Theocritus, Calvus, and Eclogue 6

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that of approximating qualifiers (like μάλιστα). This helps to explain why editors and lexicographers have often had trouble in elucidating its meaning and use in particular passages.[27]

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THEOCRITUS, CALVUS, AND *ECLOGUE* 6

Of the six unconnected lines surviving from Calvus' epyllion, none is better known than the neoteric exclamation addressed to Io herself (Serv. Dan. ad *Ecl.* 6. 47 = Calvus frag. 9 Morel):

> a virgo infelix, herbis pasceris amaris.

We are indebted to Servius Danielis; for, as has been noted,[1] it can be seen that in *Eclogue* 6 Virgil drew from Calvus' line to produce an acknowledgment of previous literary expression. Stewart observes that at *Eclogue* 6. 47 ("a, virgo infelix, quae te dementia cepit!") Virgil combined the first half of Calvus' line with the second half of a verse from *Eclogue* 2 (69 "a Corydon, Corydon, quae te dementia cepit"), a line whose antecedent is Theocritus *Idyll* 11. 72 (ὦ Κύκλωψ Κύκλωψ, πᾷ τὰς φρένας ἐκπεπότασαι;). *Eclogue* 6. 47, then, is a recognition of the poet's literary predecessors, molded into a single Virgilian line.

But what of line 52 of the same poem?

> a! virgo infelix, tu nunc in montibus erras.

Virgil does not lightly repeat himself, and we may ask why this line, with the alteration of the second half, reappears after five verses. It is true that there is a structural purpose to the repetition: lines 47-52 are, in fact, a self-contained panel.[2] But why the change in the second half ("tu nunc in montibus erras")? The motif of wandering is common in the *Eclogues*, particularly in *Eclogue* 6.[3] For the moment, however, instances outside this poem will be important. First, *Eclogue* 2. 21:

> mille meae Siculis errant in montibus agnae.

As Servius recognized, Virgil drew from, but altered, Theocritus (again the Cyclops poem) at this point:

1. Z. Stewart, "The Song of Silenus," *HSCP* 64 (1959): 190.
2. Briefly noted, together with other panels, by F. Skutsch, *Aus Vergils Frühzeit* (Leipzig, 1901), p. 13.
3. J. P. Elder, "*Non Iniussa Cano*," *HSCP* 65 (1961): 118-19, points to the numerous instances of *erra*- in the *Eclogues*, particularly 6. 40, 52, 58, and 64. Is there significance in the distribution —an interval of twelve lines followed by two of six?

MILLE MEAE SICULIS ERRANT I. M. A. Theocritus ⟨XI 34⟩ βοτὰ χίλια βόσκω errant autem cum securitate pascuntur.

Again, on *Eclogue* 1. 9–10:

> ERRANT pasci ut ⟨II 21⟩ mille meae Siculis errant in montibus agnae.

The discrepancy in verbs between Theocritus and Virgil seemed significant to Servius, as it should to us, for Virgil clearly had *Idyll* 11 constantly before him while writing *Eclogue* 2. When he wrote *errant*, he intended his reader to recall the Theocritean verse and to supply *pascuntur*. Nor is Servius alone in seeing this approximation. Pseudo-Acron, on Horace *Epode* 2. 12 ("prospectat errantis greges"), notes:

> ERRANTES GREGES libere pascentes ut ⟨Virg. *Ecl.* 1. 9⟩ ille meas errare boves.

Thus, Virgil creates a parallel between grazing and wandering: *errare* and *pasci* can imply the same activity.

Let us return to *Eclogue* 6. When Virgil repeated Calvus' exclamation at line 52, but ended the line differently ("tu nunc in montibus erras"), he intended his reader to consider the model again, this time, however, the second half of Calvus' line as well as the first:

> a virgo infelix, herbis pasceris amaris.

Keeping in mind the equivalent meaning possible for *pasci* and *errare* (as established at *Ecl.* 2. 21), we will see exactly what *Eclogue* 6. 52, seemingly anticlimactic after its allusive counterpart five lines earlier, represents: a restatement, in Virgilian terms, of the complete line of Calvus—in this context, *pasceris* and *erras* are virtually interchangeable. Pasiphae's actions, then, are those of Io. Virgil, it seems, gives an additional indication of his source by alluding, two lines later (in the same metrical position, and in the same word order—verb enclosed by noun and adjective), to Calvus' half line ("pallentis ruminat herbas").

In the poetic genealogy of *Eclogue* 6 Virgil appears to have played further on this connection. He makes Linus the shepherd (67 *pastor*)[4] hand the pipes of Hesiod to Gallus, who is wandering (64 *errantem*) on the banks of the Permessus. Of course, *errare* here has only its conventional sense; but, since the verb is applied to Linus as *pastor*, its appearance does seem significant when we consider Virgil's earlier approximation of *errare* to *pasci*.

This leads to other considerations. *Pasci* obviously has a central place in pastoral poetry. Wandering, as noted, is also a prominent feature of the *Eclogues*. In particular, it can be the activity of the elegiac lover. In *Eclogue* 6 Virgil had placed Gallus, the author of the *Amores*, in this situation, just as Propertius, in the first poem of the *Monobiblos*, was to describe (the Gallan) Milanion, stricken by love:

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4. Virgil elsewhere shows an interest in words derived from *pasco*: *Ecl.* 6. 4–5 "pastorem, Tityre, pinguis / pascere oportet ovis," *G.* 2. 435–36 "pastoribus . . . pabula," *G.* 3. 339–42 "pastores . . . pascua . . . pascitur." For an elaborate development of this feature of Virgilian poetry, together with further etymological allusion, see David O. Ross, Jr., *Backgrounds to Augustan Poetry* (Cambridge, 1975), pp. 155–56 (on Tib. 2. 5. 25–30). Ross (pp. 21–23) also discusses the significance of Linus' role as *pastor*.

"nam modo Partheniis amens errabat in antris" (1. 1. 11).[5] So Virgil makes Pasiphae, who is subject to frustrated love, wander in the mountains. *Errare* is thus appropriate in this sense at *Eclogue* 6. 52, as well as in the sense established in *Eclogue* 2.

We can go no farther, for without the poetry of Calvus and Gallus the full significance of Virgil's construct is lost. If, from a single line, it is possible to detect Virgil's reshaping of his poetic antecedents, we can only regret once again the loss of those earlier works.

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5. Cf. H. Tränkle, *Die Sprachkunst des Properz und die Tradition der lateinischen Dichtersprache*, Hermes Einzelschriften, 15 (Wiesbaden, 1960), p. 13, for the tradition of *amens errabat*, and Ross, *Backgrounds*, pp. 61–64, for the demonstration that this phrase, together with the entire Milanion exemplum, reflects a Gallan archetype.