

## THE ‘GALLUS PAPYRUS’: A NEW INTERPRETATION\*

The elegiac lines in *PQaṣrIbrīm* inv. 78–3–11/1 (L/2), first edited and ascribed to Gallus by R. D. Anderson, P. J. Parsons and R. G. M. Nisbet in 1979,<sup>1</sup> raise a number of major problems of interpretation yet to be resolved. As is now well known, the papyrus fragment contains nine fairly well-preserved lines: first a pentameter, followed by two quatrains each composed of two elegiac couplets; the two quatrains are carefully marked off from each other and from the lines which preceded and followed them by a pair of signs which have defied interpretation; another such sign can be seen to have marked a similar separation between groups of lines in the next column of the papyrus. One might think that the sets of lines thus marked off were quite separate epigrams,<sup>2</sup> or perhaps excerpts from longer poems,<sup>3</sup> for they are concerned with separate, indeed discrepant, topics – the naughtiness of Lycoris, the morale-boosting effects of Caesar’s forthcoming successes, the love-poet’s fearless stance before his critics – and they do not seem *prima facie* to follow logically after one another. However, various unmistakable verbal and thematic connections between them have rightly been pointed out by Nisbet.<sup>4</sup> So what is this sequence of related verses and why is it set out in this way?

There is, I suggest, a simple hypothesis which will account for all the formal peculiarities of the papyrus text, and will furthermore suggest important new lines of enquiry into the questions of its authorship, dating and significance. The question we must ask is this: is there a type of context in classical poetry where one finds diametrically opposed subjects treated in alternate quatrains linked by thematic correspondences? And the answer is that one does indeed find this in amoebaean verses. I therefore suggest that what the ‘Gallus papyrus’ presents is a fragment of an amoebaean song-contest.<sup>5</sup> The signs separating the quatrains serve to mark the places where the text of the contest-poem calls for a change of singer.<sup>6</sup> For the use of elegiacs in a singing-match there is the precedent of [Theocr.] *Id.* 8. 33–60 – which is not to say that our fragment need come from an ordinary sort of bucolic poem. That the contestants’ names are not given need not surprise us unduly, seeing that in

\* The earliest version of this paper was written on 2 May 1983, and circulated privately; a second was read to the Cambridge Greek and Latin Seminar on 20 June. I am greatly indebted to everyone who commented on these earlier drafts, and also to all participants in the Colloquium ‘*Carmina Gallo*’, held in Liverpool, 29 April 1983, for much helpful information.

<sup>1</sup> ‘Elegiacs by Gallus from *Qaṣr Ibrīm*’, *JRS* 69 (1979), 125–55.

<sup>2</sup> cf. the brief elegiac poems on amatory and other subjects in the last part of Catullus’ collected works. However, the best-preserved quatrain in the papyrus, lines 2–5, if taken as a self-contained epigram, seems less full of punch and purpose than the Catullan specimens, being a mere statement of forthcoming felicity.

<sup>3</sup> To accept such a hypothesis means dismissing the correspondence, *dulcia/tristia*, and the echo, *tua/tueis*, as coincidental, and irrelevant to the argument.

<sup>4</sup> *JRS* 69 (1979), 149.

<sup>5</sup> The apostrophizing of Lycoris and Caesar in two successive lines tells against the supposition that this could be any other kind of dialogue-poem.

<sup>6</sup> cf. Hephaestion, *Enchiridion*, p. 75. 5 ff. Consbruch (in a discussion of punctuation signs in lyric and dramatic texts): τῇ δὲ παραγράφῳ (sc. χρώμεθα) ἦτοι κατὰ πρόσωπα ἀμοιβαῖα ἐν τε τοῖς λαμβικοῖς καὶ τοῖς χορικοῖς, <ῆ> μεταξὺ τῆς τε στρόφης καὶ τῆς ἀντιστροφῆς. See also *JRS* 69 (1979), 129 f. on the *paragraphus*.

Theocritus papyri changes of speaker are distinguished either not at all or by interlinear horizontal dashes.<sup>7</sup>

Let us surmise that the fragmentary epigram ending with our line 1 and the first complete quatrain (lines 2–5) were a matched pair, the former taking as its theme ‘happiness destroyed by misfortune in love’, the latter answering it with ‘happiness brought about by good fortune in war’. Both poems feature apostrophe (to Lycoris/to Caesar); *tristia* (line 1) is picked up by *dulcia* (line 2);<sup>8</sup> *tua* (line 1 fin.) by *tueis* (line 5 fin.). The antithesis between love and war is, of course, a favourite theme of the Latin love-elegists; *triste* is used as the opposite of *dulce* in the amoebaeen verses of Verg. *Ecl.* 3. 80–4; *tua* and *tueis* represent a type of formal correspondence between corresponding lines which one expects in a pair of amoebaeen quatrains; note that both these possessive adjectives agree with ablative nouns (*nequitia/spolieis*), both of which in turn bear a similar relation to neuter plurals in *-a* (*tristia/fixa*) at the beginning of their lines.

In the quatrain of lines 6–9 the singer who had previously taken Lycoris as his theme resumes his challenge, once more adopting the role of a love-poet. How he was answered we do not know: the one surviving word from the next four lines, *Tyria*, mainly used of purple cloth, ‘might have dealt with triumphs (real or metaphorical) rather than with the finery of Lycoris’.<sup>9</sup>

This hypothesis surely accounts better than any other for the type of disjunction of thought which we find between the different sections of the fragment, together with the way in which they are linked by verbal correspondences, and the division into quatrains. Furthermore, a poem combining bucolic formal elements with themes characteristic of Roman love-elegy is a type of hybrid which one can well imagine being tried during the poetical experimentation of the mid-first century B.C., the date to which the fragment has been assigned on stylistic grounds.<sup>10</sup>

How abnormal a variant our poem may have been on orthodox bucolic we may never know. Was the conflict between love and war kept as the subject throughout the contest, just as in Alcuin’s *Conflictus Veris et Hiemis*<sup>11</sup> the advantages and disadvantages of the arrival of the cuckoo are pitted against one another throughout the poem? Or did Roman realities – the doings of Lycoris and Caesar – intrude only

<sup>7</sup> None of the Theocritus papyri is as early as our example; see R. A. Pack, *The Greek and Latin literary texts from Greco-Roman Egypt*<sup>2</sup> (Ann Arbor, 1965), p. 87; see especially A. S. Hunt and J. Johnson, *Two Theocritus Papyri* (London, 1930), for *POxy.* 2064 (*saec.* A.D. II), which includes part of *Idyll* 8 with interlinear dashes to denote speaker-change. The one papyrus fragment of Vergil’s *Eclogues* is unilluminating about Roman practice. Early Vergil manuscripts do give abbreviations of competitors’ names (in red) – so at least P (*saec.* IV/V) and M (*saec.* V) – but this need not reflect the practice of the first century B.C.

<sup>8</sup> Such mirror-correspondence, whereby elements in the last line of one song are picked up in the first of the next (or alternatively elements in the first line of one song in the last of the next), is not nearly so common in amoebaeen verses as is the parallelism between corresponding lines exemplified by *tua/tueis*. See, however, the amoebaeen distichs of Verg. *Ecl.* 3 for some examples: lines 76, 79 *Iolla/Iolla*; lines 101, 102 *amor/neque amor*; lines 104, 107 *et eris mihi magnus Apollo/et Phyllida solus habeto*. So clearly mirror-correspondence was not absolutely against the rules in Vergil’s view. (See also n. 34 below on the possible indebtedness of *Ecl.* 3 to a Gallan original.) Nor was it invariable practice, if one’s singing opponent introduced apostrophe, to echo it in the corresponding line of one’s reply: note, in addition to the case of *Iolla* (*Ecl.* 3. 76 ff.), the failure of Thyrsis in *Ecl.* 7. 41 ff. to echo Corydon’s apostrophe to Galatea in the preceding quatrain.

<sup>9</sup> So Nisbet, *JRS* 69 (1979), 147.

<sup>10</sup> *ibid.* pp. 148 ff.

<sup>11</sup> Text in e.g. *The Oxford Book of Medieval Latin Verse*, ed. F. J. E. Raby (Oxford, 1959), pp. 99–101.

briefly into a contest otherwise concerned with standard bucolic themes, as in Vergil's third *Eclogue*? In that poem the contestants move (startlingly to modern taste)<sup>12</sup> from the amiability of Phyllis and from dalliance, now *triste* now *dulce*, with Amaryllis and Amyntas (80–3), to the realities of contemporary Rome, where Pollio both promotes and composes poetry and critics are offended by the bad taste of the poetasters Bavius and Mevius (84–91); then they return once more (92 ff.) to a land of wild strawberries and riverside sheep-pastures. There is also the question of the identity of the two contestants. Was the one who sings of Lycoris identified as Gallus and the other with his soldier-rival, or with some Roman poet specializing in martial themes? Perhaps, but there are other alternatives one can imagine. We might have, in anticipation of Alcuin, two personifications in conflict, for instance *Amor* and *Mars*. After all, Ovid presents *Elegia* and *Romana Tragoedia* (in a shady grove) staking rival claims for his attention in *Amores* 3. 1. It is also perfectly conceivable that two ordinary pastoral characters could have been assigned verses about Lycoris and Caesar: consider, in addition to *Ecl.* 3. 84–91, how Vergil in *Ecl.* 5. 85 ff. presents Menalcas as the poet who composed 'formosum Corydon ardebat Alexin' and 'quoium pecus? an Meliboei?', that is, his own second and third *Eclogues*.

This brings us to the question of authorship. Will the first editors' ascription of the poem to Gallus still hold good?<sup>13</sup> Two points may be made against it. First, the apostrophe to Lycoris, if set in the context of a singing-match, does not prove Gallan authorship. Clearly a poet who presents Lycoris and Caesar as themes in such a contest need not himself feel passionately about either; if he does, he has to some extent distanced himself from his passion. Secondly, the quality of some of the lines in the fragment may be thought unacceptably low for the attribution to Gallus. Certainly, many readers, who had been expecting great things of a fragment attributed to Gallus, given Vergil's great admiration for him, have been very disappointed by the papyrus lines, and have found particular fault with the prosody, diction and word-arrangement of the best-preserved of the quatrains, lines 2–5. How serious these deficiencies are is a matter of opinion. If one approaches the text with Vergil and the later elegists in mind they may seem more distressing than if one approaches them from the elegiacs of Catullus, whose grappling with the metre is found acceptable and whose artistic use of prosaic diction is regarded as a positive virtue. But even if one may find parallels for the metrical oddities in respectable Augustan poets, and for the use of prose diction in Catullus, the convoluted expression of lines 4–5 in particular does seem open to adverse criticism.

However, no inelegancy in lines 2–5 need bring discredit on the poet who composed them if we view these lines in one particular light. In Vergil's seventh *Eclogue* Corydon defeats Thyrsis in a singing-match conducted in quatrains, and it has been the view of many critics<sup>14</sup> that Thyrsis, the loser, has been given verses in which Vergil pokes subtle fun at some typical imperfections of poetic technique, as well as imperfections in his character. Could it be, then, that the singer of lines 2–5 in the 'Gallus papyrus' was a contestant of the same stamp as Vergil's Thyrsis, destined like him to lose the competition? Like our singer, Thyrsis has been criticized for jolting rhythms in his hexameters: for instance, the strong break before monosyllables in the sixth foot of *Ecl.* 7. 35, *nunc te marmoreum pro tempore fecimus; at tu*, was long ago criticized by

<sup>12</sup> There is a comparable abrupt transition (*Ecl.* 10. 41) in a monologue which Vergil assigns to Gallus. See below, n. 34.

<sup>13</sup> *JRS* 69 (1979), 148.

<sup>14</sup> See e.g. F. H. Sandbach, 'Victum frustra contendere Thyrsim', *CR* 47 (1933), 216 ff.; V. Pöschl, *Die Hirtendichtung Virgils* (Heidelberg, 1964), pp. 93–154.

F. H. Sandbach<sup>15</sup> as contrary to Vergil's normal practice. Line 2 of the 'Gallus papyrus' presents a similar awkwardness, *fata mihi, Caesar, tum erunt mea dulcia quom tu*; here the abruptness of *quom tu* is somewhat compensated by the preceding *tum*,<sup>16</sup> but in combination with the hiatus *tum erunt*<sup>17</sup> it makes for an ungainly line. Use of prosaic words (*historiae, postque tuum reditum*) by the singer of lines 2–5 is also something one might expect from a counterpart of Vergil's Thyrsis, whose verses include the unpoetic phrases *ultra placitum* and *pro tempore* and the coarse (though Catullan) colloquialism, *rumpantur...ilia*.<sup>18</sup> The excessive length of the clause dependent on *quom*, the convoluted expression of lines 4–5, and the ambiguous use of *legam* (line 5),<sup>19</sup> might all be intended to convey to us that this contestant is no match for the poet who sings of Lycoris. Certainly his choice of subject-matter was not entirely in his favour. True, in preferring triumphs in war to the vicissitudes of love he had a precedent in the choice of Hercules as related by Prodicus (Xen. *Mem.* 2. 1. 21 ff.): this hero had preferred 'Αρετή over her rival, Κακία alias Εὐδαιμονία. However, in the legend of the contest between Hesiod and Homer it is Hesiod who is eventually awarded the victory, the reason being: δίκαιον εἶναι τὸν ἐπὶ γεωργίαν καὶ εἰρήνην προκαλούμενον νικᾶν, οὐ τὸν πολέμους καὶ σφαγὰς διεξιόντα (*Certamen* 13).<sup>20</sup> Furthermore, it is axiomatic that in Roman love-elegy *omnia vincit Amor*.<sup>21</sup>

To account for the ungainliness of lines 2–5 of the 'Gallus papyrus' by suggesting that the character who sang it lost the competition will no doubt seem over-subtle to many, just as the interpretation of *Eclogue* 7 which suggests that Vergil employed Thyrsis to demonstrate how not to write bucolic poetry has been doubted by a number of reputable critics.<sup>22</sup> It remains a fact that the quatrains which Vergil composed for this shepherd contain features of expression open to much the same sort of fault-finding to which lines 2–5 of the 'Gallus papyrus' have been subjected.<sup>23</sup>

We may now consider the arguments in favour of Gallan authorship. They seem strong. First, there is the sheer number of apparent allusions to phrases in our fragment

<sup>15</sup> CR 47 (1933), 217.

<sup>16</sup> See the examples of similar compensation in Vergil given by Sandbach, loc. cit.

<sup>17</sup> See Nisbet's comments, *JRS* 69 (1979), 148, on the hiatus, of a type unparalleled in extant elegy, but not without parallels in good poets.

<sup>18</sup> *Ultra placitum* (line 27) and *pro tempore* (line 35) are found nowhere else in Vergil, nor in Catullus, Lucretius, Horace, Propertius, Tibullus, Ovid. With *ilia...rumpantur* (line 26) compare Catullus 11. 20.

<sup>19</sup> See Nisbet, *JRS* 69 (1979), 142 and 149; M. C. J. Putnam, 'Propertius and the new Gallus fragment', *ZPE* 39 (1980), 49–56; R. Whitaker, 'Apropos of the new Gallus fragment', *Acta Classica* 24 (1981), 87–96. Note in addition Sen. *Suas.* 7. 12, where a young declaimer uses the expression *ita te legam* and the rhetorician Cestius Pius interprets this, *sensu obsceno*, as *ita te fruar*.

<sup>20</sup> See *Vitae Homeri et Hesiodi*, ed. U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorf (Bonn, 1916), p. 41. This version of the *Certamen* contains a reference to the emperor Hadrian, but the tradition was much earlier in origin, having been related by, among others, Alcidas; see *P. Petrie* 25. 1, ed. Wilamowitz, op. cit. pp. 45–7; *P. Mich.* 2745, ed. J. G. Winter, *TAPA* 56 (1925), 120 ff.; M. L. West, 'The contest of Homer and Hesiod', *CQ* n.s. 17 (1967), 433 ff.; N. J. Richardson, 'The contest of Homer and Hesiod and Alcidas' *Museion*, *CQ* n.s. 31 (1981), 1 ff.

<sup>21</sup> Words attributed to 'Gallus' in Verg. *Ecl.* 10. 69.

<sup>22</sup> See the criticisms of O. Skutsch in his review of Pöschl, *Gnomon* 37 (1965), 105–8; L. E. Rossi, 'Vittoria e sconfitta nell'agone bucolico letterario', *GIF* 23 (1971), 13–24.

<sup>23</sup> For the convoluted expression in lines 4–5 of the papyrus there is admittedly no close parallel in *Ecl.* 7. Compare, however, the ambiguity of wording about war in *Ecl.* 10. 44 f. (from the monologue of 'Gallus'): *nunc insanus amor duri me Martis in armis / tela inter media atque adversos detinet hostes*, and see n. 34 below, on the possible relationship of these lines to Gallan poetry.

which have been discovered in Augustan poetry.<sup>24</sup> This in itself suggests that the poem and its author were famous. Besides, the themes of the fragment, to state the obvious, are of a type which one might expect from the poet whom Ovid considered the forerunner of the Augustan love-elegists (*Trist.* 4. 10. 51–4). Stylistically it seems to belong to a period when Gallus was active, and once the quatrains are viewed together as parts of a song-contest, the objection that as separate epigrams they seem too weak and lacking in point to be by a major poet melts away. Again, the disrespect for Caesar which is implied if we suppose that lines 2–5 were allotted to a losing contestant is perfectly in accord with what is known of Gallus' free-spoken attitudes: according to Cassius Dio (53. 23), *πολλὰ καὶ μάταια ἐς τὸν Αὐγουστον ἀπέληρει* (not that we should prejudge the issue of the identity of 'Caesar' in the papyrus).<sup>25</sup> Another important argument in favour of the attribution of the fragment to Gallus is the way that, if interpreted as a hybrid between bucolic and love-elegy, it bears out expectations about Gallan poetry to which earlier critics, working from testimonia alone, have been led by a consideration of allusions to Gallus in later poetry, particularly those in Vergil's tenth *Eclogue*.

Interpretations of this *Eclogue* are many and various.<sup>26</sup> Disagreement arises primarily over the extent to which the presentation of Gallus in an Arcadian landscape is purely Vergil's own fantasy, to what extent derived from poems composed by Gallus himself prior to the *Eclogue*. That some lines at least, those around line 46 concerned with Gallus' desertion by Lycoris, are imitations of Gallan verses is vouched for by a note on that line in Servius' commentary, and the wording of the note, *hi autem omnes versus Galli sunt, de ipsius translati carminibus*, certainly does not rule out the possibility that allusions to Gallus' poetry permeate much of the *Eclogue*, the pastoral fantasy as much as the amatory lines whose affinity to love-elegy is obvious (lines 42–9). Now, undeniably there is much in *Eclogue* 10, its form, sequence of ideas, and tone, which may be considered an imitation of the Daphnis-dirge in Theocritus, *Id.* 1. 64 ff.<sup>27</sup> However, there remain pastoral features in it which are quite untypical of Vergil's imitations of Theocritus and suggest an additional source of inspiration: the unequivocally Arcadian setting for a start, and in line 19 two useful pastoral words, *upilio* and *subulci*, which occur nowhere else in Vergil; such obscurity as we find in the next line, *uvidus hiberna venit de glande Menalcas* (why should acorns make one wet?), also suggests allusion to lost poetry.

It therefore seems very reasonable to accept as a working hypothesis the view advanced by F. Skutsch<sup>28</sup> and elaborated recently by D. O. Ross<sup>29</sup> that the whole of Vergil's presentation of Gallus in the tenth *Eclogue* may be heavily indebted to Gallan poetry, poetry as Ross stresses already composed, not merely projected, at the time the tenth *Eclogue* was composed – and poetry, it seems, which contained a pastoral element. This hypothesis is quite compatible with the view of many recent scholars that Gallus' oeuvre was confined to four books of elegiac *Amores*: Ross is one such

<sup>24</sup> It became clear at the Liverpool Colloquium that the provisional total of 20 possible allusions given by J. van Sickle, 'Style & imitation in the new Gallus', *QUCC* n.s. 9 (1981), 115–23, now needed to be considerably augmented.

<sup>25</sup> For disrespect towards *Julius Caesar* cf. of course Catullus 93. On Gallus' military and public career and his eventual downfall see J.-P. Boucher, *C. Cornélius Gallus* (Paris, 1966), 1–65.

<sup>26</sup> See E. Coleiro, *An introduction to Virgil's Bucolics* (Amsterdam, 1979), pp. 269–76, for a survey of these interpretations. See also G. B. Conte, *Il genere e i suoi confini* (Turin, 1980), pp. 11–43.

<sup>27</sup> See R. G. G. Coleman, ed. Vergil, *Eclogues* (Cambridge, 1977), pp. 294–7.

<sup>28</sup> *Aus Vergils Frühzeit* (Leipzig, 1901), pp. 1 ff.

<sup>29</sup> *Backgrounds to Augustan Poetry: Gallus, Elegy and Rome* (Cambridge, 1975), pp. 85–106.

critic<sup>30</sup> and yet can conceive of Gallus as 'perhaps an elegist wanting to discover other genres, such as pastoral';<sup>31</sup> F. Skutsch had envisaged *Eclogue* 10 as giving a survey of Gallus' 'elegisch-bukolische Poesie'.<sup>32</sup>

*Eclogue* 10, if interpreted in this way, provides further resources for speculation about the papyrus fragment. Vergil presents Gallus, deserted by Lycoris, being offered consolation by an idiosyncratically selected group of Arcadian herdsmen and divinities. The first words of 'Gallus' in reply seem particularly important for our enquiry:

Tristis at ille 'tamen cantabitis, Arcades,' inquit  
 'montibus haec vestris, soli cantare periti  
 Arcades. o mihi tum quam molliter ossa quiescant,  
 vestra meos olim si fistula dicat amores!  
 atque utinam ex vobis unus vestrique fuissem  
 aut custos gregis aut maturaе vinitor uvae!

(lines 31–6)

This desire expressed by Vergil's 'Gallus' to delegate the singing of his *amores* to Arcadians, this wish that he had himself been an Arcadian, herdsman or tender of vines,<sup>33</sup> might they not very well refer to a poem or poems in which Gallus presented pastoral characters taking his own amatory preoccupations as a theme for song-contests and the like?

There follows a sequence in which 'Gallus' envisages dalliance with Phyllis and Amyntas before an abrupt transition to themes closer to reality, his dream of happiness with Lycoris, the helplessness enforced on him by the war, Lycoris' defection over the snowy Alps (lines 37–49). It is reminiscent of the sudden transition in the amoebaeen couplets of *Eclogue* 3. 76–91 from Phyllis, Amaryllis and Amyntas to Pollio and the bad Roman poets. Now is no time for overstating the case, but inevitably this similarity must provoke speculation that the lines in the tenth *Eclogue* echo a contest poem, perhaps even our contest poem: one should note the way in which Vergil presents Gallus' attention as divided between Phyllis and Amyntas, and how he moves on then to alternating reflections on love and war.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>30</sup> *ibid.* p. 46.

<sup>31</sup> *ibid.* p. 86.

<sup>32</sup> *Aus Vergils Frühzeit*, p. 18.

<sup>33</sup> Could these have been two contestants in a singing contest? See Calp. Sic. *Ecl.* 2 for a singing match in which the contestants were *Idas lanigeri dominus gregis*, *Astacus horti* (line 2), i.e. not the usual two herdsmen.

<sup>34</sup> This is a very tempting line of enquiry. Inevitably it will be asked if our papyrus fragment could not have come from a stage in this hypothetical contest poem just after the section paraphrased by Vergil. Support for such an idea, though of course flimsy, is not so flimsy as one might expect. If one compares *Ecl.* 3. 76–95 with *Ecl.* 10. 35–49 plus the 'Gallus papyrus' (in that order), the following successive correspondences may be noted: Phyllis – 3. 76–9 cf. 10. 37; Amyntas – 3. 82–3 cf. 10. 37–40; Amyntas + willow – 3. 83 cf. 10. 40; abrupt transition to contemporary Rome – 3. 84 cf. 10. 42; *facere carmina* – 3. 86 cf. 'Gallus papyrus' 6; harsh criticism of poets (two examples) – 3. 90–1 cf. 'Gallus papyrus' 8–9. Disrupting the order there is also the notable correspondence, *triste/dulce* – 3. 80–2; *tristia/dulcia* 'Gallus papyrus' 1, 2. Note also the use of convoluted language about war in 10. 44–5 and 'Gallus papyrus' 4–5. If one believes that these correspondences all point to a common Gallan original, of which the papyrus forms a part, it may be supposed that the contest in it began with traditional pastoral themes, but went on to demonstrate a novel way of singing Gallus' *amores*, his love for Lycoris and the *insanus amor* which involved him in war. It may further be conjectured, on the basis of *Ecl.* 10. 31 ff., that the contestants were Arcadians (though n.b. *pastoris Siculi*... *avena*, line 51), and maybe, in view of 50 ff., that the poem culminated in Gallus' acceptance of a Theocritean vocation. But note that even the over-simplifying Servius (on *Ecl.* 10. 46) suggests that poems (plural), not just one poem, by Gallus were drawn on by Vergil in the tenth *Eclogue*.

More certainly of relevance to our investigation are the programmatic lines 50 ff., in which Vergil's Gallus announces a positive resolve:

Ibo et Chalcidico quae sunt mihi condita versu  
carmina pastoris Siculi modulabor avena.  
certum est in silvis inter spelaea ferarum  
malle pati tenerisque meos incidere amores  
arboribus. crescent illae, crescetis, amores.

Given that Euphorion was *the* poet of Chalcis, these lines chime well with a supposition that in his *Amores* Gallus, formerly a *cantor Euphorionis*, at some stage decided to compose a poem or poems comparable in some respects to his earlier work, but this time in a Theocritean manner. We do not have to assume a change from elegiacs to hexameters, as has sometimes been suggested, but rather changes in setting, characters portrayed, or poetic conventions.<sup>35</sup> Not that a move from imitation of Euphorion to Theocritus need have meant a drastic change of direction. *Eclogue* 6 and related testimonia indicate that one notable poem by Gallus in imitation of Euphorion was concerned with the Grynaean grove, which was something of a *locus amoenus*, if we may judge by Servius' speculation that it might be identified with a grove near a town called Grynium which was *arboribus multis iucundus, gramine floribusque variis omni tempore vestitus, abundans etiam fontibus*. Euphorion and Gallus told of the origin of this grove and evidently included an account of a contest there between Calchas and Mopsus to decide who was the better prophet; Mopsus won, and Calchas died of grief.<sup>36</sup>

It is highly probable, then, I would suggest, that the elegiac lines of the 'Gallus papyrus', if interpreted as belonging to a singing contest, ought still to be attributed to Gallus. As to dating, this interpretation must lead us to consider several new factors. First, we have been looking at an interpretation of *Eclogue* 10 which presumes that Gallus had at least begun composing poetry in a Theocritean manner before the date of that poem, probably 39 B.C.<sup>37</sup> It is an interpretation which is not universally accepted, and does not rule out the possibility that Gallus continued Theocritean experiment after the *Eclogues*. However, a date prior to *Eclogue* 10 appeals. Secondly, the time-scale of amoebaeon song-contests tends to be very vague, but at least it can be said that they are normally set in the past. The triumphant return of Caesar therefore may or may not have happened before the poem was composed; the poet's experience of Lycoris' *nequitia* may or may not have been recent. Thirdly, if we assume that lines 2–5 represent or caricature typical Caesarian bellicosity, they might belong to a somewhat wider range of dates than if we imagine them to express Gallus' own emotions at the date of composition. It has been felt that the unalloyed pleasure anticipated at the thought of Caesar's triumphant return is incompatible with most stages of the Civil Wars. However, some Civil War victories were undoubtedly celebrated with triumphs, involving much display of spoils and written propaganda, which must have been thought desirable at least by the less reflective partisans of the victor.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>35</sup> See the discussion of these lines and the testimonia connected with them in Ross, *Backgrounds* (see n. 29, above), pp. 40–6.

<sup>36</sup> Servius on *Ecl.* 6. 72. The legend had also been related in Hesiod, *Melampodia*; see fr. 278 Merkelbach/West. If this fragment is representative, the contest of Calchas and Mopsus took the form of challenge by difficult questioning (like much of the *Certamen Homeri et Hesiodi*), and was thus of a type distinct from the amoebaeon contests of the Theocritean tradition.

<sup>37</sup> See *JRS* 69 (1979), 153 and n. 142; cf. R. G. G. Coleman, ed. Vergil, *Eclogues* 14 f. for the relevant ancient testimonia.

<sup>38</sup> See Suet. *Iul.* 37 on the triumphs of 46 and 45.

The question of dating thus needs some reconsideration. However, the balance of probabilities still seems to be much as Nisbet presented it in the first edition.<sup>39</sup> A pre-Civil War date for Gallus' liaison with Lycoris seems highly improbable if we accept that his birthdate was around 69.<sup>40</sup> It is unlikely that verses like lines 2-5 of the papyrus would have been composed in the years immediately after Julius Caesar's death, especially not if set in the ambiguous past usual in amoebaeon contests. To date the poem to a period when Octavian, rather than his uncle, might have been considered potentially *maxima Romanae pars... historiae*, takes us some years past the desertion of Gallus by Lycoris alluded to in *Eclogue* 10, and into a different moral climate, not favourable either to disrespectful parody of swashbuckling Caesarian poetry or to indulgent musings about an old flame of Mark Antony.<sup>41</sup> The most likely date for our poem would therefore seem to be in the time of Julius Caesar's ascendancy at the very end of his life, when, after his four triumphs of 46 and his Spanish victory over the sons of Pompey at Munda in 45, he began making plans for a Parthian expedition, forestalled, in the event, by his assassination.<sup>42</sup> Such a dating has been found to fit well enough with what is known of the activities of Antony and Cytheris, alias Lycoris.<sup>43</sup>

Vergil's Corydon and Thyrsis, *Arcades ambo*, sing on the banks of the north Italian river Mincius (*Ecl.* 7. 4-13),<sup>44</sup> but one would not have expected comparable Gallan singing-competitors to be discovered even further from Arcady amidst the sands of Qaşr Ibrim. Some will think them a mirage. But if one does accept the identification of the elegiac quatrains in the papyrus as amoebaeon verses, these lines, which have previously seemed so disappointing, acquire the degree of charm and subtlety which one might expect from a poet of Gallus' standing, and it becomes understandable why they should appear to have exerted such a remarkable influence on both love-elegy and pastoral.

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<sup>39</sup> *JRS* 69 (1979), 151-5.

<sup>40</sup> There is scope for dispute here, however: St Jerome's datings are not always to be trusted, and this one, though it refers not to Gallus' birthdate but to his age at the time of his death in 27 B.C. (Ol. 188. 2; see Hieronymus, *Eusebii Pamphili Chronici Canones*, ed. J. K. Fotheringham, London, 1923, p. 246), could be derived from the tradition that Gallus was Vergil's *condiscipulus* (Probus, *Prooem, ad Buc. in Servii in Verg. Commentarii*, ed. G. Thilo, H. Hagen, Leipzig, 1927, iii. 328), a tradition which is open to the suspicion of being merely an inference from expressions of friendship for Gallus in Vergil's poetry.

<sup>41</sup> cf. *JRS* 69 (1979), 155.

<sup>42</sup> Note, however, that the *reditus* of Caesar which would have been uppermost in people's minds in late 46 and the earlier part of 45 would have been his return from Spain (see Cic. *Phil.* 2. 78), rather than his return from the projected Parthian expedition.

<sup>43</sup> See *JRS* 69 (1979), 152-4. One need not assume that Cytheris ever made a total break from Antony before or during her affair with Gallus, given how Roman love-elegy thrives on rivalry and the need for concealment.

<sup>44</sup> A tributary of the Po which flows from (Catullus') Lake Garda through (Vergil's) Mantua and the *transpadana regio* where Gallus is said by Vergil's commentators to have been one of those responsible for the land-division remembered in *Ecl.* 1 (see Boucher, *C. Cornélius Gallus*, pp. 16 ff.).