

VIRGIL *BUCOLICS* 1.1–2 AND INTERPRETIVE TRADITION:
A LATIN (ROMAN) PROGRAM FOR A GREEK GENRE

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THE OPENING LINES OF VIRGIL'S FIRST *ECLOGUE* are so familiar that many will know them by heart (*Ecl.* 1.1–2):

Meliboëus:

Tityre, tu patulae recubans sub tegmine fagi
silvestrem tenui musam meditaris avena.

Tityrus, while you lie there at ease under the awning of a spreading beech
and practise country songs on a light shepherd's pipe (as rendered by E. V. Rieu)

They owe familiarity to their role as the initial moment in a career that was to transform western literary history, inventing the ideal of Arcadia and going on to graft the Roman and Latin *Aeneid* onto the epic tradition that traced its roots to the Greek of Homer's *Odyssey* and *Iliad*.

Familiar, too, has been the scholarly consensus that Virgil here took aim at Theocritus (Servius 3.1.2.14 Thilo): *Intentio poetae haec est, ut imitetur Theocritum Syracusanum meliorem Moscho et ceteris qui Bucolica scripserunt* ("The poet's intention is this, to imitate Theocritus of Syracuse as better than Moschus and others who wrote *Bucolics*"). This consensus, however, has been challenged by a well-known scholar in an authoritative medium. Writing for *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology*, Francis Cairns argues that bucolic themes give only a generic stamp to the opening lines, which lack a specific "strong and unequivocal pointer to Theocritus," unless we recognize an etymological play that previous scholars, he claims, have overlooked.¹

Yet Cairns offers no compelling reason to overturn the consensus that found here a strong and overt reference to Theocritus. His proposed etymological point turns out to be neither overt nor strong; it had, in any case, occurred to many scholars from the Renaissance through the eighteenth century, then again in the mid-twentieth, among the latter a close cohort of

1. F. Cairns, "Virgil, *Eclogue* 1.1–2: A Literary Programme?" *HSCP* 99 (1999): 289–93. I am indebted to him for making this work available to me and to the directors of the Center for Hellenic Studies (Deborah Boedeker and Kurt Raaflaub) and the Folger Shakespeare Library (Werner Gundersheimer) for facilitating access to resources that made possible my research. To the anonymous readers I am grateful for perceptive and stringent advice that helped nudge this ὄλῃ closer to its proper form. Such flaws as persist are my own.

Cairns. Above all, the etymology's implications cannot be what Cairns infers. Something constructive may yet result, however, if readers are forced to take a fresh look at a crucial text that has long since been too familiar to seem as strange as it must have once been.

My argument builds on a review of Virgilian studies, on recent scholarly interest in relations among texts,² and on the need to consider contexts that are both adequate and germane.³ Basic philological analysis—semantic and rhetorical—takes priority, because only attention to the normal meanings of the language involved can overcome the inertia of familiarity and recover the innovative force of Virgil's use.⁴ I conclude that the etymological play in question, once it has been accurately described, complements more familiar signs of Virgil's relations with Theocritus, far from providing the unique key claimed by Cairns.⁵ The resulting account of literary innovation accords with recent assessments of ways in which Roman poets dealt with previous texts—their own and those of predecessors, Roman and Hellenistic and older Greek.⁶ Given the importance of the passage, the presumptive authority of the venue, and the currency of theoretical issues raised, a detailed report of Cairns' note seems called for.

Only sketching his first theme, Cairns finds signs of "bucolic" genre and "Alexandrian" poetics in the lines.⁷ Just as succinctly, then, he goes on to deny significant engagement with Theocritus:⁸

But, although we might also have expected to find in this very important location a strong and unequivocal pointer to Theocritus, at first sight none presents itself. It is true that Tityrus also appears twice in the *Idylls*, in one case near an *incipit* (3.2–4). But his role there is marginal and he is even less prominent in *Idyll* 7 (72).⁹ *Qua* bucolic character, then, Tityrus in *Eclogue* 1 can hardly be regarded as a clear pointer to Theocritus.

2. E.g., S. Hinds, *Allusion and Intertext: Dynamics of Appropriation in Roman Poetry* (Cambridge, 1998); J. Wills, "Divided Allusion: Virgil and the *Coma Berenices*," *HSCP* 98 (1998): 278–305; R. Thomas, "Virgil's *Georgics* and the Art of Reference," *HSCP* 90 (1986): 171–98, later published in *Reading Virgil and His Texts. Studies in Intertextuality* (Ann Arbor, Mich., 1999): 114–41; and J. Van Sickle, *The Design of Virgil's "Bucolics"* (London, 2004; reprint with new introduction that reviews scholarship since 1978, with a particular critique of blind spots in some recent receptionist theorists), 250, s.v. "emulation."

3. "Only an awareness of the actual context . . . allows the reader to appreciate the connection Virgil is making," Thomas, "Virgil's *Georgics*" (n. 2 above), 176 (author's emphasis); Thomas himself had just been corrected for ignoring context by J. Van Sickle, in "Catullus 68.73–78 in Context (vv. 67–80)," *HSCP* 84 (1980): 91–95.

4. "We know a figure only if we know its range. No instance of a figure is comprehensible by itself but must be seen amidst the company it keeps" (J. Wills, *Repetition in Latin Poetry* [Oxford, 1996], 2).

5. Suffice it to say here that I am partial to those who associate Virgil's program with "correction, Giangrande's *oppositio in imitando*" and see him, with respect to earlier bucolic poetry, seizing "the opportunity to overhaul, partly through correction, that entire tradition," which is how Thomas describes Catullus' relationship with prior epic in Poem 64 ("Virgil's *Georgics*," 185); cf. Van Sickle, *Design* (n. 2 above), 254, s.v. *oppositio in imitando*.

6. Cf. works cited in n. 2 above.

7. On *tenui* Servius remarked (3.1.5.7–8 Thilo): *Dicendo autem tenui avena humilis styli genus latenter ostendit, quo in bucolicis utitur* ("but by saying 'with thin oat' he covertly reveals the genre of lowly style, which he uses in the *Bucolics*"), although Clausen has gone so far as to assert that *tenui* can have such metapoetic implication only in *Ecl.* 6.8; see W. Clausen, *A Commentary on Virgil "Eclogues"* (Oxford, 1994), xxv, 175, countered by J. Van Sickle, "The End of the *Eclogues*," *Vergilius* 41 (1995): 114–33.

8. Cairns, "Virgil, *Eclogue* 1.1–2" (n. 1 above), 289.

9. For very different evaluations of Tityrus in the seventh *Idyll*, cf., e.g., Tityrus *pro rustici carminis peritissimo adhibetur* ("Tityrus is introduced as very skilled in bucolic song"), Petrus Ramus, *P. Virgilii*

Playing down the importance of *Tityrus*, a pointer that has satisfied most readers, Cairns isolates etymology from other kinds of programmatic implication. He then presents his “strong and unequivocal pointer”:

Although all the evidence needed for its recognition has long been to hand, it seems to have escaped notice. *Eclogue* 1.1–2 contain an implied “etymology,” i.e. *Tityrus* = *avena* since both can be glossed *κάλαμος/calamus*.

Further explanations come in a footnote, referring to types of etymologies classified elsewhere:¹⁰

It [i.e. the etymology] can be considered both an “etymology of a synonym,” since *calamus* and *avena* are synonymous . . . and a Greek-Latin gloss, since *avena* is Latin for *κάλαμος*.

Cairns adds that Virgil highlights the link between *Tityrus* and *avena* by placing them in prominent positions, at the beginning and the end of the distich: a kind of placement that often signals etymological play. This emphasis through structure remains operative, of course, even if the paired words be differently construed.

Cairns proceeds to cite the scholia to the third *Idyll*. They describe *Tityros* as a proper name variously glossed: by Sicilians as “Silen,” by others as “billy goat,” by others “satyr,” by some “a city of Crete,” and by others “servant of gods,” but by certain sources also *κάλαμος*.¹¹

Assuming that other scholars had not connected the last of these with *avena*, Cairns writes:¹²

Their relationship—and the etymology’s pedigree—are crucial for Virgil’s programmatic strategy; and Virgil confirms explicitly that his use of *avena* = *κάλαμος* to gloss “Tityrus” at the start of his bucolic book was no accident: a few lines later he makes Tityrus himself describe his instrument as *calamo* . . . *agresti* (10).

Cairns caps his argument with evidence from Athenaeus’ *Deipnosophistae* (182d) that “The reed [calamine] pipe is called the tityrine [sc. pipe] by the Dorians in Italy” (ὁ δὲ καλάμιμος αὐλὸς τιτύρινος καλεῖται παρὰ τοῖς ἐν Ἰταλίᾳ Δωριεῦσιν). From this he infers that since the adjective “tityrine” is “associated here with the *κάλαμος*” and is identified as a Dorism, indeed an

Maronis “*Bucolica*” (Paris, 1572), 33, where *peritissimo* recalls Virgil’s *solī cantare peritī* (*Ecl.* 10.32); then more generally, *Tityrus carminis rustici peritissimus* (“Tityrus the most skilled in rustic song”), Friedrich Taubmann, *P. Virgilii Maronis Opera* ([Wittenberg], 1618), 6; and *Tityrus contra peritia modulandi & suavitatis cantus insignis apud Theocr.* (“Tityrus, on the other hand, distinguished in Theocritus because of his skill in performing and charm of singing”), Jacob Emmensius, *P. Virgilii Maronis Opera* (Leyden, 1680), 1:1; also Clausen “Commentary” (n. 7 above), 33–34; T. Hubbard, *The Pipes of Pan: Intertextuality and Literary Filiation in the Pastoral Tradition from Theocritus to Milton* (Ann Arbor, Mich., 1998), 48–49; and J. B. Van Sickle, “Virgil vs Cicero, Lucretius, Theocritus, Callimachus, Plato, and Homer: Two Programmatic Plots in the First *Bucolic*,” *Vergilius* 46 (2000): 21–58, emphasizing the centrality of *Tityros* in *Idyll* 7 for Theocritean poetics.

10. For his classification of etymologies, see F. Cairns, “Ancient ‘Etymology’ and Tibullus: On the Classification of ‘Etymologies’ and ‘Etymological Markers,’” *PCPS* 42 (1996): 24–59, especially Type 3, p. 27, and Type 10, p. 29. I am grateful to its author for making this invaluable tool available to me.

11. Cairns, “Virgil, *Eclogue* 1.1–2,” 290.

12. *Ibid.*, 291.

Italian Dorism, Virgil's "*Tityre* and *avena* constitute the desiderated unequivocal reference to Theocritus: they signal that Virgil is writing 'Italian Doric' poetry, i.e. Theocritean bucolic transplanted to Italy." In closing, Cairns underlines that Athenaeus attributed his information about "tityrine" to the treatise on Doric by the same Artemidorus who gathered the bucolic poets into the edition that Virgil in all likelihood used.

The latter seems a plausible source; and Cairns' work on Tibullan etymologies offers valuable parallels.¹³ Yet *Tityrus* long served as a perfectly clear link with Theocritus for those who cared (quite a few did not, as even a brief review of studies shows).¹⁴ Already Antonio Mancinelli (Velletri, 1490) glossed:¹⁵

Tityre] Tityrus, mercenarii pastoris nomen a Theocrito sumptum: is enim Ecloga tertia inquit,¹⁶ Tityre lascivas virgultis pasce capellas,¹⁷ & in ultima,¹⁸ Tityrus ast illic miseros cantabat amores Daphnidis.¹⁹

Tityre.] Tityrus, name of a hired herdsman taken from Theocritus: for he says in the third Eclogue, "Tityrus, graze on shrubs the lewd she-goats," and in the last, "But Tityrus there was singing the wretched loves of Daphnis."

By contrast, the etymology seems subtle, even clandestine. Moreover, where Cairns writes that "*avena* is Latin for κάλαμος," the *Oxford Latin Dictionary* defines *avena* as "oat (prob. including a number of allied grasses)," identified commonly as a weed to be removed from productive fields: for example, Ennius *Varia* 31–32 Vahlen: *ubi videt avenam lolium crescere inter triticum, selegit secernit aufert* ("where he sees oat [*Avena sativa*], darnel [*Lolium temulentum*] grow amidst the wheat [*Triticum* species], he picks it out, discards it, carries it off").²⁰ The Latin for κάλαμος is either *harundo* or from Greek the loan word *calamus*, which means "A reed or cane" (*OLD*) and refers to various plants with sturdy, often hollow, stalks, for example, *cava per calamorum* ("through the hollows of reeds," Lucr. 5.1382).²¹ *Avena* does not mean κάλαμος in the Latin dictionary or in the Italian fields.

13. Cairns, "Ancient 'Etymology'" (n. 10 above).

14. Cf., e.g., the sampler given in n. 9 above.

15. Cited from *P. Virgilii Maronis Opera* (Venice: Giunta, 1544) = C. Kallendorf, *Virgil and the Myth of Venice* (Oxford, 1999), 74.

16. Sc. *Idyll* 3, cf. Virgil's close rendering of *Id.* 3.3–5 at *Ecl.* 9.23–25: "*Tityre, dum redeo—brevis est via—pasce capellas / et potum pastas age, Tityre, et inter agendum / occurrere capro—cornu ferit ille—caveto*" ("Tityrus, till I return—the way is short—graze my goats and drive them, Tityrus, when they've grazed to drink, and driving don't run up against the billy—he strikes with his horn").

17. Cf. *Id.* 3.1–5.

18. It would be of interest, but would lie beyond our present scope, to trace the versions of Theocritus used by the Virgil commentators. The seventh *Idyll* does not stand last in any of the editions or manuscripts catalogued by A. S. F. Gow (*Theocritus* [Cambridge, 1952], xii–xiv), or ever in the sixth position, where Ramus recalled it.

19. Not content merely to seek out and quote, Mancinelli paraphrased the sources in hexameters. His *Daphnidis* makes a palpable enjambment which was not in the original, *Id.* 7.72–82; but his *cantabat* departs from the future tense that Theocritus twice placed in emphatic positions: ἀσεί (72 ending and 78 heading a verse). Mancinelli's liberty makes a revealing contrast with Virgil's closeness, cited in n. 16 above.

20. Cf. Cato *De agr.* 37.5: *avenamque destringas* ("and you should strip oat away"); Cic. *De fin.* 5.91; Virgil, *Ecl.* 5.37, G. 1.154; so, e.g., Clausen, *Commentary* (n. 7 above), ad loc.: "The wild oat."

21. Cf. other properties as well, e.g., *multa sunt quae . . . dulcem terram . . . significant . . . ut calamus* ("there are many signs of the sort that indicate sweet soil, for instance reeds," Columella, 2.2.20).

Cairns' "*avena* is Latin for *κάλαμος*" makes sense only if etymology is not the sole trope at work in the text. The metaphoric equation—{oat = reed}—presupposes other figures often taken for granted but that Petrus Ramus, for one, analyzed and named:²²

Tegmine] umbra: synechdoche est generis pro specie.

Cover] shade: synechdoche of the genus for the species

Musam] metonymia pro carmine.

Muse] metonymy for song

Avena] metonymia pro fistula avenae culmo facta: ut illic—*gracili modulatus avena*:²³
quales tropi erunt deinde, stipula,²⁴ calamus,²⁵ cicuta.²⁶

Oat] metonymy for panpipe made with stalk of oat: as in that passage—"performed with modest oat": the sort of tropes that there will be then [sc., in the other *Eclogues*] with straw, reed, hemlock.

Ramus as a professor of rhetoric not only recognized a basic trope but saw that it recurred both in the rest of the *Bucolics* (as he regularly noted for other details as well) and in Virgilian tradition.

Likewise, but adding a reference to natural history, Ramus explained the instrument of Tityrus (*Ecl.* 1.10):

Calamo] metonymia: calamus enim proprie est frutex aquatilis, tibiis & scripturis aptus, canna minor & arundine: hic pro fistula ex calamo: quomodo erit postea, *Tu calamos inflare leves*.²⁷

With reed] metonymy: for reed is properly a water-loving plant, suited for pipes and writing utensils, because lesser than the pole-reed [*Arundo donax*] and bamboo [*Arundo indica*]: here it stands for panpipe made from reed, in the way it will afterwards [sc., in other *Eclogues*], "You to puff light reeds."

Allowing that *calamus* can stand for pipe or pen, Ramus takes it for the former here.

Only by metonymy, then, might *avena* do in Latin what *κάλαμος* does in Greek, indeed through multiple metonymies. By metonymy both might stand for "stalk," which in turn might stand for "instrument made of one stalk" and further, by synechdoche, "instrument composed of several stalks."²⁸ Thus Cairns' "*avena* = *κάλαμος*" must be unpacked and reformulated in some-

22. Ramus, "*Bucolica*" (n. 9 above), 34.

23. From the apocryphal epigraph for the *Aeneid*—*ille ego qui quondam gracili modulatus avena / carmen* ("That one am I who once performed with modest oat a song")—composed of snippets from Virgil, for which see n. 43 below.

24. Cf. *Ecl.* 3.27 and Servius' gloss, discussed below.

25. *Calamus* (reed) for panpipe at *Ecl.* 1.10; 2.32, 34; 5.2, 48; 6.69; 8.24; but 3.13 standing for arrows, as at *Aen.* 10.140; but without metonymy at *G.* 1.76 (mentioned along with *avena* among weeds to be removed), cf. *G.* 2.358 (of stakes for vines).

26. *Cicuta* (hemlock) for panpipe at *Ecl.* 2.36 and 5.85.

27. *Ecl.* 5.2: the other metonymies of *calamus*, see n. 25 above.

28. Metonymy, "a figure related to *synechdoche*, in which one word is substituted for another with which it stands in close relationship" and synechdoche, "often quite properly regarded as a special type of metonymy, wherein the part is substituted for the whole, or sometimes the whole for the part" (R. O. Evans, in *Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*, ed. A. Preminger [Princeton, N.J., 1974], 499, 840).

thing like the following manner: “Virgil places *avena* in a bucolic context defined by traditional motifs of person, place, posture, and musical activity. This context forces *avena* to stand by metonymy for an instrument of bucolic music. Such instruments could otherwise be indicated by metonymy in Latin as *harundo*, *cicuta*, or *calamus*. Greeks could indicate a bucolic instrument by the material *κάλαμος* or, in the dialect of Dorians in Italy, by *τίτρος*.” Only through such a chain of metonymic substitutions might *avena* make the metaphoric leap to identify with the Italian Doric meaning of *Ti-tyrus*.²⁹ Without the metonymic figures and framing motifs of bucolic art, *avena* refers in nature to oat as do *calamus* and *κάλαμος* to reed.

But if *avena* at *Bucolics* 1.2 is figurative, that fact imposes an interpretive constraint. “We know a figure only if we know its range,” as Jeffrey Wills reminds us; “No instance of a figure is comprehensible by itself but must be seen amidst the company it keeps.”³⁰ If we look, then, for the range of *avena* and *κάλαμος/calamus*, we soon learn that their material differences sustain very different adaptations for human use, giving each type of plant a distinct and different normal range of employment.

Plants designated *κάλαμος* share the feature of a substantial stalk, although cognates are specialized and reduced to mean merely stalk or straw—*καλάμη* and *culmus*.³¹ The sturdy *κάλαμος* lends itself to practical applications, producing a wide array of metonymies that reflect actual utilizability. For example, *κάλαμος* can refer by metonymy to a fishing rod, to a stick daubed with lime for catching birds, to an arrow or its shaft, to medical instruments, to a measuring rod, and to a pen for writing with ink.³² In Latin *calamus* has a similarly broad range of metonymic applications, also extending to stalk of any plant, or branch, or scion for grafting.³³ Consistent with this range and versatility, *κάλαμος* and *calamus* also designate musical instruments: a single pipe or several pipes bundled together into a panpipe or syrinx, *fistula* in Latin. The material usefulness of *calamus* was what Ramus had in mind when he described it as *tibiis & scripturis aptus*.

By contrast, the plants designated *avena* are not only considered weeds, but they rise on spindly stems that bend easily and that break when dry.³⁴ Reflecting this reality, the metonymic extensions of *avena* in normal usage are

29. Cf. the theory of metonymic chains as constituting a “Global Semantic System” that underlies all metaphor, as propounded by U. Eco (“The Semantics of Metaphor,” in *The Role of the Reader*, trans. J. Snyder [Bloomington, 1979], 250–71 [brought to my attention by Professor M. Patowski, Department of English, Brooklyn College]).

30. Wills, *Repetition* (n. 4 above), 2.

31. Cf. also German *Halm* and appropriate entries in LSJ.

32. See LSJ, s.v. *κάλαμος*, and *calamaio* (inkwell) in Italian.

33. Note the divisions in *TLL*, s.v. *calamus*: “**I** *proprie*: herba, frutex palustris odoratus, fere i.q. harundo, canna [122.6–14] . . . **A** herba viridis et sicca, saepe in odoribus, medicamentis, sim., cum aliis herbis palustribus [122.15–64] . . . **B**: res ad longiorem usum ex calamo factae: **1** calamus scriptorius [122.65–123.37] . . . **2** virga varie usurpata: **a** in vinetis, viis, hortis . . . **b** ad sagittas adhibita, saepe fere i.q. sagitta: cf. PLIN. nat. 16.159 . . . **c** aucupis . . . **d** piscatoris . . . **e** virga mensoria [123.37–83] . . . **II sensu latiore**: **A** caulis harundinis avenae cicutae pastorum fistulae et aliorum inserviens, calamus organi [123.84–124.45] . . . **B** caulis qualislibet herbae, surculus arboris, quem inserunt [124.46–74]. . .”

34. *TLL*: “*proprie* de herba, plerumque sterili inutilique (cum *lolio* saepius coniungitur), qua Italici ad vescendum non usi sunt” [1308.33–1309.19]. “As an oat-straw could not be made into a musical instrument, *avena* must be used for ‘a reed’ or something of the sort. Milton however (Lycidas 33) ventures to talk of the ‘oaten flute’” (T. E. Page, *P. Vergilii Maronis “Bucolica” et “Georgica”* [Cambridge, 1898], 165).

limited to “stalk, straw” or “straw used to draw liquid” (cf. our soda fountain straw).³⁵ Only by disregarding this practical and material limitation could poets beginning from the Augustan age employ *avena* in metonymy to mean “shepherd’s pipe, reed-pipe” (as Lewis and Short would have it).

The inference seems plain that all such instances presuppose Virgil’s prominent uses of *avena*. He makes it represent an instrument of bucolic music not only in our passage, which opens his undertaking, but in a passage near the close which looks back and characterizes the whole.³⁶ The evidence from other poets shows that *avena* became a symbol of the *Bucolics* and their aftermath in pastoral tradition.

Both *avena* and *Tityrus* figure, for example, among the representative motifs used by Propertius to contrast his elegies with Virgilian bucolic.³⁷ His bantering pastiche comes to a head by twitting the bucolic poet as weary of his own genre, which is represented by metonymy as his “oat” (2.34b.75): *quamvis ille sua lassus requiescat avena* (“Though he is tired of pastoral song, and his pipe is mute . . .”).³⁸ While *avena* recalls the opening of the first *Eclogue*,³⁹ *requiescat* echoes its ending—the offer by *Tityrus* to *Meliboëus* of a night’s repose.⁴⁰

In the next century, when Latin pastoral is to be codified as a generic tradition in its own right, Calpurnius Siculus employs *avena* and *Tityrus* to represent Virgil as the tradition’s inventor and a hallowed bard, in a pastiche that recalls the first, second, and seventh *Eclogues* and Virgil’s first (and final) voice, *Meliboëus* (Calp. *Ecl.* 4.62–66):⁴¹

35. OLD: “(linum) tam gracili avena, tam non alte a tellure tolli. PLIN. Nat. 19.5; bibere avenis, MELA 3.91.” Cf. TLL [1309.20–31]: “MELA 3.91 alii labris etiam cohaerentibus, nisi quod sub naribus etiam fistula est per quam bibere avenis. PLIN. nat. 6.188 pars . . . ore concreto et naribus carens uno tantum foramine spirat potumque calamis avenae trahit. SOL. 30.13 calamis avenarum pastus hauriunt. CHIRON 794 ad inficiendum rufum colorem . . . crocum, calamos avenae (hebene, cod.), vinum vetus.”

36. *Ecl.* 10.51: *carmina pastoris Siculi modulabor avena* (“songs with the Sicilian herdsman’s oat I’ll tune”)—a densely metapoetic passage analyzed in detail by J. B. Van Sickle (“Quali codici d’amore nella X egloga? Il poeta elegiaco contestualizzato nel *Bucolicon Liber* di Virgilio,” in *Giornate filologiche “F. Della Corte” III*, ed. F. Bertini [Genoa, 2003], 55).

37. 2.34b.67–76. For the pastiche of themes from Virgil and Theocritus, see H. E. Butler and E. A. Barber, *The Elegies of Propertius* (Oxford, 1933), 260–61.

38. Translated by Butler and Barber, *The Elegies* (n. 37 above), ad loc., where *ille* gets taken as a reference to Virgil behind the mask of *Corydon*. The emphatically placed adjective *lassus* recalls comedy and suggests bodily tiredness, which is paradoxical where the generic commonplace is piping while relaxed in shade; on the relative distribution of *lassus* and *fessus*, the latter preferred in higher style, see B. Axelsson, *Unpoetische Wörter* (Lund, 1945), 29–30.

39. The pastiche opened by mixing motifs from the *Georgics* and *Bucolics*, addressing Virgil (2.34b.67–68): *tu canis umbrosi subter pineta Galaesi* [G. 4.126] / *Thyrsin* [Ecl. 7.2] *et attritis Daphnin harundinibus* (“You sing beneath shadowy Galaesus’ pines / Thyrsis and Daphnis with their worn reeds”). Cf. *trivisse* (Ecl. 2.34), with the idea of rubbing, wearing down; *Daphnis* (Ecl. 2.26, 3.12, 5.20, 7.1, 8.68, 9.46); *harundo* (metonymy for pipe here as at Ecl. 6.8, which corrects the metonymy with *avena* of Ecl. 1.2; but without metonymy, the plant embroidering the banks of Mincius, Ecl. 7.12, G. 3.15; and then in the *Aeneid* by metonymy, “arrow, shaft.”

40. *Tityrus to Meliboëus* (Ecl. 1.79), *hic tamen hanc mecum poteris requiescere noctem* (“yet here with me this night could you rest”); cf. another defining moment: *Daphnis to Meliboëus* (Ecl. 7.10), *requiesce sub umbra* (“rest beneath the shade!”).

41. Elsewhere Calpurnius also recalled the normal and problematic character of *avena* (Calp. *Ecl.* 3.61): *carmen iners et acerbae stridor avenae* (“artless song and shriek of harsh oat”), cf. Verg. *Ecl.* 3.27: *stridenti stipula* (“with shrieking straw”).

Corydon: Tityrus hanc [sc. fistulam] habuit, cecinit qui primus in istis
montibus Hyblaea modulabile carmen avena.⁴²
Meliboeus: Magna petis, Corydon, si Tityrus esse laboras.
ille fuit vates sacer et qui posset avena
praesonuisse chelyn.

Corydon: Tityrus owned this pipe, who in those hills of yours was first
who sang a song performable with Hyblean oat.
Meliboeus: Great things you're after, Corydon, if Tityrus you toil to be.
He was a holy bard and of a kind that could
out-sound the tortoise [sc., lyre—metonymy from material].

Of course, as Ramus noticed, *avena* also serves to evoke the *Bucolics* in the pastiche of Virgil's oeuvre sometimes prefixed to the *Aeneid*: *ille ego qui quondam gracili modulatus avena / carmen*.⁴³

Avena would serve yet again, along with other characteristic motifs, at the dawn of modern Virgilian criticism. Politian wrote the hexameter poem, *Silva cui titulus Manto* (Wood [sc. Literary Matter] entitled *Manto*), to introduce his Florentine lectures on the *Bucolics*, which he represented as the forceful first moment of a challenge by Virgil to Greek epic (fols. a ii^v–a iii^r):⁴⁴

Deerat adhuc Latio vatum decus: horrida quanque
Bella tubasque rudi cantaverat Ennius arte.
Editus ecce Maro quo non felicior alter⁴⁵
Seu silvas seu rura canit sive arma virumque.
Namque syracosii cum vis assurgat avenis⁴⁶
Hesiodum premit et magno contendit Homero. . . .

There lacked till then in Latium grace of bards: though bristling
wars and trumpets Ennius with rough art had sung.
Sprung forth, look, Virgil, than whom more fecund none,
whether he sings of woods or countryside or arms and man.
For, though his power arise through Syracusan verse,
Hesiod he masters and he matches with great Homer. . . .

42. The lines are dense with Virgilian phrase and theme, e.g., *Ecl.* 10.70: *cecinnisse poetam* ("your poet to have sung"), *G.* 4.566: *Tityre, te cecini sub tegmine fagi* ("Tityrus, I sang you beneath the cover of beech"), *Aen.* 5.524: *cecinerunt omina vates* ("sang omens bards"), *Aen.* 8.340: *vatis fatidicae, cecinit quae prima futuros* ("of the fate-telling bard, who first sang those to be"); but *Lucr.* 1.117: *Ennius ut noster cecinit qui primus* . . . ("as our Ennius sang, who first . . ."); and also *Ecl.* 8.24: *qui primus calamos non passus inertes* ("who first did not endure reeds artless"), *Aen.* 1.1: *Troiae qui primus ab oris* ("who first from Troy's shores"), *Aen.* 9.51: *qui primus in hostem* ("who first against the foe"); cf., too, *Ecl.* 1.54: *Hyblaeis apibus* ("Hyblean bees") and *Ecl.* 10.51: *carmina pastoris Siculi modulabor avena* (for translation and discussion, cf. n. 36 above).

43. Other sources in Virgil for the pastiche include *G.* 562–63: *illo Vergilium me tempore dulcis alebat Parthenope* ("at that time me Vergil sweet Naples nurtured"), and *Ecl.* 1.9: *ille meas errare boves* . . . ("he my cows to wander . . ."); also *Ecl.* 10.71: *gracili fiscellam textit hibisco* ("wove a basket with modest hibiscus") with *Ecl.* 10.51, cited in n. 42 above. Cf. Ramus' citation, n. 23 above.

44. Angelus Politianus, *Silva cui titulus Manto* (Florence, 1491), written to introduce the course he taught in 1482–83 at Florence. Some of his preparatory notes also survive in a manuscript at Munich (CLM 754): see Massimo Gioseffi, *Studi sul commento a Virgilio dello Pseudo-Probo* (Florence, 1991), 288.

45. Cf. *Aen.* 9.772: *quo non felicior alter* ("than whom no other more lucky"), 6.164: *quo non praetantior alter* ("than whom no other more outstanding").

46. Cf. *Ecl.* 6.1: *prima syracosio dignata est ludere versu* ("first she deigned to play in Syracusan verse").

(fol. a iii^v):

Dant & multiforam modulanda ad carmina loton
Et decrescenti compactas ordine avenas . . .

They give for performing songs both multiperforated pipe⁴⁷
and—joined together in descending order—oats [sc. panpipe of oat stalks] . . .

(fol. a v^r):

Ecce autem imparibus dum sibila flectit avenis
impubis pastor . . .⁴⁸

Look moreover while the not yet bearded herder steers
his whistles with unequal oats . . .

The fortune of *avena* was assured as “a convention of pastoral poetry” defying both nature and real human craft, yet to be featured also in Sannazaro, Spenser, Shakespeare, Milton, and Marvell.⁴⁹

Although Virgil imposed *avena* as a trademark, inadvertent evidence for its strangeness in that role survives in the tradition of commentary represented by the glosses in Servius (3.1.5.5–7 Thilo):

AVENA: Culmo, stipula, unde rustici plerumque cantare consuerunt: alibi <III 27> stridenti miserum stipula disperdere carmen.

WITH OAT: with stalk, with straw, from which rustics by and large were wont to make music: elsewhere (*Ecl.* 3.27) “scatter wretched song with shrieking straw.”

Through multiple metonymy, “oat” evokes for the commentator “stalk” and “straw.” The latter in turn calls up another passage in the *Bucolics* and leads to a generalization about rural music, which shows a principle of analogy at work, as in the citations by Ramus.

Yet this very choice of an example illustrates the perils of analogy when drawn with inadequate regard for context; *stipula* in its original context, far from exemplifying regular and proper bucolic musicianship, represented just the opposite (*Ecl.* 3.25–27):

Cantando tu illum? aut umquam tibi fistula cera
iuncta fuit? non tu in triviis, indocte, solebas
stridenti miserum stipula disperdere carmen?⁵⁰

47. Pipe by metonymy from the wood of the *lotos* tree (*Celthis australis*); cf. lute from Arabic, *al-ʿūd* (the wood).

48. In this poem *syracosii* . . . *avenis* combines two motifs, drawing on *syracosio* . . . *versu* (*Ecl.* 6.1) and the influential *carmina pastoris siculi modulabor avena* (*Ecl.* 10.51, for which see n. 36 above)—a verse also underlying Politian’s *modulanda ad carmina*. Politian’s *compactas* and *imparibus* take from Virgil’s *disparibus septem compacta cicutis fistula* (“pipe composed of seven unequal hemlocks [sc., stalks].” *Ecl.* 2.36–37). “Oat” fills the role otherwise played by “reed,” with no attention to actual differences in the material.

49. Clausen, *Commentary*, 36—in short, an acquisition for culture, despite the real nature of oat: cf. n. 56 below.

50. So “designedly contemptuous,” J. Conington and H. Nettleship, *The Works of Virgil with a Commentary*, Vol. 1⁵, rev. F. Haverfield (1898; reprint Hildesheim, 1963) ad loc.; “charged with musical incompetence,” R. Coleman (*Virgil, “Eclogues”* [Cambridge, 1977]), who compares Theocritus *Id.* 5.5–7, “. . . tootle away on a straw pipe” (καλάμας αὐλὸν ποππίσδεν); the scholia gloss this as puffing or piping

In making music you best him? Or did you ever own a pipe
joined with wax? Were you not used in cross-roads, untrained,
to scatter wretched song with shrieking straw?

Virgil makes one singer doubt that his rival ever had true bucolic credentials. “You best him in music making?” begins the incredulous query, going on to specify what criteria the rival failed to satisfy: a true musician would be *doctus*, would be situated in woods not crossroads,⁵¹ and would perform with the proper kind of instrument, which would be a well-compounded syrinx or panpipe (*fistula cera iuncta*), not a shrieking straw (*stridenti . . . stipula*).

At issue are two ways of producing sound and two contrasting timbres, as Peter Smith has pointed out:⁵² blowing across an aperture in a tube produces a full, breathy sound in flute-like instruments (e.g., the syrinx and its analogue in today’s Andean pipes). By contrast, blowing on “a double reed or beating reed” produces a “timbre . . . quite unlike that of any flute (such as the syrinx).”⁵³ Smith infers that, since straw is too brittle for use in flute-like instruments, Virgil’s *stipula* must be meant to suggest some kind of “straw squeaker.”⁵⁴ *Stipula* thus suggested the opposite, the very negation of *fistula*,⁵⁵ which was the norm for pastoral instrumentation; and *stipula* was synonymous with *avena* (as in Servius). Thus *avena* itself seems an odd choice to define poetics for Virgil’s book. The difficulty has troubled modern commentators, yet they try to explain it away,⁵⁶ or they acquiesce,⁵⁷ seeing the preponderant acceptance by tradition.

like children (φυσᾶν . . . αὐλεῖν ὥς οἱ παῖδες), but not even piping if only popping (ποππύσδεν). The scholia also define καλάμη as the stalk left behind from the harvest, adding: ταύτην δὲ νεαρὰν οὖσαν ὑποτεμνόμενοι φυσῶσιν ἐν αὐτῇ καὶ αὐλίζουσι (“cutting the straw when it is fresh they puff into it and pretend to pipe” [sc. not simply αὐλεῖν but αὐλίζειν, a nonce word]). One infers that the straw, if not fresh, could not even serve to make noise (ποππύσδεν, cf. Virgil’s *stridenti*).

51. “This is a terrain without echoes, one which ‘wastes’ pastoral song as the *trivium* does,” writes Philip Damon (“Modes of Analogy in Ancient and Medieval Verse,” *University of California Publications in Classical Philology* 15 [1961]: 289). He builds on the “detailed argument that ‘disperdere carmen’ at 3.27 means to ‘waste’ a song by singing in echoless surroundings” that he draws from M. Desport (*L’incantation virgilienne: Virgile et Orphée* [Bordeaux, 1952], 37).

52. P. L. Smith, “Virgil’s *Avena* and the Pipes of Pastoral Poetry,” *TAPA* 101 (1970): 498–502.

53. *Ibid.*, 501.

54. *Ibid.*, 505–6.

55. Πανωλεθρίαν carminis notat. Videtur autem Maro alludere ad stridulos puerorum, terebratosque culmos, in superiore ora pelliculae ambitu obturatos obductosque (“He remarks the total destruction of song. Virgil seems however to refer to the shrieks of boys and drilled stalks, stopped up and enclosed on their upper edge by a ring of skin”), Germanus Valens Guellius, *P. VIRGILIUS MARO, Et in eum Commentationes, & Paralipomena* (Antwerp, 1575). Cf. ὥς παῖδες of the Theocritean scholia (n. 50 above).

56. “The oatstraw (whether *Avena sativa* Linn. or *Avena fatua* L.) is impossible as a syrinx tube,” concedes Smith, “Virgil’s *Avena*” (n. 52 above), 506–7. But he argues that “it makes excellent sense as a monaulos—the *stipula* or straw squeaker of *Ecl.* 3.27.” The obvious drawbacks of this association make him resort to special pleading: “straw squeaker of *Ecl.* 3.27, without the pejorative connotation.” He adds that one should not “insist that Tityrus’ *avena* must be literally an oatstraw monaulos,” shying still further from his original inference that *avena* must suggest some kind of rudimentary monaulos, in fact a squeaker.

57. E.g., Page, Conington, and Coleman (nn. 34 and 50 above). Clausen (*Commentary*, 36) refers to “this musical absurdity” and underlines the echo of an insult from Theocritus, yet writing “Whatever the practical objections—for practical objections may be disregarded in the pastoral world,” he falls back on the traditional consensus that takes “*avena* as a collective singular denoting the pan-pipe.”

The difficulty ought, instead, to have put us on guard. As Wills remarks:⁵⁸

Figures of language arise from the same source as errors of language, but they are defended by authority, age, usage, and even reason. . . . In other words, some marked expression may win praise for its departure from unmarked language, but it could also be judged an error, existing outside language altogether.

By these criteria, Virgil's *avena* was "a departure from unmarked language" without the stamp of "age, usage, and even reason": in short, a catachresis.⁵⁹

Knowledge of usage alone would make one versed in country things bridle at the use of *avena* here. It would seem to be an error if not an insult to *Tityrus*' art, equating it with childish noise. No one had used *avena* for a musical instrument, still less a pen; nor, reasonably, in the nature of real things, given the fragility of the material, could they or would they try.⁶⁰ As for age, the figure was new.⁶¹ Its only authority was still to come and would derive in later tradition, as we have seen, from its prominence in the *Bucolics*.⁶² Given this lack of natural and linguistic qualifications, *avena* cannot be smoothed over as a mere replica of the well-established metonymies with κάλαμος and *calamus*. The anomalous character of its metaphoric identification with them in such a prominent place calls for exegesis.

One approach construes the pejorative connotations that *avena* shares with *stipula* as signaling dramatic character.⁶³ This line of interpretation takes cognizance of emphatic notes in the language of *Meliboëus* that produce ironic overtones. The pronoun *tu* betrays attitude, emphasizing disparity between the situations of the two characters. The impression of disparity grows with *recubans*, if read with Wendell Clausen as a "rather unusual verb, here perhaps with a connotation of luxurious ease."⁶⁴

Likewise *sub tegmine* (under cover) conveys ambivalence. Its usage here is figurative, classified by Ramus as synechdoche of the class for one of its instances, *generis pro specie* (the type for the particular, genus for species); and any trope may confer extra point. A less oblique and mannered reference to shade would have been normal. Shade, however, bears the connotation of

58. Wills, *Repetition*, 2.

59. "Strained use of a word or phrase, as for rhetorical effect": *American Heritage Dictionary* (New York, 1976), s.v.; cf. n. 107 below.

60. Cf. Clausen's "musical absurdity" (n. 57 above) and the other commentators (n. 50 above). Smith ("Vergil's *Avena*," 502–3) cites a report of "oaten pipes from Finland that have rough finger-holes as well as a beating-reed mouthpiece cut in the straw itself." At a midsummer fair of folk crafts in Helsinki in 2002 one artisan was selling just these instruments—fragile in material but drilled, perforated, and capable of producing a robust wailing sound with the cut end inserted in the mouth. Actual sampling of Italian oats has found nothing that would have allowed such craft: cf. E. Leach, *Vergil's "Eclogues": Landscapes of Experience* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1974), 118.

61. "A word that Vergil seems to have pioneered as a musical term": Smith, "Vergil's *Avena*," 506.

62. Cf. n. 49 above. To the examples already noted add Tibullus' account of the origin of rural music (2.1.53): *et satur arenti primum est modulatus avena / carmen* ("and once well fed performed the first song with arid oat"), cited by Smith, "Vergil's *avena*," 508.

63. Cf. above, nn. 50 and 56.

64. Clausen, *Commentary*, 34, adducing Cicero, *De or.* 3.63: "(Cyrenaic philosophy personified) 'in hortulis quiescet suis, ubi vult, ubi etiam recubans molliter et delicate nos avocat a rostris' (He rests in his little gardens, where he wishes, where even lying back softly and preciously he calls us away from the rostra), Prop. 3.3.1 'molli recubans Heliconis in umbra' (lying back in the soft shade of Helicon)."

sloth from the viewpoint of Roman public life.⁶⁵ The irony would grow in recalling that *sub tegmine* echoes Lucretius, Cicero, and the style of older Latin epic,⁶⁶ since the trope would reduce the confident reach of their wider physical world to the compass of a single tree. Indeed, the phrase *tegmen fagi* (cover of beech) was hardly Latin according to Virgil's detractors Anser, Bavius, and Maevius, as Friedrich Taubmann noted, quoting their etymological jibe: *Tityre, si toga calda tibi est, quo tegmine fagi?* ("Tityrus, if your covering robe is warm, what purpose cover of beech?").⁶⁷

Silvestrem musam compounds irony. It suggested wildness to Fulvio Orsini:⁶⁸

Silvestrem Musam] hoc est, τὸ βουκολικὸν carmen & pastorium. Mnasalces Sicyonius, vel ut alii, Plataeensis, in eo epigrammate, quo Venerem celebravit. ἃ δ' ἄγρια μούσα ἐν ὄρει νέμεται.⁶⁹

Woodland Muse] that is, the cowherd song and herdsmen's. Mnasalces of Sicyon, or, as others have it, of Platea, in that epigram, in which he celebrated Venus, "the wild muse dwells on the hill."

Also Orsini and many after him have detected here a trace of Lucretius (4.589), too rarely with awareness of dissonance. Lucretius was debunking pastoral mythology, which he described as a figment of lonely hill people pretending that natural echoes were Pan's music. The reference thus implies disdain for the music of *Tityrus*.⁷⁰

Like the verbal noun *tegmen*, the verb *meditaris* is abstract. It suggests an effort or process, bodily or mental, or practice, as opposed to a particular and conventional verb for singing or piping.⁷¹ *Tenui* adds its own peculiar slant. Cristoforo Landino noted that it differs greatly from *subtili*, because it diminishes, as in *attenuo* and *extenuo*: *ergo laudat subtile ingenium, tenue vituperat* ("thin unlike subtle, as in attenuate and extenuate: therefore subtle praises genius, thin censures").⁷²

All told, then, ironies color the language of *Meliboeus* creating a context that the pejorative connotations of *avena* fit and cap. It remains for *nos* to

65. Cf. P. L. Smith, "*Lentus in umbra*: A Symbolic Pattern in Vergil's *Eclogues*," *Phoenix* 19 (1965): 301.

66. Taubmann (*P. Virgilii* [n. 9 above], 6) points to Lucretius; cf. Coleman (*Eclogues* [n. 50 above]), who compares *sub tegmine caeli* ("under cover of sky") in Cicero, *Aratea* 47 = *Nat. D.* 2.112 and in Lucretius 2.663. Clausen (*Commentary*) adds variants at *Aratea* 233, 239, 346 and Lucretius 1.988, 5.1016, noting, too, *Aratea* 114–15, *foliorum tegmine* . . . *arbusta ornata* ("trees adorned by cover of leaves"), and he remarks that Lucretius 2.661–63 is "reminiscent of the high archaic style."

67. Taubmann, *P. Virgilii*; cf. for normal shade, e.g., ἐν νέμει σκιερῶι (*Il.* 11.480); ἄλσος ὑπὸ σκιερὸν ἐκατηβόλου Ἀπόλλωνος (*Od.* 20.278); or Theocritus, καὶ ἃ σκιά οὐδὲν ὁμοία / τᾷ παρὰ τίν (*Id.* 5.48–49), εὐσκιον ἄλσος (*Id.* 7.8), ποτὶ σκιραῖς ὁδοαμνίσιν (*Id.* 7.138), σκιερὴν δ' ὑπὸ φηγόν (*Id.* 12.8); Meleager, ὑπὸ σκιερῇ κεκλιμένως πλατάνῳ (13.8 GP = *Anth. Pal.* 7.196).

68. *Virgilius collatione scriptorum graecorum* [et aliquot Latinorū, praesertim Poetarum, added in an old hand] *illustratus opera et industria Fulvii Ursini* (Antwerp, 1567), 5.

69. Cf. μούσ' ἐν ὄρει μένω (Brunck), -ται (P) νέμεται (Pl): Mnasalces 16.4 G.-P. (*Anth. Pal.* 9.324).

70. Cf. Damon, "Modes of Analogy" (n. 51 above), 285–90.

71. Servius cites the Greek synonym μελετῶ and the ancient belief that the Latin derived from the Greek by exchange of letters (3.5.10 Thilo). With respect to Theocritus, instead of singing (μελισσόμενος, 7.89) or piping (συρίσδες, 1.1–3), *meditaris* resembles ἐξεπύνασα (7.51) and ἔχον πόνον (7.139).

72. Landino is cited from *Publii Vergilii Maronis "Bucolica," "Georgica," "Aeneis"* (Venice: Aurelius Pintius, 1531) = Kallendorf, *Virgil and the Myth of Venice* (n. 15 above), #62.

underline disparity with *tu . . . tu* (lines 1, 4) and give the irony an explicit and urgent cause in *Meliboeus'* themes of loss and exile in the Roman world.

It follows, then, as the imagined response to provocation in the little drama, that Virgil makes *Tityrus* reply with defensive emphasis (1.6): *O Meliboe, deus nobis haec otia fecit* ("O Meliboeus, a god for us this leisure made"). The god famously and emphatically counters (at Rome) *Meliboeus'* account of rural and civic displacement. The defense culminates by replacing the language of *Meliboeus* with a more positive set of terms for *Tityrus'* art: play rather than toil or practice (*ludere* not *meditaris*) and instead of *tenui . . . avena* a more normal *calamo . . . agresti* (*Ecl.* 1.10: rural reed).⁷³ The ordinary metonymy with "reed" acquires edge as a retort to the paradoxical *avena*. The dramatic point can be paraphrased as follows, with *Tityrus* imagined as objecting to *Meliboeus'* initial slight, "No, I don't practice with squeaky straw, as you put it, I play whatever I wish on sturdy reed." The contrast between materials and their metonymic range has been too often and lightly overlooked.

The perplexities provoked by *avena* and reinforced by the anomalies in the surrounding language bring to mind a stylistic mannerism that ancient critics denounced as a Virgilian vice. The symptoms of *cacozelia* have been meticulously reconstructed by Harry Jocelyn: "One feature common to the locutions against which this charge is recorded is that they openly paraded artificiality and sought to surprise readers and hearers with novelty at the expense of lucidity and related qualities."⁷⁴

Virgil may well merit the charge for marking a context as Theocritean and bucolic, only to inject multiple Latin ironies, imposing, above all, for the traditional reed a material unexampled and unfit. His metaphoric use of *avena* usurped the normal role of terms like *harundo* and *calamus*, or even *cicuta*. Meter, to be sure, ruled out the former pair, but not *cicuta*.⁷⁵ One had only to write **silvestrem tenui musam meditare cicuta* (you work a woody muse with thin hemlock). The verb would have sounded suitably archaic;⁷⁶ and *cicuta* would have countered *silvestrem musam* with a positive reference. Lucretius used *cicuta* in metonymy for the music that nature first taught primitive men, back when *agrestis musa* thrived.⁷⁷ But no, Virgil wrote *avena*. Choosing to do so must typify the bravura that he himself discerned in the *Bucolics* when he looked back from the end of the *Georgics* and remarked that he had been *audax iuventa* (daring in youth).⁷⁸ Jocelyn notes that "a very

73. Cf. *Ecl.* 6.8: *agrestem tenui meditabor harundine musam* ("I'll work up a country muse with a thin reed"), also attributed to *Tityrus*, as well as *calamos* (*Ecl.* 6.69): cf. for further discussion the studies cited in n. 108 below.

74. H. D. Jocelyn, "Vergilius cacozelus (Donatus Vita Vergilii 44)," *Proceedings Leeds International Latin Seminars*, 2 (1979): 67–142, esp. 70.

75. Metrical equivalence remarked by Clausen (*Commentary*, 36), pointing to *cicuta* at *Ecl.* 2.36 and 5.85.

76. For the archaic color of second person singular indicative ending in *-re*, see M. Leumann, *Lateinische Laut- und Formenlehre* (Munich, 1977), §397.2.

77. *Lucr.* 5.1382–83, 1398.

78. *G.* 4.565–66: *audaxque iuventa / Tityre, te cecini sub tegmine fagi* ("daring in youth, Tityrus, you I sang under cover of beech").

thin line divided the *κακόζηλος* from the *varius figuris et verbis felicissime audax*” [varied in tropes and in vocabulary very felicitously daring].⁷⁹

Once *avena* has been recognized as figurative, indeed as even a strong—metaphoric and catachrestic—“departure from unmarked language,”⁸⁰ it requires more than ever to be scrutinized concerning its precise programmatic implications. Its etymological bearing on the name *Tityrus* was urged by Pier Vettori as early as 1553.⁸¹ Citing the evidence from Athenaeus to which Cairns, too, would turn, and, like Cairns, oblivious to the musical issues raised by Smith, Vettori argued that the name *Tityrus* came from the pipe and that Virgil signaled the point by making *Meliboeus* describe *Tityrus* as playing on an *avena*:

Tityro pastori nomen inditum fuisse puto à fistula, qua in cantu ille uteretur: quamvis veteres Latini grammatici affirmant Afrorum lingua hircum ita appellari.⁸² unde custos eorum eodem pacto vocatus sit. Athenaeus enim in IIII. libro Δειπνοσοφιστῶν, de fistulis copiose disputans, inquit ὁ δὲ καλάμινος αὐλὸς τίτύρινος καλεῖται παρὰ τοῖς ἐν ἰταλίᾳ Δωριεῦσιν. cuius rei auctorem ille habet Artemidorum Aristophanem in secundo περὶ Δωρίδος. Id autem fortasse Virgilius significare voluit, quum Meliboeum, alterum pastorem, fecit ipsi dicentem. Silvestrem tenui musam meditaris avena: nam καλάμη Graecis culmus est. ut doctissimus poeta rationem eius nominis ita aperire voluerit.

To Tityrus the herdsman the name was given I think from the pipe, which in making music he used: although the old Latin grammarians state that in the Africans’ tongue the billy-goat was so addressed, whence their keeper by the same convention was called. For Athenaeus in the fourth book of the *Deipnosophists*, discoursing at length about pipes, says “the kalamine [sc., reed] pipe is called tityrine by the Dorians in Italy,” for which matter he has as his authority Artemidorus the disciple of Aristophanes in the second book on Doric dialect. This perhaps Virgil wanted to signify, when he fashioned Meliboeus, the other herdsman, saying to Tityrus himself, “you practice woodsy muse with thin oat,” for *kalame* among the Greeks is stalk, so that the very learned poet wanted to reveal in this way the reason for Tityrus’ name.

Vettori like Servius takes *avena* (oat) by metonymy for *culmus* (stalk), which he glosses by the Greek καλάμη. To this he relates the adjective καλάμινος, meaning “made of a stalk or stalks” and here describing a pipe;⁸³ and he infers that, if Dorians in Italy express the same idea with the adjective τίτύρινος (made of a stalk or stalks), then they must have had a related noun τίτύρος meaning “stalk,” which by metonymy could mean “instrument made of stalks, pipe.” By this route *Tityrus*, like *avena*, can stand for pipe. Vettori finds the etymology particularly credible, he adds, because attributed to Doric speakers in Italy and because Theocritus, too, used Doric.⁸⁴ Vettori does not worry

79. Jocelyn, “*Vergilius cacozelos*” (n. 74 above), 94, citing Quint. *Inst.* 10.1.96.

80. Cf. nn. 58 and 59 above; for metaphor as catachresis, n. 107 below.

81. *Petri Victorii Variarum Lectionum Libri XXV* (Florence, 1553), 257.

82. The sole reference to Africa in the commentators comes in Ps-Probus (329.1 Hagen): *hircus Libyca lingua tityrus appellatur* (“billy goat is called tityrus in the Libyan tongue”), cited by Politian in his notes on *Ecl.* 1.1 (Munich manuscript CLM 754, which belongs to a group [CLM 733–825] from the library of Vettori, opening a possibility for comparative research that lies outside our scope here).

83. Vettori does not distinguish αὐλός and *fistula* as representing the different instrument types described by Smith (“*Vergil’s Avena*”).

84. Since Munich manuscripts CLM 733–825 come from Vettori’s library, it might be possible to determine whether Politian first brought Athenaeus to bear on the name of *Tityrus*.

about the contrasting types of wind instruments or the drawbacks to making anything at all from straw.

Athenaeus' argument appeared, too, in marginalia to an edition of the *Bucolics* published by Michaël Vascosan in Paris in 1543 and now in the Vatican Library.⁸⁵ The margins are crowded with passages copied from a wide range of Greek and Latin authors by a scholar who must be Fulvio Orsini. The written Greek closely resembles that in letters from Orsini now preserved in the Biblioteca Nacional of Madrid;⁸⁶ and, above all, much of the transcribed material appears, too, in the volume of Orsini's notes published by Christopher Plantin in 1567,⁸⁷ ostensibly against Orsini's will and without his knowledge.⁸⁸

The citation of Athenaeus recurs without inferences in the printed version of Orsini's notes.⁸⁹ Ramus closes his report of meanings for *Tityrus* as follows: *quidam putant etiam hoc nomine calamum, lingua laconica significari* ("Some think that also by this name reed is signified in the Doric dialect"). Explicit reference to Vettori, Athenaeus, and the link of *Tityrus* with *fistula* does appear in the commentary of Guellius (1575, also published by Plantin),⁹⁰ and Vettori's argument in its entirety (with scant credit) heads the notes to the first *Eclogue* compiled by Jacobus Pontanus (1599).⁹¹ Early in the next century, Juan Luis de la Cerda (1608) makes Vettori's etymology only one of four reasons why Virgil chose the name *Tityrus*.⁹² La Cerda, more compendious than discriminating, also allows that the old etymologies relating *Tityrus* to ram or billy may have favored its use. Taubmann (1618) relates the name *Tityrus* to the pipe and notes at least the presence of both oat and reed: *Tityrus autem calamo canit, & ut Pastor, & quod τιτύρος etiam CALAMUS est, & τιτύρινος μόνᾱυλος, vel tibia calamina, quae hīc AVENA etiam dicitur* ("Tityrus however makes music with a reed, both as a herdsman, and because 'tityros' also is reed, and tityrine monopipe,

85. P. Virgilii Maronis "Bucolicorum" liber unus, in *decem aeglogas divisus* (Paris, 1543), f. [Ai V] = [p.2], in top margin.

86. MSS 5781.

87. Orsini, *Virgilii collatione* (n. 68, above). Some citations are identical to the written notes, others amplified or abridged, but with reference to the marginalia. Further research would be required to determine what, if anything, these notes owe to the marginalia added by Politian to his copy of Virgil that Orsini later owned: see Gioseffi, *Studi* (n. 44 above), 43–44.

88. *Id si auctore fortassis factum est invito, & ignorante, publicae me utilitatis ratione excusatum iri confido* ("If this perchance has been done without the knowledge and consent of the author, I trust that I am going to be excused on grounds of utility to the public") wrote Plantin in his dedicatory epistle to *Cardinali Granvellano, D. Antonio Perrenoto*.

89. Glossing *calamo agresti*, *Ecl.* 1.10.

90. Guellius, P. VIRGILIUS MARO (n. 55 above). In a supplementary note (p. 567), he adds: *Sed & auctore Eustathio τιτύρος ὁ σάτυρος παρὰ τοῖς ἐν ἰταλίᾳ δορυεῦσι ὄθεν καὶ τιτύρινος αὐλός* [on *Il.* 18.495] ("But also on the authority of Eustathius 'tityros means satyr among the Dorians in Italy, hence tityrine pipe'").

91. Jacobus Pontanus, *Symbolarum libri xvii Virgilii* (Augsburg, 1599), cited from a reprint by Ioannes Pillehotte (Lyon, 1604).

92. Io. Ludovico de la Cerda (P. Virgilii Maronis "Bucolica" et "Georgica" [1608; reprint, Lyon, 1619]) credits Vettori and Ianus Parrhasius; cf. the latter's edition of *Claudiani "de raptu Proserpinae"* (Paris, 1517), F lxxxvi: *Nos in Lydia contendimus esse non in Lycia neque fontes sed insulas Calaminas appellatas vel a Calamis ad quorum cantum numerosius movebantur* ("We contend that in Lydia not in Lycia, not springs but islands are called Calamines if you will from reeds to the music of which they were rather rhythmically moved"). The metonymy is interesting, but unrelated to *Tityrus*.

or reed pipe, which here also is styled oat").⁹³ Echoes of the topic recur in the commentary of Emmensius (1680).⁹⁴

In the following century (1746), the Burmans father and son underline that Vettori attacked the grammarians and argue that *Tityrus* must mean pipe:⁹⁵ *quod nomen non ab hirco, qui Graecis Τίτύρος, sed a fistula deducit, Graecis ita dicta, Victorius lib. XVII. Var. Lect.* ("which name not from billy goat, which among the Greeks is 'Tityros', but from panpipe he derives, so called by the Greeks, Vettori, Book 17, *Divers Readings*").

Scholarly focus would shift, however, to copious, labored, and often circular discussions of historical context (e.g., in Heyne's fourth edition, 1832, with Wagner).⁹⁶ Wagner's American friend and admirer, Charles Anton, would remark in his school edition (dedicated to Wagner in 1848 but supplying material his friend did not): "The name Tityrus is borrowed from Theocritus, *Id.* iii., 2, καὶ ὁ Τίτυρος αὐτὰς ἐλαύνει. The word is probably Doric, for Σάτυρος, 'a satyr,' or companion of Bacchus, though Strabo distinguishes the Τίτυροι from the Σάτυροι. It subsequently became a frequent shepherd's name."⁹⁷ No word of Vettori and only oblique acknowledgement of the literary fortunes of *Tityrus*, no longer identified as a most skilled singer in the seventh *Idyll*.

Towards the middle of the twentieth century the evidence from Athenaeus (minus Vettori and his echoes) resurfaced in two encyclopedia articles,⁹⁸ which Smith would cite to support his inference that Virgil with *avena* "may have intended an instrument of the aulos type."⁹⁹ Smith suggested that if Virgil had been aware that καλάμις had a synonym τιτύρηνος among Italian Dorians, "he would have found it irresistible to have the musical goatherd ("Tityrus" also = "Satyros") play his eponymous instrument."¹⁰⁰ The latter phrase recurred in an essay by Cairns' sometime collaborator James Wright: "If one equates the *avena* or oaten pipe with the *monaulos* it certainly provides a characteristically learned conceit to have the shepherd playing his eponymous instrument."¹⁰¹ Meanwhile, Robert Coleman had noted on *calamo*

93. Taubmann, *P. Virgilii*, 6. His note also registers reference to the linkage between *Tityrus* and reed in a range of scholars that includes J. C. Scaliger and Turnebus.

94. Emmensius, *P. Virgilii* (n. 9 above), 1:1–2.

95. P. Burmannus, P. Burmannus Junior, *P. Virgilii Maronis Opera* (Amsterdam, 1746), 5–6.

96. C. G. Heyne, with G. P. E. Wagner, *P. Virgilii Maro*⁴ (Leipzig and London, 1832).

97. C. Anton, *The "Eclogues" and "Georgics" of Virgil* (New York, 1859), 105, where "frequent" reflects the emblematic role for *Tityrus* documented above.

98. W. Vetter, "Tityrinos," *RE* 6A (1937): 1609; and E. Wüst, "Tityroi," *ibid.*, 1609–10.

99. Smith, "Vergil's *Avena*," 506.

100. *Ibid.*, 507. But Virgil makes his version of *Tityrus* both shepherd and cowherd, not "goatherd," the role reassigned from the *Tityros* of *Id.* 3 to *Meliboeus* and the poet of the *liber Bucolicon* himself (*Ecl.* 10.7, 77); cf. Van Sickle, "Two Programmatic Plots" (n. 9 above), 47–51.

101. J. R. G. Wright, "Virgil's Pastoral Programme: Theocritus, Callimachus and *Eclogue* 1," *PCPS* 29 (1983): 107–60, esp. 108. Among "many friends whose only occasionally ribald scepticism has been a valuable, even if insufficient corrective" Wright mentions Cairns, Van Sickle, and DuQuesnay, whose work Cairns ("Virgil, *Eclogue* 1.1–2," 289) cites as his own bibliographical guide—I. M. Le M. DuQuesnay, "Vergil's First *Eclogue*," *Proceedings Leeds International Latin Seminars*, 3 (1981): 29–182. The latter received sweeping and cogent criticism by E. A. Schmidt, "Freedom and Ownership: A Contribution to the Discussion of Vergil's First *Eclogue*," *Publications of the Leeds International Latin Seminars* 10 (1998): 185–201. Schmidt's critique complements that by J. Van Sickle, "How Do We Read Ancient Texts? Codes and Critics in Virgil, *Eclogue* One," *MD* 13 (1984): 107–28.

(*Ecl.* 1.10) that “since Tityrus has been playing on an oaten pipe, there may be a reference to the fact that *titúrinos* was the Italian Doric word for the single reed pipe *kaláminos aulós* (Athen. 4.182d),” although he fails to underline the dissonance between *calamus* and *avena* implicit in his earlier remark that “**avena** in its literal sense ‘oaten straw,’ ‘stalk’ would produce a tenuous note indeed.”¹⁰²

Cairns, then, erasing these modern remarks, as well as earlier centuries of scholarship, thereby ignoring precise linguistic, rhetorical, material, and musical distinctions, infers from *avena* a program for the *Bucolics* as a whole, to be considered as “‘Italian Doric’ poetry, i.e. Theocritean bucolic, transplanted to Italy.” Yet this confident extrapolation, too, invites second thoughts, even as we agree that a word as difficult as *avena* here must convey programmatic force. For one, how could Virgil claim to transplant to Italy a genre that already located itself there? Didn’t Theocritus set the fourth and fifth *Idylls* in the Italian south? Didn’t the scholiasts locate the third *Idyll* there, too, because it shared a prominent character, *Amaryllis*, with the fourth?

But if *avena* and *Tityrus* cannot simply signal a transplant of Theocritus to Italy, what will be a more accurate and appropriate inference? *Tityrus* as an echo of the third *Idyll* can certainly imply Theocritean bucolic, even its presence in Italy. The opening address to *Tityrus* does, then, carry out a return, but to a tradition that is not only Italo-Doric but also more generally and generically bucolic, comprising also the range of the seventh *Idyll*. To this generic range Virgil adds novelty by imposing a Latin substitute for a traditional material, the anomalous oat for the ordinary reed. Since *avena* is both innovative and problematic as a metonym for the pipe, the result must be ambivalent. Positively, *avena* can assert the move to Latin. Yet given its material unsuitability for craft and its absence from both popular usage and literary tradition, *avena* also seems to be a telling example of Virgil’s peculiar and problematic situation with respect to Theocritus, as characterized, for instance, by Clausen and by Charles Segal:

Unlike Theocritus, Virgil did not have an ancient and ample poetic tradition to draw upon, and the proportion of unliterary to literary plants and trees in the *Eclogues* is therefore higher than it is in the pastoral *Idylls*.¹⁰³

With centuries of a well-developed poetic tradition behind him, Theocritus can assume a coherent art-world of song, poetry, and literary concerns; this autonomous realm of poetry need only refer to itself. Virgil must create the art-world of his *Eclogues*, and it is far more precarious.¹⁰⁴

Of this tentative—tenuous and yet determined—project, *avena* proves to be an example and an instrument. It reveals a poet determined—daring to

102. Coleman, *Eclogues*, 75 and 72, the former cited by J. O’Hara (*True Names: Vergil and the Alexandrian Tradition of Etymological Wordplay* [Ann Arbor, Mich., 1996], 244). The relations between *Tityrus* and reed do not figure in R. Maltby, *A Lexicon of Ancient Latin Etymologies* (Leeds, 1991), 614. Fuller reports appear in Van Sickle, *Design*, pp. 119–20, n. 43 (NAMES . . . TITYRUS); Van Sickle also cites C. Wendel, *De nominibus bucolicis* (Leipzig, 1900), 49.

103. Clausen, *Commentary*, xxviii.

104. C. P. Segal, *Poetry and Myth in Ancient Pastoral: Essays on Theocritus and Virgil* (Princeton, N.J., 1981), 9.

commit catachresis and risk the charge of *cacozelia*—and destined to impose his metaphoric mark.

Vettori's understanding of the etymological figure also deserves its due. He inferred that Virgil used etymology to privilege one traditional interpretation of the name *Tityrus* over others. By endowing *Tityrus* with an instrument, Virgil evoked the etymology *κάλαμος* over the meanings reported by the Latin grammarians. The latter, which are types of male animals, seem more related to the context in the third *Idyll* where *Tityros* minds goats rather than music or *Amaryllis*.¹⁰⁵ At the same time, by privileging “reed” as an etymology, Virgil intimates a paradox: a character named for the established and proven material in Greek but furnished with a new and impracticable Latin variant, “oat,” which no one ever supposed could make music and might suggest boys making noise. Making a paradoxical metaphor, Virgil transfers “oat” from the domain of agriculture to the domain of literature and transvalues it from reviled weed to prized emblem of what will become European pastoral tradition.¹⁰⁶ The paradoxical—catachrestic—metaphor embodies and enacts Virgil's peculiar innovation in the genre and is programmatic for his new departure in art.¹⁰⁷

In reading *Tityrus* and *avena* we have seen metonymy and etymology, because they are contextualized by motifs that are local to bucolic, help to impose metaphoric identity but in ways that differentiate and determine the import of the new ensemble. Above all we experience the advent of a Latin, even Roman, claimant to a Greek genre. As interloper from the fields, erstwhile weedy trash, *avena* evokes the Greek tradition only to vary it so pointedly—with metaphoric catachresis—as to cinch the trademark status that later tradition would accord. In time, of course, familiarity tended to obliterate the strangeness and the title to originative force. Yet the ironies recovered by considered analysis invite comparison with other transformative paradoxes in Virgil's project, opening horizons to scan another time.¹⁰⁸

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105. For possible double entendre surrounding *Tityros*, see R. L. Hunter, *Theocritus: A Selection* (Cambridge, 1999), 111–12. Through double entendre, other possible associations would come into play: Wüst (“Tityroi” [n. 98 above, 1609]) relates the root *tit-* to an old and widespread metaphoric system, “tit- (ursprünglich ‘Vogel’, dann metaphorisch ‘Phallos’).” In such an associative web, both kinds of nickname would work: “Billy” or “Old Stalk.”

106. Cf., e.g., n. 49 above.

107. Cf. n. 59 above; also Eco, “Semantics of Metaphor” (n. 29 above), 269, on the process by which “metaphors are transformed into knowledge . . . : they become catachreses. The field has been restructured, semiosis rearranged, and metaphor (from the invention which it was) turned into culture.”

108. E.g., on the dual program in the entire first *Eclogue*, Van Sickle, “Two Programmatic Plots.” On the further transformations of *Tityrus* in the *Eclogues* (signaled separately and so requiring comparison and synthesis), see Hunter, *Theocritus* (n. 105 above), 146; Richard Thomas, “Voice, Poetics, and Virgil's Sixth *Eclogue*,” in *Reading Virgil and His Texts* (Ann Arbor, Mich., 1999), 288–96; and Van Sickle, *Design*, 146–58, along with the detailed review and critique of earlier failures to see how Virgil in the persona of *Tityrus* transformed Callimachus by J. Van Sickle in “Virgil's Sixth *Eclogue* and the Poetics of Middle Style,” *Liverpool Classical Monthly* 2 (1977): 107–8, available at <http://academic.brooklyn.cuny.edu/classics/jvsickle/bb6midst.htm>; on the import of *Tityrus redux* as narrator of *Ecl.* 6, see Van Sickle, “End of the *Eclogues*” (n. 7 above), 125.