorded Pollio's honours:

Anna, who binds the Tyrant War in Chains,  
 And Peace diffuses o'er the cheerful Plains;  
 In whom again the bright Astraea Reigns. [1713, ll. 373-75]

Gay's redaction of the Georgics and Windsor Forest qualified the more heroic strains of other "Peace" poetry such as Addison's The Campaign (1713) or Tickell's To his Excellency the Lord Privy Seal, on the Prospect of Peace (1712) in order to give more space to his "Country" persona.<sup>1</sup>

In Gay's first poetry, therefore, there is a preoccupation with the genuine order of simple rural lives in contrast with the multiplicity and formlessness of the town and its disruptive bellicosity. This ideology is very much that of the landed interest and is, indirectly, Ancient in its distrust of the city's ephemeral influences. Virgil is a competent guide to the countryman's honest toil and prosperity in times of peace. Fundamentally, rural culture is a retreat from faction and instability where sporting activity and country labour obey a seasonal providence noticed only by the elevated perception of 'Sweet Contemplation' (1713, 341).

#### The Shepherds Week as a Mock-Pastoral

One of the most palpable signs that a particular genre or topos no longer impresses its readers is the appearance of sustained patterns of parody or burlesque. By itself, the fact that the more "Virgilian" form of pastoral ceased to be written after Pope's own attempts could point to its gradual redundancy. Mock-forms are not, on the other hand, sufficient evidence of such failing sensitivity. The Rape of the Lock, MacFlecknoe or Hudibras are poems which misapply heroic cadences and similes, and yet also refuse to represent these gestures as unworthy ideals. However, given the contemporary examples they

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1. See Poet "Of a Lower Order", l: 77-78 and C.A. Moore, "Whig Panegyric Verse, 1700-1760", PMLA, 41 (1926), 362-401. For a contrast to Gay's persona, see almost all the poems in English Gratitude: Or, The Whig Miscellany (1713).

implicitly undermine, there is the residual doubt that such attitudes do indeed only exist as ideals.

It is by no means clear that a mock-pastoral would create the same effect. A much "lower" form, if mocked, may perhaps be less immune from an exposure of its fictiveness. The Shepherd's Week has excited much critical consternation. Edmund Gosse celebrated the fact that for 'the first time since the reign of Elizabeth, a serious attempt was made to throw to the winds the ridiculous Arcadian tradition of nymphs and swains, and to copy Theocritus in his simplicity'.<sup>1</sup> Elizabeth Nitchie, in a close study of Virgilian influence, concludes that Gay's 'burlesques are nearer to the Latin than many of the serious imitations'.<sup>2</sup> This incompatibility between the corporeal Modernity of a Lobbin and his voicing Ancient elegiac sentiments is very much the same disparity between Theocritean bucolic and the "official" Virgilian norm.<sup>3</sup> The clash is between conventions but is none the less real for all that. Recent criticism has stressed the Scriblerian motive behind Gay's work. For Hoyt Trowbridge,<sup>4</sup> Gay's target is exclusively Ambrose Philips and, for William D. Ellis,<sup>5</sup> it is the more homely rusticity of the ballads,

1. The Complete Works in Verse and Prose of Edmund Spenser, edited by A.B. Grosart, 8 vols. (London, 1882), 3: xliii.
2. Vergil and the English Poets (New York, 1919), p. 173. See also R.F. Jones, "Eclogue Types in English Poetry of the Eighteenth Century", Journal of English and Germanic Philology, 24 (1925), where Gay's work is seen as one of 'the most successful attempts at putting new wine into old bottles offered by the eighteenth century' (p. 49).
3. See Sven M. Armens, John Gay: Social Critic (New York, 1966), pp. 155-61.
4. "Pope, Gay, and The Shepherd's Week", Modern Language Quarterly, 5 (1944), 79-88.
5. "Thomas D'Urfey, the Pope-Philips Quarrel, and The Shepherd's Week", PMLA, 74 (1959), 203-12.

especially those of Thomas D'Urfey. There is much extrinsic evidence to support this. Internal evidence is more chequered. What has not been canvassed sufficiently is the possibility that Gay's intention was neither Ancient nor Modern alone, but in reaction to both.

It is easier to make out a case for Gay's Ancient motive. As Dearing and Beckwith have shown, the "Proeme" is greatly influenced not just by Tickell's Guardian series and Philips's "Preface" but also by Pope's ironic Guardian 40.<sup>1</sup> The Somersetshire "Pastoral Ballad" had in its turn looked back to "E.K.'s" "Dedicatory Epistle". Furthermore, there are several instances of what is clearly ridicule of the Theocritean/Spenserian strain of pastoral. The opening paragraph is reminiscent of Philips's "Preface" and wonders that no writer has 'hit on the right simple Eclogue after the true ancient guise of Theocritus, before this mine attempt.' Doubt is cast on the validity of Theocritean 'simplicity' and its pretensions to Ancient definitiveness. This is manifest by the example from Idyll 5 where his 'Louts give foul Language, and behold their Goats at Rut in all Simplicity' (l: 90). Spenser's shepherd names, 'indeed right simple and meet for the Country', are also adopted as is his Doric, 'such as is neither spoken by the country Maiden nor the courtly Dame; ...'. This rootless rusticity is illustrated by a satire upon the distinctly ephemeral self-seeking of urban life:

Granted also it is, that in this my Language,  
I seem unto my self, as a London Mason, who  
calculateth his Work for a Term of Years, when  
he buildeth with old Materials upon a Ground-rent  
that is not his own, which soon turneth to Rubbish

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1. Poetry and Prose, 2: 515-18. The text of The Shepherd's Week is at l: 90-126.

and Ruins. For this point, no Reason can I  
alledge, only deep learned Ensamples [perhaps  
Philips and Spenser] having led me thereunto.

This opportunist fraud Gay's "Shepherd-Poet" seems innocently to perpetuate, knowing that, even if such language decayed, there would be many scholar-editors or 'some Lover of Simplicity' who might 'render these mine Eclogues into such more modern Dialect as shall be then understood, to which end, Glosses and Explications of uncouth Pastoral Terms are annexed' (1: 92). The satire here is consistently aware of Modern presumptuousness in both refusing to undertake the representation of "higher" truths for a merely conventional realism and also investing in the fashion of the moment with as much foundation as a jerry-built town-house. Such 'simplicity' of purpose comes to seem increasingly complex and devious.

There are, however, some inconsistencies in the argument that the "Proeme" is wholly in the service of such Scriblerian interests. The most obvious problem is in explaining Gay's reference to the Golden Age. Whilst appearing to side with those 'young Men of insipid Delicacy' who would confine the pastoral to Golden Age matters, Gay's "Shepherd-Poet" is not necessarily polarized by the irony into a Modern experimenter on new models, for he knows no Age 'so justly to be instilled Golden, as this of our Sovereign Lady Queen ANNE'. This is an unexpected twist to the irony. If Gay was out to vilify contemporary confidence and pretension, he could have accomplished this without invoking the Queen. The Golden Age could have stood out in stark relief against a backdrop of 'Manners ... meetly copied from the rustical Folk therein'.<sup>1</sup> The reference to a sovereign

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1. Gay could here have been parodying Philips's obsequious (and therefore self-seeking) optimism at Eclogue 6. 43-44.

widely believed to have Tory backwoods interests at heart is, it would seem, superfluously ambivalent from the Ancient perspective.

The "Golden Age" and "Simplicity" recur as variable terms in the "Proeme's" argument. Those passages obviously Ancient in motivation extract much amusement at the "low" physicality of Theocritean or Spenserian shepherds, and yet "Simplicity" is something of an uneasy term to support as a basis for Golden Age artifice. The "persona" Gay adopts for the occasion may betray a fatuous confidence in British progress but its alternative, the withdrawal into the 'new-fangled Fooleries' of 'gay Gothic Garniture' such as practised by a Fontenelle or even Virgil in his more elevated pastoral mood, is hardly preferable. Given the undoubtedly pervasive "politeness" of the "Shepherd-Poet's" address to the 'gentle' or 'courteous' reader, the "citizen-reader" is constructed as Gay's complicit persona. The 'prudent Citizen journeying to his Country Farms' would be aghast to find his farms peopled by poetry's 'Court Clowns, or Clown Courtiers'. Instead, he would expect 'plain downright hearty cleanly Folk; such as be now Tenants to the Burgesses of this Realme'. The weight of Gay's satire is hard to trace here. The telling use of 'prudent' would seem to ensure that some of the mud thrown would stick to city clothes.

Indeed, "Gay" sets out to inform 'gentle' city-dwellers of rural conditions by setting before them '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'.<sup>1</sup> Once again, the one adjective 'proper' provides some measure of commentary on the delicate choice of such pilgrimages. If this detail could be said to reflect as much on the visitor as the visited, then Gay's quotation from

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1. Gay's last words in the "Proeme" are heavily ironic in this vein: 'Gentle Reader, turn over the Leaf, and entertain thyself with the Prospect of thine own Country ...' (1: 92).

Paradise Lost, IX, 445-51 which immediately follows is unequivocal.

The depiction of the 'Summer's Morn ... / Among the pleasant Villages and Farms' seems to support the Virgilian epigraph from Eclogue 2 (23-29), and yet, in context, is part of the description of Satan viewing Eve and for the moment 'stupidly good' (465). This salutary effect can hardly be squared with rural artifice, especially as Gay's next words highlight the patent absurdity as well as inutility of Arcadians: 'Thou wilt not find my Shepherdesses idly piping on oaten Reeds, but milking the Kine, tying up the Sheaves, or if the Hogs are astray driving them to their Styes. My Shepherd gathereth none other Nosegays but what are the growth of our own Fields, he sleepeth not under Myrtle shades, but under a Hedge ...' (l: 91).<sup>1</sup> The British labourer can be part of Gay's description of rural affairs in two distinct ways. Firstly, he is the humorous bumpkin, barred from problematic depiction by stringencies of decorum but secondly, his very "unofficial" liberty undercuts such convention and provides a graphic rebuke to hidebound urban sentiment. The price of the latter is the deconstruction of hitherto acceptable Virgilian craft.

Gay's country persona provides the vulnerable charm of the "Prologue" to Bolingbroke as well. Here "Gay" portrays himself as a player of a 'Boxen Haut-boy' (8), and one who, on hearing of rumours of his Queen's death, breaks his 'Reed' (21). Swapping the accoutrements of a pastoral life for suitable Court garments, "Gay" travels to Court:

Of Soldier's Drum withouten Dreed;

For Peace allays the Shepherd's Fear

Of wearing Cap of Grenadier.

[ll. 46-48]

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1. These useful pastoral shepherds seem to be a return of the 'honest and laborious Plough-men, in no wise sure more unworthy a British Poet's imitation, than those of Sicily or Arcadie; ...' (l: 90). However, the Swiftian touch in the profession of such amour propre immediately preceding this must cast doubt on this.

Indeed, the Country Interest's relief not only from Land-Tax but from constricted overseas trade forms the sentiments of "Gay's" message from the Court (69-71). Bolingbroke, who had recently suffered concerted opposition to the commercial sections of the 1713 Peace, is thus a particularly appropriate dedicatee.

The Theocritean/Spenserian bucolic is far from being a weakness in Gay's satire. Its ambiguous purpose need not be a defensive tactic but a means of exposing pastoral writing altogether.

Theocritus's goatherds and shepherds were rustics innocently using urban, sophisticated genres to express impossible longings, whereas Spenser's allegory insured his Chaucerian roughness against stylistic awkwardness. Both of these models could be said to exploit their own dualisms. Gay's Doric is no exception, and like Pope's conclusion in Guardian 40, it implicitly betrays a whole tradition of rural idealism and nostalgia, expressed in plangent lyric. For the "Calendar" of Spenser's shepherds, redolent of Church ritual or astrological frameworks, Gay supplies the limited scope of a "Week", not merely to ridicule the Modern bucolic but also to emphasise how pretentious Ancient devices were in transforming such recalcitrant matter.

The series of eclogues are therefore imitative yet eventually original. "Monday", the 'Squabble' between Lobbin Clout and Cuddy, is a burlesque of Eclogues 3 and 7; "Wednesday" is based on the first half of Eclogue 8 (with hints of 1 and 2) whilst "Thursday" is based on the second half; "Friday's" Bumkinet and Grubbinol are country cousins of Menalcas and Mopsus of Eclogue 5 and, in "Saturday", Gay registers the more epic pastoral voices of Eclogues 6 and 4. These Virgilian models are rendered in a Doric abruptness with more than passing resemblances to several of Philips's Pastorals. The

remaining eclogue, "Tuesday", resembles the Modern "Pastoral Ballad" described in Guardian 40.<sup>1</sup> Each poem is accompanied by select annotation which supplies more comprehensible "plain" translations of the 'Saxon' original interspersed with some parallel Virgilian details. Unlike Pope's 1736 edition of his Pastorals, this editorial commentary denies the poetry allusive range. A striking example can be found in "Friday", the lament for Blouzelinda. It is here that the balance is most delicate between amusement and empathy, and also where the Virgilian annotation is least straightforward.

Blouzelinda's loss excites naïve and plaintive anthems from Bumkinet and Grubbinol. Constantly the more expansive gestures suggested in the footnotes are straitened by more homely similes. The effect is often bathetic. At the climax of the amoebaeon dialogue, the annotation becomes thicker:

Lament, ye Fields, and rueful Symptoms show,  
Henceforth let not the smelling Primrose grow;  
Let Weeds instead of Butter-flow'rs appear,  
And Meads, instead of Daisies, Hemlock bear;  
For Cowslips sweet let Dandelions spread,

For Blouzelinda, blithsome Maid, is dead! [ll. 83-88] ...

Whilst the Saxon nomenclature (and indeed the conclusion of the poem) show obvious signs of burlesque, there are long periods where the Doric rejection of Virgilian euphony is nearer to Allan Ramsay's Scots and just as "pathetic". For those who would object that Golden Age flowers were inherently comic a glance at the roses and cowslips of "Panthea" would provide a corrective.<sup>2</sup> The Virgilian parallel is Eclogue 5, lines 38 to 39: 'pro molli viola, pro purpureo narcisso/

1. These allusions are illustrated at Poetry and Prose, 2: 525-27.

2. See lines 51, 71-72, 77-78.

Carduus et Spinis surgit paliurus acutis.<sup>1</sup> The violet, narcissus, thistle or thorn of the Latin are hardly more sounding than the English, which, it is reasonable to suppose, points to a deft translation, not a burlesque.

Grubbinol's response attracts a longer quotation:

Albeit thy Songs are sweeter to mine Ear,  
 Than to the thirsty Cattle Rivers clear;  
 Or Winter Porridge to the lab'ring Youth,  
 Or Bunns and Sugar to the Damsel's Tooth;  
 Yet Blouzelinda's Name shall tune my Lay,  
 Of her I'll sing for ever and for aye. [ll. 93-98]

Tale tuum carmen nobis, divine poeta,  
 quale sopor fessis in gramine, quale per aestum  
 dulcis aquae saliente sitim restinguere vivo ...  
 ... nos tamen haec quocumque modo tibi nostra vicissim  
 dicemus, Daphnimque tuum tollemus ad astra; ...

[Eclogue 5,  
 ll. 45-47, 49-50]

Blouzelinda is a poor substitute for Daphnis, but then actuality, 'the Prospect of thine own Country', would be. The divinity of the poet in the Virgil that inspires a talent as soothing as sleep on grass to the weary or the assuaging of thirst in dancing water is rendered by similes of physical detail. Gay's rustics remain stubbornly British and untransportable by courtly manners or heroic diction. The "editor" mentioned in the "Proeme" who wishes to preserve the language of the poems and highlight some unimpeachable classical authorities is not to be confused with the "Shepherd-Poet". If the critical apparatus

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1. 'In place of the soft violet, in place of the glistening narcissus, the thistles flourishes and the sharp-spiked thorn.'

is overbearing and unjustified, that is to the detriment less of the naïve text than the editorial effort itself, the perhaps Ancient quoting of chapter and verse for every pastoral gesture. It is no accident that the potential bathos of "failed" allusion fades after this point in the poem. There is no comment on the passage describing Blouzelinda's death, a passage where the Creech-like simplicity is also held in abeyance:

When Blouzelind expir'd, the Weather's Bell  
 Before the drooping Flock toll'd forth her Knell;  
 The solemn Death-watch click'd the Hour she dy'd,  
 And shrilling Crickets in the Chimney cry'd; ...

[ll. 99-102]

Indeed, this is a prologue to the most unironic section of the poem: Blouzelinda's last words and distribution of possessions (113-38).

This alternation between bathos and sentiment is part of Gay's pose as a writer of bucolics. It is the Gay of the "Epigrammatical Petition", the Scriblerus Club Invitations and the "Prologue" to Bolingbroke. Whilst never serious, Gay's "country" persona is rarely unattractive. Only in both "Monday" and "Thursday" would it be possible to say that the significance is consistently opposed to Philips's example. "Tuesday" provides us with an indigenous successor to Simaetha and Alpheisiboeus in Marian and just as susceptible to the dramatic irony of fruitless complaint. Sparabella in "Wednesday" appears a homage to D'Urfey, 'thou Bard of wond'rous Meed' (17), and, until the closing narratorial commentary (115-20), is every bit as inventive and knowing as her classical forebears.

Gay's most skilful amalgam occurs in "Saturday", Bowzybeus's "Flights" of drunken fantasy. His most obvious source is Eclogue 6, Silenus's similarly drunken catalogue of Ovidian metamorphoses and

Epicurean accounts of creation. For once, Gay exactly mirrors the prevalent rustic tone of Virgil, not Theocritus. In Eclogue 6, Silenus fills his song with rustic descriptions of the myths he mentions - fonte (43), armenta (45), aratrum (50), hyacintho (53), herbas (54), memorum . . . saltus (56), stabula (60), mola (61), alnos (63), floribus, apio (68).<sup>1</sup> This forms one half of a contrapuntal duet between subject-matter and form, for Silenus's initial drunkenness does not hinder an expansive range of mythic knowledge. These references are, however, expressed in a bucolic idiom. The conclusion of the poem may end in the stars but it has never departed from the bucolic. Gay's restitution of this mode of pastoral ignores Dryden's more consistently honorific treatment<sup>2</sup> and has Bowzysbeus indulge himself in specifically folkloric narratives or rural culture - a "grounding" of the 'Flights' in effect.

Eclogue 6 had long been a battleground for those critics pro- or anti- its non-pastoral sublimity. Fontenelle was amused at 'honest Silenus' and his 'hearty Carouse', but disturbed at the invasion of 'philosophical Notions', especially those of 'Epicurus's System'.<sup>3</sup> Chetwood had tried to read Christian notions into the song and so vindicate these drunken 'Flights'.<sup>4</sup> Gay's irony proceeds to recapture some of the binary attraction found in the original and which had been denied by neo-classic commentary. Indeed, Rapin's Golden Age excluded physical love especially, 'for all sort of lewdness or debauchery are directly contrary to the Innocence of the golden

1. For an attempt to create a cohesion in the poem, see E.W. Leach, "The Unity of Eclogue 6", Latomus, 27 (1968), 13-32.

2. See Poems, 2: 894-97.

3. Of Pastorals, pp. 286-87.

4. Dryden's Works, edited by Scott and Saintsbury, 13: 334.

Age'.<sup>1</sup> Gay's poem is much too much given over to unironic rural descriptions and its alternative culture to stand Rapin's or Chetwood's test. This is certainly true of 'Nature's Laws' (51), a catalogue of the superstitious and proverbial instead of more basic truths. Granted that the mode is comic, the sonority of the form rescues it. Bowzybeus sings of:

How Will-a-Wisp mis-leads Night-faring Clowns,  
 O'er Hills, and sinking Bogs, and pathless Downs.  
 Of Stars he told that shoot with shining Trail,  
 And of the Glow-worms Light that gilds his Tail.

[ll. 57-60]

The panorama of such instinctive 'Laws' modulates into an account of the immense variety and particularity of 'Fairs and Shows' (71). Just as Gay's Muse had felt seduced by the profusion of female dress in The Fan, it is similarly distracted (just as Silenus's scattered song had been) from a cohesive, unitary expression in this display of country details, of objects not items of urban finery:

How the tight Lass, Knives, Combs and Scissors spys,  
 And looks on Thimbles with desiring Eyes.  
 Of Lott'ries next with tuneful Note he told,  
 Where silver Spoons are won and Rings of Gold.  
 The Lads and Lasses trudge the Street along,  
 And all the Fair is crowded in his Song. [ll. 77-82]

Virgil's 'Flights' had included the Epicurean explanation of Creation whereby the forms of things were a chance amalgam of separate elements in the inane coacta (31). Bowzybeus's song is here moulding a form out of heterogeneity as well.

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1. . Treatise, p. 67. Gay, however, mirrors exactly the passage of Virgilian bawdy when Silenus sights Aegle (20-26).

It is also of note that Virgil's drunken god becomes in Gay's version, a ballad-singer. Chromis and Mnasyllus of Eclogue 6 had demanded songs. Silenus had responded with all the songs of old Phoebus (82). Bowzybeus supplies songs comprehensible to shepherds, and for his necessary heightening of tone towards the end quotes both "The Children in the Wood" (91) and "Chevy-Chase" (102), the ballads lionized by Addison. As the poem draws to its close, there is scanty annotation and few reminders of Virgilian precedent. This coincides with less of a mock-pastoral framework and more of the guarded delight at "lower" details to be found in Book I of Trivia (1716).<sup>1</sup>

Gay throughout the main body of "Saturday" sports with a ballad's freedom from Aristotelian or Horatian high seriousness. Pedlars provide 'glitt'ring Toys' (73); mountebanks and pickpockets are cheek-by-jowl with 'Raree-Shows' (89) and swallows, bats and dormice demonstrate Nature's mysteries (65-66) without thereby complimenting the citizen-reader's greater perspicacity at all. What is more, all of this contemporaneity is truer to Silenus's proverbial recounting of well-known myths than Dryden's more portentous version. By remaining exactly true to Eclogue 6's loose form and occasional bawdiness, Gay is thereby demonstrating how un-neo-classical the classical pastoral could be, and incidentally replacing the "Clowns" of the mock-pastoral with the "Lads and Lasses" of a pastoral ballad without any of the rough dialectal forms of Pope's Somersetshire version.

If The Shepherd's Week includes mock-pastoral passages, it would do a disservice to its overall complexity of tone and irony to allow

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1 . See especially ll. 23-40, 189-208.

then a definitive influence on readings of the collection as a whole. Indeed such Modern and Ancient elements were never again so clearly compacted in the same work. By 1715 Gay's depiction of rural life in The What D'Ye Call It: A Tragi-Comi-Pastoral Farce was darker and correspondingly more didactic.<sup>1</sup> Pastoral continuity is rudely disrupted by the press-gang. Dorcas's speech on Thomas Filbert's enlistment in Act I, Scene i illustrates the effective capital of rural life:

Ah! why does nature give us so much cause  
To make kind-hearted lasses break the laws?  
Why should hard laws kind-hearted lasses bind,  
When too soft nature draws us after kind? [ll. 98-101]

Peascod's threatened execution in Act II, scene vi is a return to The Shepherd's Week, but in a very different key. Blouzelinda had distributed her meagre possessions in a sentimental parody of Daphnis from Idyll 1. Peascod's confrontation is with a firing-squad:

Say, is it fitting in this very field,  
Where I so oft have reap'd, so oft have till'd;  
This field, where from my youth I've been a carter,  
I, in this field, should die for a deserter?

[ll. 8-11]

The ritual leave-taking is in full view of Corporal and soldiers. Just as war's rapine had so accentuated the bucolic serenity of peace in Eclogues 9 and 10, in 1715, Gay has it assume just as specific a political shape. In his "Preface", the Soldier and the Swain form synecdoches for wider ideological exposition, an extension of some of

1. The full text can be found at Poetical Works (ed. Faber), pp. 335-61. For a fuller account of Gay's burlesque, see Peter Lewis, "Gay's Burlesque Method in The What D'Ye Call It", Durham University Journal, 59 (1967), 13-25.

the more pertinent questioning of The Shepherd's Week. In travesty of Aristotelian purity of form, Gay finds he can deconstruct the social hierarchies as well. In replying to those who 'say the sentiments are not Tragical, because they are those of the lowest country people', he inverts normal aesthetic categories much in the same way that the category of thief and the Great Man are conflated in The Beggar's Opera (1728). Although Justices of the Peace, Parish Clerks or Embryo Ghosts do not appear in any of the Ancients's plays, this is a mere nicety as Nurses often make their entrance. Besides, 'the sentiments of Princes and clowns have not in reality that difference which they seem to have: their thoughts are almost the same, and they only differ as the same thought is attended with a meanness or pomp of diction, or receive a different light from the circumstances each Character is conversant with' (pp. 336-37).<sup>1</sup> Addison could not have bettered this defence of "lower" poetic subject-matter. Nor, indeed, is this position undercut by the irony that is cast over the whole play; as in later work, the irony strengthens Gay's hand and allows him to take indecorous risks by constructing novel connections.

Looking back on The Shepherd's Week from 1715 two conclusions are probable. Firstly, the ballad was not inherently ridiculous to Gay. In a reprise of Sparabella's prudent decision against suicide in "Wednesday", Kitty's grief at Tom's enlistment is similarly qualified by melodramatic dramaturgy, such as the flinging away of the tool of her trade: a rake and the attendant chorus of sighs and groans. On

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1. The "Preface" clearly drives a wedge between pastoral characters and a 'Sergeant of Grenadiers', and, although the 'Clowns' might be 'whoremasters' or the damsels 'with child', 'a Soldier to a Swain is but just the same thing that a Wolf is to his Flocks, and is as naturally talk'd of or introduc'd' (pp. 337-38). Indeed, the salient reason why the play cannot be a comedy is that the plot deals with 'Inferiors trampled upon by the Tyranny of Power, a soldier shot for desertion, and an innocent maid in the utmost despair' (p. 337).

the other hand, within this framework Gay feels free to interpolate some straightforward anti-war propaganda: 'Happy the maid, whose sweetheart never hears / The soldier's drum, nor writ of Justice fears' (Act II, scene viii, 12-13). Indeed the pathos is given a graphic immediacy by the inclusion of the ballad: "'Twas when the seas were roaring ...' (22-61), reprinted alongside Pope's Eloisa to Abelard in its second edition (1720) and also in Pope's Miscellany Poems, 2 vols. (5th edition, 1726, 1: 88). Kitty is relieved, not surprisingly, and not by any self-defeating "prudence", but Filbert's appearance. Besides this, Gay demonstrates how important the simple lyricism of his ballads is in establishing alternate moods. Not for him the occasional bawdy of a D'Urfey. Kitty's lament is long enough to exhaust any potential parodic reserve from those who see that the whole situation is ludicrous. As Peter Lewis points out, The Beggar's Opera thrives on the dichotomy between romance and anti-romance: 'Gay urbanizes romance and, in so doing, makes it truly democratic - of the people, not of the aristocracy.'<sup>1</sup> The second conclusion is that Gay's use of pastoral motifs is not always to enjoy the disparity between the more serious neo-classical requirements and the "unofficial" world that opens on their transgression. As in "Panthea" or Rural Sports, Gay finds a wealth of expressive material and also his moral touchstones from pastoral myth. A Kitty is not so far from a Blouzelinda or a Sparabella, especially when contrasted with an Araminta or Pope's Belinda.

Gay's Shepherd's Week is, therefore, not merely a parody of Philips or D'Urfey as Trowbridge concludes. Indeed, in Dione: A Pastoral Tragedy (1720),<sup>2</sup> the tragic effect depends upon laments

1 . John Gay: The Beggar's Opera (London, 1976), p. 25.

2 . The full text can be found at Poetical Works, pp. 367-421.

much like those deployed by Philips in The Distrest Mother, without ironic qualification. The 'Prologue, Design'd for the Pastoral Tragedy of Dione' is conscious of its Modernity. Gay refuses to lift a scene by recourse to a battle or loud drum. On the contrary, the 'foolish bard' '... nor pomp nor show regards. / Without the witness of a hundred guards / His Lovers sigh their vows ...' (35-37). Consequently, this amorous pastoral will depict 'no Hemskirk boors, or home-bred clowns, / But the soft shepherds of Arcadia's downs' (21-22). This lyric strain is not so much a consequence of Arcadia, where many dissonant details are also depicted, but the more enervated Kent of Purney. The country is a location where epic emotions are possible because not qualified by urban or courtly corruption.

Martin Price has defined the normal mock pastoral 'or "town eclogue"' as out to depict urban noise and grime 'in all their ugliness', in order to 'create a mock order that is the very denial of true pastoral'. However, this 'mock order' is still 'an authentic order', perhaps the only framework available for the mimetic pastoral.<sup>1</sup> The Mandevillian metropolis from The Grumbling Hive, or Knaves Turned Honest (1705), enlarged to The Fable of the Bees (1714) is prosperous, yet full of dishonesty. Once society undergoes moral reform, life is more virtuous, but also stagnant and where arts and crafts lie neglected:

Thus every Part was full of Vice,  
 Yet the whole Mass a Paradise ...  
 Such were the Blessings of that State;  
 Their Crimes conspir'd to make them Great.<sup>2</sup>

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1. To the Palace of Wisdom: Studies in Order and Energy from Dryden to Blake (Carbondale, Ill., 1964), p. 108.
  2. Bernard Mandeville, The Fable of the Bees: or Private Vices, Publick Benefits (London, 1714), p. 9. For an extended account of its influence, see Krämnick, Bolingbroke and his Circle, pp. 201-4.

Gay's anti-Walpole touches in The Beggar's Opera turn on the ambivalence of such "civic" greatness. In Act III, scene xvi, the Player and the Beggar debate the workings of 'strict poetical Justice' (4). As it is Opera, the drama must have a happy conclusion, yet the more contrived the happiness, the less it is convincing. Macheath in Walpole's England, would normally be hanged, but 'to comply with the Taste of the Town' (15), he must survive. The Beggar, however, is no Mandevillian. The similarity between the manners of 'high and low life' (18) was not observed in order to demonstrate the "greatness" of the whole, but to demonstrate a most "unpoetical" justice: 'that the lower sort of people have their vices in a degree as well as the rich: And that they are punish'd for them' (23-24).<sup>1</sup> Gay's London provides no wonderfully contrived framework outside of bourgeois tastes.

Pope was to claim in his Dunciad of 1729 that The Beggar's Opera was 'a piece of Satire which hit all tastes and degrees of men, from those of the highest Quality to the very Rabble'.<sup>2</sup> In a letter from Pope and Gay to John Caryll of March 3, 1714/15, a similar effect seems to have been gained by The What D'Ye Call It: 'The farce has occasioned many different speculations in the town, some looked upon it as a mere jest upon the tragic poets, others as a satire upon the late war.'<sup>3</sup> This hybridization of effect combines an apparent obedience to the accepted norms of the chosen form with a clear indication that they are insufficient and artificial, if "true", then only so for the duration of the entertainment they support. This is very much the case with The Shepherd's Week. It is accurate

1. The Beggar's Opera, edited by Peter Lewis (Edinburgh, 1973), pp. 111-12.

2. III, 326 n., TE, 5: 190.

3. Letters, p. 19.

to claim that it is a work divided against itself but insufficient to propose also that Gay failed to achieve some other design. It is rather the fault of those neo-classical critics who could not recognize the deep-seated ambiguities of both Theocritean and Virgilian bucolic. Far from hymning a retired ease or perpetually idealized Arcadia, both the Idylls and Eclogues suggest a turbulent and often rustic alternative. Gay's method in 1714 is very much in that vein.

Gay's mock-pastoral is not the same as Swift's or indeed Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's. For Swift, Arcadian idealism is an imposition, as rural deprivation is too pressing to be veiled. "A Description of the Morning" (1709) applies the classical descriptio framework to most disorderly material.<sup>1</sup> Betty 'from her master's bed ... flown' (3), the 'slipshod prentice' (5) and 'Brickdust Moll' (14) form an order only by reference to art. The same might be said of the more georgic "A Description of a City Shower" (1710), where the final three lines intensify not only the dirt of city-life but its anarchy, in defiance of the "art" needed to survive it.<sup>2</sup> Both these early attempts at Town Pastorals emphasize how inappropriate Virgilian grace and idealism are in describing city life. The Corydons and Daphnises of Restoration lyric were no such rural innocents. When Swift resurrects a Corydon and Phyllis in his "A Town Eclogue" (1711) he situates them at the Royal Exchange, in the heart of the City.<sup>3</sup> Virgil's Eclogue 1 and its sentiments in praise of a rooted life, is travestied not only by urban references but by urban immorality. Phyllis expects Corydon's baby but not his continued devotion. The catalogue of impossibilities

1. Complete Poems, pp. 107-8. For a fuller account of the parody, see Roger Savage, "Swift's Fallen City", in The World of Jonathan Swift, edited by Brian Vickers (London, 1968), pp. 171-94.

2. Complete Poems, pp. 113-14.

3. Complete Poems, pp. 115-17.

that had helped Gallus express his alienation from Arcady (55-61) becomes a bathetic register of all that is unmagical and ephemeral:

COR: When I forget the favour you bestowed,  
 Red herrings shall be spawmed in Tyburn Road,  
 Fleet Street transformed become a flowery green,  
 And mass be sung where operas are seen. [ll. 20-23]

Worse still, Phyllis discloses the existence of two more children, one 'placed' at Wapping. This adds a piquancy to the closing offer of "charity". Tityrus's magnanimity to Meliboeus becomes highly suspect when voiced by Corydon:

However, you shall home with me tonight,  
 Forget your cares, and revel in delight.  
 I have in store a pint or two of wine,  
 Some cracknels, and the remnant of a chine. [ll. 61-64]

Swift's city bucolics emphasize not only modern degeneration but how inapplicable classical touchstones prove to be in coming to terms with the rootless ephemerality of urban life.<sup>1</sup> This very modernity was a source of fascination for Gay. For Swift the silks and manteaux of urban prosperity are deceitful,<sup>2</sup> akin to the South Sea Bubble of 1720, where the machinery of public credit attracted the avarice of deluded ambition. In Upon the South Sea Project (1721)<sup>3</sup> the 'deluded bankrupt' (21) has in view "'a lord's estate; / My manors

1. This is not to say that rural life is an Arcadia for Swift. See his scatological A Pastoral Dialogue (1729, pp. 386-88), especially ll. 21-24, 37-40. When in contrast with the "monied" interest's supposedly tasteless incursion into country property, on the other hand, pastoral life is more ideal. See A Pastoral Dialogue between Richmond Lodge and Marble Hill, Written June 1727, just after the News of the King's Death (pp. 321-24), where Richmond Lodge, promised elevation to 'a high degree' (16) by its 'royal master' (15), is now neglected unlike Marble Hill, open to purchase by 'Some South Sea broker from the city' (67), which will thrive by a 'vulgar taste' (70).
2. See The Progress of Beauty (1719, pp. 192-95).
3. Complete Poems, pp. 207-14.

all contiguous round;" ...' (18-19). His reality is a stock-jobber's fraud; his desire is the sure foundation of a landed estate.

Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's six town eclogues (1716, 1747), on the other hand show little of Gay's virtuosity.<sup>1</sup> If Swift's were more overtly didactic, these are carefully satirical of fashionable mores but not with such a thoroughgoing purpose. A product of her friendship with both Pope and Gay, Lady Mary probably wrote them in 1716, the same date Gay himself was experimenting with town eclogues. Pope indeed thought "Friday" to be Gay's work,<sup>2</sup> but the version that appears in his Poems on Several Occasions is significantly different.<sup>3</sup> What marks out these eclogues from Gay's is their satirical object: courtly foibles. "Monday: Roxana, or the Drawing-room", is a prude's lament at Hanoverian court life. "Tuesday: St. James's Coffee-house, Silliander and Patch" as also "Thursday: The Bassette Table, Smilinda, Cordelia" are adaptations of Eclogues 7 and 8 and "Saturday: The Small Pox, Flavia" is a revisit to Idyll 1 and Eclogue 10. The trivial bric-a-brac of court gossip supersedes the mythical framework of the classical models. "Wednesday: The Tete a Tete" remains closest to Pope's The Rape of the Lock. Dancinda's impassioned expression of 'the secret conflict' (16) of a Court-lady's mind resembles the closing words of wisdom uttered by Clarissa in the Rape (V. 9-34):

Could I forget the Honor of my Race,  
And meet your wishes, fearless of Disgrace; ...

[Yet] The wretched she who yeilds to guilty Joys,

A Man may pity, but he must despise. [ll. 57-58, 65-66]

1. Essays and Poems and Simplicity, A Comedy, edited by Robert Halsband and Isobel Grundy (Oxford, 1977), pp. 182-204.

2. See Anecdotes, 1: 104.

3. The full text of Gay's version can be found at Poetry and Prose, 1: 181-85.

As this is a mock-pastoral, however, the closing lines subvert the assumption of outraged innocence. Strephon, 'cursing slips down the back stairs' (92), as Dancinda hears her 'Lord' approach. The same strategy is employed in "Friday: The Toilette, Lydia". Here feminine satire at the masculine rules of the marriage-game is all but subverted by the arrival of a maid with a 'Band box' (70): 'Strait Lydia smil'd; the Comb adjusts her Locks / And at the Play House, Harry keeps her Box' (77-78). Only 43 lines are repeated in Gay's version: "The Toilette. A Town Eclogue. Lydia", first printed in Court Poems (1716), and, although the theme is shared, it is true to say that Gay's version owes much more to "Araminta", a depiction of a woman spurned, much more an allusion to Idyll 2 than a mock-pastoral on the Swift model.

Indeed, Gay's own poetry from this collaboration, collected in the Poems on Several Occasions (1720) is similar in all but one instance. "The Tea-Table. A Town Eclogue"<sup>1</sup> has Doris and Melanthe gossip until the subjects of their malice arrive. All dissension is quelled by a game of Ombre. "The Funeral. A Town Eclogue" travesties the elegy for Daphnis of Eclogue 5.<sup>2</sup> Sabina sheds tears for Fidelio until Lucy arrives with a billet doux from Myrtillo. The same tactic lies behind "The Espousal. A Sober Eclogue. Between two of the People called Quakers".<sup>3</sup> Protestations of dissenting virtue abhor the couches that 'creak with whoredom's sinful shame' (93) and yet such liberty from established form can be itself a licence just as full of cupidity: 'Tabitha: Espousals are but forms. O lead me hence, / For secret love can never give offence' (105-6). The town eclogue in Gay's hands cannot be said to be as critical of the eclogue-form

1. Poetry and Prose, 1: 234-37.

2. Poetry and Prose, 1: 237-41.

3. Poetry and Prose, 1: 241-44.

as The Shepherd's Week. The fact that town beaux and belles use pastoral innocence as a polite pretence is no debasement of the convention as a whole. Swift takes no delight in the "reality" that succeeds pastoral convention but Gay, in The Shepherd's Week, does suggest that rural conventions have an attraction over and above their obvious indecorum. Lady Mary Wortley Montagu does not suggest a consistent bucolic alternative to court trivia, whereas this implicit comparison is central to the rustic shepherds and shepherdesses that celebrate without contemplation.

At the head of the 1720 collection is a poem, however, which is more Swiftian than the 1714 eclogues. "The Birth of the Squire. An Eclogue. In Imitation of the Pollio of Virgil"<sup>1</sup> returns to his "Saturday" but substitutes a genial, if loutish, Bowzybeus with a degenerate and altogether rebarbative "Tunbelly Clumsy". James Sutherland is not alone in being shocked by such uncustomary distaste: 'Gay's tone is, for him, oddly uncompromising; it comes near to disgust. We may perhaps suspect that he had some particularly unfavourable specimen of the squirearchy in mind, some arrogant lout remembered from his boyhood years in Devon.'<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, William Irving attempts to reclaim the poem for some consistently unassuming and good-hearted canon presumed to be essentially that of Gay's spirit. "The Espousal" and "The Birth of the Squire" are both claimed to 'contain smart touches of that Hogarthian humour that has done so much to keep Gay's fame alive' (p. 143). Gay in 1720 was not the "good-hearted" Puck of 1714. Little is recorded of Gay's life in these years but it is safe to assume that a stipend was never a consistent factor. The subscription lists of 1720, however, do

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1. Poetry and Prose, 1: 231-33.

2. "John Gay", Pope and His Contemporaries (London, 1949), p. 211.

bear powerful names. William Kent had designed the frontispiece; Lord Burlington and Lord Chandos are down for fifty copies each, and Lords Bathurst and Warwick for ten. Most materially, there appear the names of Gay's future patrons, the Duke of Queensberry and his duchess, Catherine Hyde.<sup>1</sup> The lists are not uniformly either Tory or Whig in complexion. What does appear remarkable is the prominent help given to the two quarto volumes by established rural gentry. No names exist from the present administration.

Richard Boyle, third Earl of Burlington, had been a member of the Privy Council in 1714, but during the impeachment proceedings against Oxford and Bolingbroke in 1715, was glad to take up the post of Lord-lieutenant of the East Riding of Yorkshire. An enthusiastic admirer of Palladian design, he, by 1720, had altered and partly reconstructed Burlington House, Piccadilly, along Italian lines. For Gay, Burlington frequently appears as a powerful yet unaffected noble, free of the exigencies of London power, and offering an alternative to bourgeois nationalism. In Trivia (1716),<sup>2</sup> Gay's "Walker" of London streets reaches the Strand, passing dire reminders of the city poor and the failure of human charity (II, 451-74). Here, Arundel House had given place to Arundel Street and instead of 'Titian's glowing Paint' (II, 485) or 'Raphael's fair Design' (II, 486) hang 'the Bell-man's Song', or 'The colour'd Prints of Overton' (II, 487-88). A similar fate had overtaken other symbols of Elizabethan connoisseurship; the houses of Essex, Cecil, Bedford and Buckingham are now no more:

Yet Burlington's fair Palace still remains;

Beauty within, without Proportion reigns.

1. On the landed interest represented here, see Howard Erskine-Hill, The Social Milieu of Alexander Pope, pp. 279-317.

2. The full text can be found at Poetry and Prose, 1: 134-81.

Beneath his Eye declining Art revives,

The Wall with animated Picture lives; [II, ll. 493-96]<sup>1</sup>

Burlington may stand alongside Chandos, Bathurst and the others as evidence of a thriving landed interest, a help to arts and improver of an otherwise barren urban scene.

On turning once more to "The Birth of the Squire", it becomes obvious that Gay can still remain true to his more Tory self whilst also pillorying a decadent and ignorant backwoods alternative. Virgil's august homage to Pollio, instigator of continuity and peace, confronts a most unworthy recipient, war-like in his tastes (61-76) and equally disruptive in his affections (49-60). Whilst snoring away 'Debates in Parliament' (76), a diurnal rural round exists, unchecked and still abundant. The Squire is undone by strong ale 'Brew'd or when Phoebus warms the fleecy sign, / Or when his languid rays in Scorpio shine' (91-92). This same liquid, 'Old October', has the power to redden 'ev'ry nose' (14) and provide cheer and comfort:

With frothy ale to make his cup o'er-flow,  
 Barley shall in paternal acres grow;  
 The bee shall sip the fragrant dew from flow'rs,  
 To give metheglin for his morning hours;  
 For him the clust'ring hop shall climb the poles,  
 And his own orchard sparkle in his bowles.

[ll. 19-24]

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1. Compare An Epistle To the Right Honourable the Earl of Burlington. A Journey to Exeter (1720): 'While you, my Lord, bid stately Piles ascend, / Or in your Chiswick Bow'rs enjoy your Friend' [Pope] (1-2, pp. 203-7). Even Exeter and environs provide bucolic serenity or Ancient evidence:  
 How are our Shepherds fal'n from ancient days!  
 No Amaryllis chaunts alternate Lays!  
 From her no list'ning Ecchos learn to sing,  
 Nor with his Reed the jocund Valleys ring. [ll. 63-66].

This natural pattern alludes to the mythical abundance of Pollio's new order. Characteristically, Gay here forsakes myth for less "poetic" details, for his Squire is more manifest and disturbing: 'O where is wisdom, when by this o'erpower'd? / The State is censur'd, and the maid deflower'd;' (97-98). Natural abundance is abused by a gentry unfit to take on Pollio's mantle of diplomat and patron. The climax is the insidiously heroic timbre of the closing lines, a re-casting of Bowzybeus's drunkenness but in much darker colours reminiscent of Satan in Pandemonium:

Triumphant, o'er the prostrate brutes he stands,  
The mighty bumper trembles in his hands;  
Boldly he drinks, and like his glorious Sires,  
In copious gulps of potent ale expires. [ll. 105-8]

The Squire's epic stature is in his capacity to hold his ale and his sceptre, the 'mighty bumper'. Tamburlaine-like, his triumph is a prelude to his extinction.

### Conclusion

Gay's attempt to mock the pastoral form relies on the decadence of the form itself. In its orthodox neo-classical or, observing Congleton's distinction, 'rational' form, the Golden Age or Rural Tranquility had described a quiescent and passive culture patently artificial yet pleasing nonetheless. William Empson, aware of the necessary contradictions in the pastoral myth, asserts that parody of the aristocratic gestures was necessary so that their insincerity could be shown alongside the essential worth of the poor man, despite his ridiculousness:

The simple man becomes a clumsy fool who yet has  
better "sense" than his betters and can say things

more fundamentally true; he is "in contact with nature", which the complex man needs to be; ... he is in contact with the mysterious forces of our own nature, so that the clown has the wit of the Unconscious; he can speak the truth because he has nothing to lose.<sup>1</sup>

In Gay's case, Empson's diagnosis is not quite accurate. In The Beggar's Opera or Trivia, it is the newly rich, not the aristocracy, of London who in gilded carriages ignore the moral perspectives of the Beggar or Walker. Despite clothing himself here in rags and accepting a moral advantage from their perspective, Gay never advances it as a serious locus of moral regeneration. As becomes increasingly clear Court manners lend themselves to the pastoral accents of Dione or Acis and Galatea; Pope and Philips (minus the occasional rusticity) are similar in this respect. Melody and negligent ease are summoned for their lyric patina. The 'simple man' of Empson's account cannot participate in this, but he can act as an implicit reproach to urban corruption, an offshoot of a satiric tradition demonstrated in Juvenal's Satire 10.

As such, Gay's rustics are a product of a Country ideology. In vain does one search for a Stephen Duck thresher or even an honest husbandman taken in isolation from a wider rhetorical function. "The Tea-Table" is a clear example of this. Sylvia, glimpsed in masquerade, appears a very nymph in her green dress complete with crook:

An am'rous shepherd led her through the croud,  
The nymph was innocent, the shepherd vow'd;

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1. English Pastoral Poetry (New York, 1938), p. 14.

But nymphs their innocence with shepherds trust;

So both withdrew, as nymph and shepherd must.

[11. 23-26]

But all is urban pretence. The force of the mock-form's satire is borne by the degraded Whig court of George I.

Gay's distrust of the pastoral tradition is not only at Theocritean "simplicity" (which he often assumes for satiric capital) but also artifice. In his Epistle "To the Right Honourable WILLIAM PULTENEY Esq." (1720),<sup>1</sup> the journey Gay took to France with the dedicatee in July, 1717 provides plenty of vulnerable Fontenellian artifice to undermine. Pulteney had been Secretary of War, but had resigned with Walpole in April, 1717. Although his years as founder-leader of the Whig opposition to Walpole, the "Patriots", lay in the future, his "retired" status associates him with Burlington and Bathurst. Gay's return to French haunts in 1719 reminds him of the pretences of "polite" society. When 'sweet-breathing Spring unfolds the buds' (101), the "natural" consequence is Chelsea meadows overhearing 'perfidious vows, / And the prest grass defrauds the grazing cows' (105-6). 'Court ladies' thus can also sin 'in open air' (108): 'What Git with a gallant would trust his spouse / Beneath the tempting shade of Greenwich boughs?' (109-10). Damons and Chloes are Virgilian in origin, but crucially bear no relation to the Eclogues, which can only exist as an empty gesture: 'But since at Court the rural taste is lost, / What mighty summs have velvet couches cost!' (131-32). Pope's Ancient pastorals had stressed a confidence that Virgil might live again on Windsor's plains. Gay demonstrates that by 1720 the only assertion possible was that this hope was a futile one.

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1. The full text can be found at Poetry and Prose, 1: 208-14.

CONCLUSION

Fontenelle, in summing up his case for the "tranquil" pastoral, endorses the idealization of rural affairs and the 'smiling' pictures of life on the grounds that 'A Court gives us no Idea but of toilsome and constrain'd Pleasures. For, as we have observed, the Idea is all in all. Could the Scene of this quiet life, with no other Business but love, be placed anywhere but in the Country, so that no Goats or Sheep should be brought in, I fancy it would be never the worse, for the Goats and Sheep add nothing to its Felicity ...'<sup>1</sup> To Fontenelle, Rapin and, indeed, most of the neo-classical pastoral theorists, the 'Idea' of rural existence involved the repression of not only the toil and constraint of such affairs but the transference of courtly/urban preoccupations to a simplified frame of reference. From a mimetic point of view, this is downright deception, but all forms of realism, however illusionistic, have a tincture of convention. A problematic depiction of rural labour is not a pastoral undertaking. The degrees of more or less realistic portrayal in pastoral really involve the adoption of alternative conventions or literary models.

Augustan pastoral had recently discovered the Theocritean bucolic. Thomas Creech's translation represented the Idylls without much of the prevalent modulation from idiomatic Doric to "poetic" afflatus. In place of a Theocritus as ironist, Creech found a rustic Coan at a sophisticated Alexandria, singing in a rough-hewn dialect, yet, despite this, producing a new sweetness and charm. As the Idylls were often read after a full curricular immersion in Virgil's Eclogues, their apparent lack of artifice was of particular interest and prominence,

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1. Of Pastorals, p. 345.

but also a challenge to a Horatian decorum that evidently expected rustics to be innately comic. When Lady Mary Wortley Montagu wrote to Pope in surprise that Theocritus was no 'romantic writer' but one who strove to give 'a plain image' of Greek peasants (April 1, 1717), the disparity between a Classical culture (graceful still in Adrianople) and the Anglo-Saxons of British fields was of crucial importance:

The young lads generally divert themselves with making garlands for their favourite lambs, which I have often seen painted and adorned with flowers, lying at their feet, while they sung or played. It is not that they ever read Romances. But these are the ancient amusements here, and as natural to them as cudgel-playing and football to our British swains; the softness and warmth of the climate forbidding all rough exercises, which were never so much as heard of amongst them, and naturally inspiring a laziness and aversion to labour, which the great plenty indulges.<sup>1</sup>

Pope's reply (June, 1717) emphasises this disparity during a highly-wrought compliment to Lady Mary. News from abroad comes as 'little less than a miracle, or extraordinary Visitation from another World; Tis a Sort of Dream of an agreeable thing, which subsists no more to me ...' but which overrides 'most of the Dull Realities' of life and exposes a 'Young Poet's' lack of 'Romantick Ideas' (1: 406). Turkish simplicity could be leisured, 'Romantick' and yet also Classical; British simplicity involved the rough sports of cudgelling or football, instances of incipient barbarity and anarchy.

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1. Correspondence, 1: 397-98.

Virgilian pastoral was a safer affair, where the work most successfully overcame its potentially recalcitrant matter. In place of the original traces of allegorical satire, however, it was customary to represent the Eclogues as considerably more idealized than they were conceived to have been and in the face of much medieval and seventeenth-century commentary. The disparities explored by Virgil between Gallus and Arcadia, Tityrus and Melibeus or the songs of Moeris/Lycidas and those of Menalcas or the accents of the possessor agelli (9.3) hardly remain. Instead, in Dryden's influential translation, these softer distinctions are subsumed under a constant desire to grant the shepherds the same heroism as in the homage to Pollio. The 1697 version, whilst suitably complimentary to Virgil's pre-eminent status, also chose this elevated accent as part of an implicit political and religious ideology; to confront the new age of limited monarchy and, so, of limited authority, with a more enduring mythical system moulded in support of a Tory Royalist ethos.

The conclusions of the first chapters emphasise how polarized the Idylls and Eclogues became in definitions of pastoral. This same division is still traceable, on the other hand, within each collection, between Idyll 1 or Eclogue 4 and Idyll 3 or Eclogue 3. For the sake of purifying the form and defining the formal elements necessary in producing a "correct" response, some consensus definition had to be formulated. This disparity between the Doric and Arcadian proved difficult to solve. By 1723, however, Allan Ramsay's Scots Doric and Purney's Anglo-Saxon Kentish had so sweetened Theocritus's example that he could fall in alongside Virgil's "artificiality". What had been sacrificed, especially by Ambrose Philips, was the opportunity to supply an alternative world for literate, yet corrupted, post-lapsarian Man. Philips's Modern bucolic might claim Theocritus and Spenser as

its forebears, but it manifestly appropriates them, eschewing their authority in practice yet quoting it in theory. Pope's eclectic arrangement of allusions seeks to accomplish the opposite: to supply a living testimony as to how reliant contemporary culture was on its past and on the practice of imitation in general. Although the melodiousness of both sets of pastorals seems in retrospect similar, the conflicting interests that much contemporary criticism felt were involved proves that their differences were a live issue. For Philips, the classicism represented by an artificial "simplicity" seemed as redundant as the love-letters of 'Classick Will' in The Freethinker 7, spreading more rhetorical heat than light.<sup>1</sup> For Pope, the "lower" bucolics of Philips resembled a Somersetshire balladeer's doggerel.

Most relevant to the argument, however, were the opposed definitions of simplicity. For Philips, the primary unmixed human emotions provided the touchstone of simplicity, but for Pope, simplicity was far more a formal quality, only accessible through acquaintance with Ancient Classical authors. "Longinian" sublimity could be called to witness for either conclusion and so sanction either folk-ballads or Homeric grandeur. No doubt, even in folk-ballads, a rural community could be stigmatized as pathetic songsters, not as Hesiodic sages, but even if country life is still not granted serious mimetic status in Chevy-Chase, the challenge of such Doric touches to the idea that literature was an aristocratic province was crucial. Emotional freedom and integrity for Philips, Purney and Ramsay emerged from the occasional awkwardnesses and "unartistic" sentiments of their shepherd protagonists. Twentieth-century criticism (much of it defined by a need to satisfy academic complexity) has understandably accepted Pope's view that such lyricism is barren. To do that, however, is to admit also that the critical principles which

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1. The Freethinker, 1: 27-28.

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endorsed such lyrical simplicity were vapid or transparent and to no purpose, which is an unacceptable censorship, given the significance than felt to lie in the debate.

The neo-classical pastoral had taken much of its form and themes from the events supposed to be natural in a situation of a shepherd's pastoral care of sheep and his leisure-hours. The shepherd of several classical pastorals is, on the other hand, a very ambiguous figure. Daphnis is a hero as well as a shepherd; Gallus is as love-sick as an Arcadian, but remains stubbornly an outsider, whereas Simichidas is travelling to the country from the city when he meets Lycidas. This very ambiguity is, of course, one of the shepherd's desirable traits in literature, for such a reference often provides Christian and socio-economic echoes. This period saw the location of pastoral sentiments in areas once considered unpastoral in the primary sense of the word. In William Diaper's Nereides: or, Sea-Eclogues (1712) and Dryades: or, The Nymphs Prophecy (1713) or Moses Browne's Piscatory Eclogues, An Essay to introduce new rules and new characters into pastoral (1729), a time-honoured tradition was broken. New models for the pastoral were selected: those of Sannazaro, where the tranquility once felt to be the main and exclusive requisite of the best pastorals proved transportable to other pursuits. With it the central and vestigial prominence of the shepherd-metaphor was called into question. What the new models demonstrated was a lyric form no longer anchored to the countryside by the dictates of Ancient precedent, and no longer confronting an urban culture quite so directly. The pastoral formed no criticism of life here neither did it invoke a classical civilization as an alternative.

In the mock-pastoral and town eclogue, the confrontation between the two cultures was more central to the poetry. However, it must be

stressed that it is only as rhetorical potential that rural manners were included, as a sufficiently potent antidote to urban complacency and corruption and not as a seriously entertained alternative. City and court culture would benefit from an infusion of rural humility and devotion. There is no suggestion that the Dancindas or Lydias should actually take to the country. Indeed, that would be unthinkable as the countryside would not be full of obedient Strephons or Phyllises but Blouzelindas and Lobbin Clouts. Gay's The Shepherd's Week testifies as much to a distrust of 'country clowns' as a renewed appreciation of the rural ideas of Eclogues 1 and 9, especially in its resistance to the depredations of urban sentimentality or exploitation. Gay has often suffered from his admirers, in that his Devonshire upbringing often assumes Hardyesque proportions. Isaac Krammick, whose aim is to demonstrate the increasing currency of a Tory myth of urban corruption, claims Gay as a country writer: 'He never forgot his rural Devon and in his writings Augustan humanism has its poetic rejection of urban civilization and its venal corruptions. In Gay, Augustan nostalgia is given geographical roots ... Utopia for Gay [lay] in the rural Arcadia outside London, where men and life were natural and genuine.'<sup>1</sup> Lobbin Clout or Bowzybeus may be "naturally" free and genuinely unambitious and uncontriving, but they are hardly acceptable ideals at all, especially when compared to a Daphnis or Lycidas. For that to be so, Gay chose another mode altogether: the georgic, for his Rural Sports and Trivia.

Whilst not directly a form of pastoral, the georgic could assume a similar elegiac, yet resolute tone. The first book provides an emphatic picture of arduous agricultural labor in constant war with nature. Husbandry assumes militaristic proportions<sup>2</sup> in its unremitting

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1. Bolingbroke and his Circle, p. 223.

2. See the hints of discipline and training (99, 210, 220, 268), launching attacks (104 ff, 155), subjugation (125), conquest (145) and ambush (271).

fight against anarchy. Gradually, this proves fuel for a fiery tirade against the fractured world of post-Caesarian/Julian Rome (1. 466-514). The body politic is as much an outcrop of natural disorder as drought or flood. The second georgic supplies a more idealistic eulogy of nature's abundance: varia natura (2. 9-258), culminating in the famous finale on the moral value and joy of rural life (2. 458-540). This brief candle is extinguished in the third book, in which such Saturnian idealism is reminded of the brute passion and destructiveness of life (3. 242-83), quite capable of nullifying arbitrarily both fructus and labor (3. 517-26). The fourth georgic recapitulates this conflict; on the one hand, it can re-introduce the idealism of Georgic 2 (the Corycian Senex, 4. 125-46 or bee community, 4. 149-218) and also threaten it with the other (Aristaeus's failure, 4. 453-59 and the doomed Orphic labor, 4. 491-522). This pervasive pessimism is a robust strain, but it is the voice of a Milton, not a Bucaeus. Idealistic it may be, but it is inextricably wedded to the depiction of particularized work and less quiescent protagonists. Its mood is active, not passive, and its descriptive vigour (quite foreign to the Eclogues's method) could blend effortlessly not only with the Horatian ode and descriptive poem but also with the philosophical poem on the Creation.<sup>1</sup> In short, by the time James Thomson came to write his "Preface" to the second edition of Winter (June, 1726), it is the Shaftesburian simplicity and rapture that is invoked, not the original pessimism of either the Eclogues or Georgics: 'I know no Subject more elevating, more amusing; more ready to awake the poetical Enthusiasm, the philosophical Reflection, and the moral Sentiment, than the Works of Nature.' Such variety is best contemplated in 'Retirement, and Solitude', preferably with a copy of the 'rural Virgil's' Georgic as ones inspiration.<sup>2</sup>

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1. See John Chalker, The English Georgic, pp. 92-98.

2. The Seasons, edited by James Sambrook (Oxford, 1981), p. 305.

Gay's angler or hunter of Rural Sports or his Walker of London streets in Trivia are no relatives of Thomson's poet but Virgil's sorely pressed yet still patriotic farmer. Thomson attempted to marry pastoral innocence with praise of commercial progress as well. Virgil gave Gay a more powerful and satirical voice, but nothing, in these poems, of the pastoral equipoise or alternation of accent found in most, if not all, classical pastoral.

The mock-pastoral was a way of attaining some of the Georgics's moral dignity and outrage. As Carole Fabricant has recently observed of Swift's readings of pastoral innocence, this ideal 'could never be embodied in an existing landscape ... , since realities could only mock or challenge visionary ideals ...'<sup>1</sup> In To Mr. Congreve (1693),<sup>2</sup> Swift likens his muse to 'some bright country virgin' (215) who has fallen in with 'a knot of beaux' (216) or critics. Offended by the 'odious smell and sight' (225), such bucolic purity has to retreat 'far in yon crystal call; / Faint inspiration sickens as she flies,' (228-29) until eventually it dies. The project of writing the mock-pastoral was a renewed effort to preserve pastoral ideals from such faintness at the prospect of importunate reality, as in the Modern lyrical bucolic. In writing to Pope on August 30, 1716, Swift suggests that Gay could perhaps turn his hand to 'a sett of Quaker-pastorals ["The Espousal"]'. 'I believe further,' he continues, 'the Pastoral ridicule is not exhausted; and that a porter, foot-man, or chair-man's pastoral might do well. Or what think you of a Newgate pastoral [The Beggar's Opera], among the whores and thieves there?'<sup>3</sup> In 1693, it had not been Swift's muse that had been at fault, but the 'knot' of city beaux. Given their existence, on the other hand, pastoral lyricism appeared to be an insipid rejoinder. When Gay in 1720 parodied

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1. Swift's Landscape (Baltimore, 1982), p. 56.

2. Complete Poems, pp. 67-73.

3. Correspondence (Pope), 1: 360.

Eclogue 4, he attained something of Swift's saeva indignatio and, indeed, some of Virgil's pertinence in Eclogues 1 and 9.

With the death of the neo-classical pastoral, not only a form (believed to be accurately Classical) disappeared, but also a rallying-point for a particular ideal of rural otium and moral transcendence. One very evident reason could have been greater acquaintance with the realities of rural deprivation. As Keith Thomas points out, the innocent shepherd 'had little justification in social fact, for agriculture was the most ruthlessly developed sector of the economy [1600-1750], small husbandmen were declining in number, wage-labour was universal ... But since it was in the city that rural profits were consumed, it was there that one found the most sophisticated society ...'<sup>1</sup> As it became rapidly fashionable (for even merchants and small businessmen) to move out of a dirty metropolis, classical tradition could be easily exposed, and with it the Ancient perspective that life and its poetic expression were essentially unchanging.

It has been argued by Joseph M. Levine that the Ancient/Modern debate in the Augustan period obscured the real issues fought over in other countries and in other ages.<sup>2</sup> Whilst this may be true, it serves to remind us how much the Augustan issues were so much a part of their age and location, especially as regards the nervousness felt at the transmission of a classical culture. Penelope Wilson has noted how, during the eighteenth century, there grew 'a confident sense of immediate and unresearched rapport' between a popular audience and the classical

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1. Man and the Natural World: Changing Attitudes in England, 1500-1800 (London, 1983), pp. 246-47. For a fuller account of the patterns of ownership, see J. V. Beckett, "The Decline of the Small Landowner in Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century England: Some Regional Considerations," The Agricultural History Review, 30 (1982), 97-111, supplemented by B. A. Holderness, Pre-Industrial England, pp. 27-44, and C. Lis and H. Soly, Poverty and Capitalism in Pre-Industrial Europe (Brighton, 1979, rev. ed. 1982) pp. 100-15.
  2. "Ancients and Moderns Reconsidered", Eighteenth Century Studies, 15 (1981-82), 72-89.

past.<sup>1</sup> Immense scholarly activity resulted in the presentation of classical poetry in contemporaneous colours. The classics were released from the academy by the academicians. Consequently, they were rapidly open to question as well as appreciation. The pastoral ideal was less well-served by a Trapp than a Dryden.

These material factors are integral parts of the literary history of the period. Simply quoting influences and models casts only a limited light on why such texts were operative then and in what way. By analysing the pastoral form in its contemporary ideological patterns, I have tried to show how contemporary historical events could be influential as well, not in a strictly deterministic way, but with a view to demonstrating the relative autonomy of literary institutions. This, in its turn, is perhaps not indignant enough at the deception practised by pastoral poetry. Raymond Williams has expressed his own frustration at the scholarly evasion by which the 'confident glossing and glozing of the reference back' to an "original" text shelves questions of moral responsibility: 'We must not look, with Crabbe and others, at what the country was really like ... let us remember, instead, that this poem is based on Horace, Epode II or Virgil, Eclogue IV; that among the high for names are Theocritus and Hesiod: the Golden Age in another sense.'<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, as Williams himself pointed out when questioned by the New Left Review editors, the pastoral myths, although promoting deception, were 'historically productive and therefore historically valuable'.<sup>3</sup> The further judgement as to their

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1. "Classical poetry and the eighteenth-century reader", in Books and Their Readers in Eighteenth-Century England, edited by Isabel Rivers (Leicester, 1982), p. 90. See also Howard Erskine-Hill on the survival and questioning of Augustanism, The Augustan Idea in English Literature (London, 1983), pp. 234-66.
  2. The Country and the City, p. 18.
  3. Politics and Letters: Interviews with New Left Review (London, 1979), p. 307.

effect on human perception is implicit in this study, for, if such forms are proved not to be the effusion of an eternal human spirit, then their potency is undermined, their categories opened to reappraisal and their hold on the imagination weakened. As E. P. Thompson has agreed with specific reference to the eighteenth century: 'To define control in terms of cultural hegemony is not to give up attempts at analysis, but to prepare for analysis at the points at which it should be made: into the images of power and authority, the popular mentalities of subordination.'<sup>1</sup> This period sees the disintegration of a form that had expressed courtly/urban stability in the face of a rural hinterland. It demonstrates that aesthetic ideals, as well as political principles, can be monitors of historical change.

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1. "Patrician Society, Plebeian Culture", Journal of Social History, 7 (1974), p. 389.

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