

XV. The Ritual Origin of Pastoral

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During the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries there was much speculation about the origin of pastoral poetry.¹ Many critical treatments of the topic were repetitious, of course, and some of the interest was merely perfunctory, since it was part of the critic's duty in dealing with each literary genre to follow the procedure that the ancient grammarians, codifying Aristotle, had made canonical, and to include a discussion of origin along with those of definition, purpose, scene, characters, subject-matter, plot, form, versification, diction, style, and qualities. Yet there was a feeling that the settlement of the question of origin was particularly important, for on this seemed to depend the decision whether the language of the true pastoral should be realistic or idealized, whether the style should be low or high, whether the characters might properly be allegorical, and so forth. The main issue was simply this: "Is pastoral the product of a primitive society or of a sophisticated one?" One's answer had relevance, it was thought, to the natural-pastoral-*versus*-the-artistic-pastoral controversy, a controversy of which Pope's quarrel with Ambrose Philips is perhaps the episode best-known to the English-speaking reader.²

A few of the primitivists cited the ritual-origin accounts to be found in the Theocritean scholia and the ancient grammarians—and of these more notice will be taken later. Julius Caesar Scaliger was the first of the Renaissance critics to do so, but even he in the long run inclined with the majority to a so-called scientific theory that can be traced back to Lucretius' pretty picture of early man passing his abundant leisure amid groves and glades and shepherd's solitudes by copying bird-calls and reproducing

¹ For a more nearly complete treatment of these theories see J. E. Congleton, *Theories of Pastoral Poetry in England, 1684-1798* (Gainesville [Fla.] 1952) esp. 160-72.

² The advocates of the idealized, artistic pastoral, as opposed to the realistic, were inclined to espouse the theory of primitive origins in a Golden Age; cf. Pope's "A Discourse on Pastoral Poetry," prefaced to his *Pastorals*.

zephyr-murmurs on his panpipes.³ Commentators sometimes peopled this scene with Biblical-patriarchal figures, sometimes filled it in with touches from a pagan Golden Age. On the other hand, the sophisticated theory seems to have been first hinted at by Puttenham in 1589, but not fully worked out until the middle of the eighteenth century, by writers who either were content to attribute all origins to Theocritus and to let the matter go at that, or else felt compelled to add to this attribution an analysis of such forces in an over-civilized society as drove the poet and his audience to seek refuge in an imaginary rustic simplicity.⁴ Dr. Johnson, in a *Rambler* of 1750, characteristically emitted a chilling blast at origin-hunters by calling them those "who love to talk of what they do not know";⁵ and the romantics, losing interest in the pastoral as a distinct genre, lost interest in its derivation as well. There the matter rested throughout most of the nineteenth century.⁶

Now it must occur to the eclectic critic of our own transitional day that such disputation was more or less *frustra ferro diverberare umbras*. If we seek the origin of a class of literary works we must first ask ourselves, origin of what? What is it in the pastoral that we are focusing our attention on? Is it the form, that peculiar

* Lucr. 5.1379 ff. (Bailey's text):

At liquidas avium voces imitauer ore
ante fuit multo quam levia carmina cantu
concelebrare homines possent aurisque iuvare.
et zephyri, cava per calamorum, sibila primum
agrestis docuere cavas inflare cicutas.
inde minutatim dulcis didicere querellas,
tibia quas fundit digitis pulsata canentum,
avia per nemora ac silvas saltusque reperta,
per loca pastorum deserta atque otia dia.

⁴ Puttenham, as quoted by Congleton (above, note 1) 162-63, merely asserted that the pastoral was a late genre, invented primarily for allegorical uses; in 1769 an anonymous reviewer in *The Monthly Review* (Congleton, 169) first stated the sophisticated theory explicitly.

⁵ *Rambler* 36. Johnson's treatments of pastoral were never free from contempt; see the two *Rambler* essays, 36 and 37, and the discussions in *Lives of the Poets: Milton* (*Lycidas* specifically) and *Ambrose Philips* (the history of the genre.)

⁶ F. G. Welcker, "Ueber den Ursprung des Hirtenliedes," written in 1820 or 1821 and published in *Kleine Schriften* (Bonn 1844) 402-11, examines the ancient accounts critically but judges them finally to be practically worthless on the grounds that the grammarians confused hymns to Artemis with popular shepherd-songs, only the former really being part of the goddess' cult. But almost certainly Welcker is applying a nineteenth-century idea of "hymns" to ancient Greek ceremony, and the grammarians were right in not making the distinction that Welcker so insists on.

semi-dramatic, sometimes purely dramatic form, always threatening to turn into mere mime,⁷ with its challenges, its *agônes*, its singing-contests, refrains, amoebae responses, flyting-matches, conundrums, and hymns to the gods? Is it the characters, seldom including anyone but shepherds and goatherds, seldom without leisure, seldom unskilled in song, or is it the scene, always the unspoiled and undisturbed countryside or hillside or woodland, or is it the subject-matter, strangely restricted to thwarted loves, especially the loves and deaths of vegetation-spirits? Is it the social milieu that furnishes a willing audience for this kind of thing, an audience sated with courtly pastimes and ready to turn a glazed eye on what is fresh and naïve and just on the verge of corruption? Or is it the poetic impulse in the creator himself, a revulsion from over-complexity to over-simplicity, a return to childhood or to Eden, an anxiety to find out what God and man are by contemplation of the flower in the crannied wall? As the emphasis shifts from one to another of these, we find that we have one or another explanation of how a certain type of literature came into existence. We should therefore speak, not of an origin, but of origins.

All literary criticism and—what is not so well acknowledged—all literary scholarship, which is given its bent, consciously or unconsciously, by critical principles, are oriented toward one or more of these coordinates: (1) the subject-matter (or *imitandum* in its widest sense), (2) the art-work itself in its formal aspect (the *poema*), (3) the audience, and (4) the *poeta*. Theories so oriented have been termed respectively mimetic, objective or formal, pragmatic, and expressive.⁸ This classification is becoming a critical commonplace. But what is not such a commonplace is the realization that one's orientation determines one's definitions and that these in turn determine one's decision about literary origins. It is not surprising that the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries grew more and more interested in the psychology of the creator of pastoral and in the sociology of the audience that found pastoral congenial. After all, the transition from Renaissance-neo-classical criticism to romantic criticism may legitimately be summed up as a shift from objective and mimetic theories to expressive and pragmatic ones. In this respect the primitivistic

⁷ Cf. Hermann Reich, *Der Mimus* (Berlin 1903) 1.296–402.

⁸ Most explicitly by M. H. Abrams, *The Mirror and the Lamp* (New York 1953) ch. 1.

and sophisticated accounts of pastoral origins did not essentially differ from each other. Both put the emphasis on the reasons for the poet's writing and on the reasons for the audience's acceptance. Neither explained the peculiar form and subject-matter of the pastoral itself. This last was precisely what the ritual origin outlined by the scholiasts might have been able to do, but from Scaliger till the late nineteenth century these narratives were pretty much ignored. And they are still pretty much ignored today, classical scholarship, thanks to a curious cultural lag, being still largely expressive and pragmatic. A typical comment is thus that of Eric Arthur Barber in the article on "Greek Pastoral (or Bucolic) Poetry" in the *Oxford Classical Dictionary*: "Ancient authorities . . . who derive Bucolic from religious ritual, deserve little credence. Modern theories of the same sort . . . are equally unconvincing."⁹

The chief of the modern theories that Barber refers to is that of the German scholar Richard Reitzenstein, who in 1893 really did little more than draw a red herring across the trail.¹⁰ Reitzenstein

⁹ Barber's own theory seems to be contained in the next two sentences: "Pastoral song, accompanied by the flute, doubtless existed in all Greek lands from an early date . . . , and especially in Sicily, the home of Daphnis, the bucolic hero. This popular origin accounts for certain features, e.g. singing-match, refrain, strophic arrangement, which are found in later bucolic." But this says scarcely more than that pastoral existed (existing in many places, to be sure, but existing especially in one place), that it had features later which it had already had earlier, and that it originated from the people somehow, somewhere, sometime. Theorists are likely to be frightened away from ritual origins by the ghost of the controversy over the origins of drama, a controversy which is often assumed to have been settled definitively against the Cambridge School. A wise and informed comment on this matter is that of J. G. Frazer's editor, Theodor H. Gaster, speaking of the ritual-origin theorists in a note to *The New Golden Bough* (New York 1959) 392: "Doubtless, in many of these attempts enthusiasm has outrun sobriety; but that is due mainly to the fact that the scholars who undertook them (and, be it added, all too many of their critics!) did not distinguish clearly enough between the history of particular compositions with which they were dealing and that of the literary genre to which those compositions belonged. It is the latter, not the former, that is really at issue. It may, for instance, be quite wrong to assume that a particular Hittite or Canaanite or Scandinavian myth, play, or epic actually goes back, in point of literary genealogy, to an earlier ritual libretto; but it may nevertheless be quite right to assume that this particular type of composition was inspired or conditioned in the first place by the standard pattern of seasonal rituals and that its structure and conventions were determined originally by those of the primitive performances. In other words, what is really at stake is not the dependence of a particular composition upon an actual performance, but rather the parallelism between a pattern of narrative and a pattern of ritual, or—to put it in broad terms—the ultimate relation of a genre of literature to a genre of ceremony."

¹⁰ *Epigramm und Skolion* (Giessen 1893) 193–263, ch. 4: "Die Bukolik." He based his theories on certain works of Schöll, Dietrich, and Maass. Cf. P.-E. Legrand,

was almost the first to treat critically and seriously the ancient scholia describing the rites of pastoral festivals, but he was not genuinely interested in accounting for the content and form of the more purely bucolic among Theocritus' *Idyls*. Instead he shared that failing so common to late-romantic criticism and scholarship, which is summed up in Lytton Strachey's remark that to the Victorians literature was always an excuse for talking about something else. The something else that the German scholar was eager to uncover was that usual preoccupation of the dominant Sainte-Beuvian school of nineteenth-century literary investigation, namely the man behind the work, or the men behind the literary masks. This is obviously only another twist of the expressive theory. Starting with the discovery that there had been in various places of the Hellenistic world Dionysian priests who called themselves *boukoloi*, Reitzenstein imagined that Theocritus and his circle of friends had constituted such a *collegium* on the island of Cos and that many of Theocritus' poems were the more or less playful by-products of this association. On this basis the real business at hand was then attacked, that activity so dear to some Theocriteans, viz. the identification of the poets who appear in the *Idyls* in shepherd costume. Reitzenstein's whole theory was soon scouted, and his identifications were scoffed at,¹¹ rightly so, for he had left the matter in worse confusion than he had found it. Far from locating the inspiration for pastoral form and pastoral subject in folk-ritual, he had located it in the sophisticated fancies of a group of urban poets merely playing at priestcraft. It was somehow felt, however, that since he had cited ancient scholiasts freely, with his defeat their claims to a hearing had also been disposed of once and for all.

But perhaps after seventy years the case may be reopened. All the really important questions about the mimetic and formal origins of pastoral still remain unanswered. Granted that we

Étude sur Théocrite (Paris 1898) 141, and R. Helm, "Theokritos und die Bukolische Poesie," *Jahrb. f. cl. Phil.* 153 (1896) 457-72, esp. 457.

¹¹ O. Crusius, review, *Liter. Centralblatt* (1894) 724-29; Helm (above, note 10); Legrand (above, note 10); K. Wendel, *De nominibus bucolicis* (Diss., Halle 1899) 20 ff.; and a glancing hit by U. von Wilamowitz, *Die Textgeschichte der griechischen Bukoliker* (Berlin 1906) 165-66. R.'s critics were not uniformly opposed to ritual origins as such; the exact opinion of some is hard to discern: Wendel (21) lumps Knaack's treatment of "Bukolik," in *RE* 3 (1899) 999-1008, with Reitzenstein's, though Knaack actually remarks (1003): "Alle diese aus den antiken Legenden vom Ursprunge der B. herausgesponnenen Combinationen sind mehr oder minder trügerisch. . . ."

may begin with Theocritus, with what did Theocritus himself begin?¹² Granted that the poet, "long in city pent," may have been yearning for country simplicity, why did he choose as the vehicle of his escapism the herdsman's life and the shepherd's song? Why not simple descriptions of farming and hunting, of meadow and brook, uncomplicated by bizarre elements, sometimes intrusively disquieting, of form and subject? Granted also that Theocritus' jaded auditors were out of the mood for excessive urbanity, for the elaboration of what was old, and for big books that were big evils, and conversely in the mood for something fresh and new, could they have done a thing so untraditionally Greek as to welcome without demur a literary form completely without a tradition, either learned or popular, behind it? We know what tradition Theocritus was writing in when he wrote his epigrams and his *paidika* and his short epics and his mimes; even the *Adoniazousae* and the *Pharmakeutria* and the *Lênai* evince the common Alexandrian predilection for the treatment of exotic folk-practices. Was the poet then doing a thing radically different when he composed the idyls that are accepted as the most purely bucolic? The scholiasts say he was not; why not believe them?

Here follows a composite of the ancient accounts, with interspersed comments:¹³

Three localities were alleged to be the provenience of the genre; pastoral was said by some to have originated in Laconia and to have spread far and wide from there. During the time when Xerxes' invasion was terrorizing Greece, all the Greek women were in hiding, and when the day was at hand for the Spartan virgins to celebrate the feast of Artemis Caryatis in outlying Caryae¹⁴ none of the maidens dared

¹² Of course the figure of the shepherd-poet can be traced back through the treatment of Daphnis by Stesichorus and others (cf. Barber s.v. "Pastoral Poetry" in *OCD*, Knaack s.v. "Bukolik" in *RE*, and Wilamowitz, *Reden und Vorträge*³ [Berlin 1913] 303-4) all the way to Hesiod's meeting with the muses (*Theog.* 22 ff.).

¹³ The accounts in Greek of the scholiast to Theocritus (presumably Theon or deriving from him) and the so-called Anecdota Estense (probably Ioannes Tzetzes), and those in Latin of Donatus, Junius Philargyrius, Servius, and Isidorus can be found in C. Wendel, ed., *Scholia in Theocritum Vetera* (Leipzig 1914) 2-22; the Latin account of Probus is in H. Hagen, ed., *Appendix Serviana* (Leipzig 1902) 324-26; and that of Diomedes is in H. Keil, ed., *Grammatici Latini* 1 (Leipzig 1857) 486-87.

¹⁴ The cult of Artemis at Caryae must have contained Dionysian elements. Servius (*ad Verg. Buc.* 8.29) tells how Apollo gave to the Laconian king Dion's three

appear.¹⁵ To prevent a lapse in the cult, herdsmen from the adjoining countryside came in and substituted their own crude rustic songs. Such a performance was called *boukolikon*, from the herdsmen themselves, or sometimes *astrabikon*, after the type of cart or wagon that the country people used to drive in on festival-day. Their contribution to the festivities caught on, became customary, and was imitated elsewhere.

Commentary on the foregoing may be brief. It is precisely when Greek writers on myth and religion are most factual and rational that we may be most skeptical of their data. All the business relative to the Persian invasion may be discounted; if there is any truth in the story, it seems topsy-turvy: more likely the participation of the Spartan maidens' chorus was an epinician element added at some time to an original rustic rite, rather than vice versa.¹⁶ But the existence of this ceremony in honor of Artemis of the Walnut Trees, a familiar type of vegetation-goddess, and the inclusion in it of bucolic songs of various kinds, not by any means confined to mere hymns to the goddess, is not necessarily dubious. Such rites were widely performed in Dorian communities. And it must have been such festivity itself, and not merely the *boukolikon* alone, that was found here and there throughout the Dorian world, not so much because of imitation as because of immigration. The ancient scholiasts, then, were being entirely

daughters, Orphe, Lyco, and Caroea, the gift of divination on condition that they would not betray the gods' secrets or pry into what was taboo to know. Afterwards Dionysus had a love-affair with Caroea, later returning for more love-making on the pretext of dedicating a temple that the king had vowed to him. But Caroea's two suspicious sisters kept close watch over her on this second occasion, meanwhile trying to learn the details of the affair. The exasperated Dionysus, after fair warning, drove them all mad, and on Mount Taygetos he changed Lyco and Orphe into rocks, Caroea into a nut-tree. The goddess Artemis then revealed the truth of the whole matter to the Laconians, and they consecrated a temple to her in the form of Artemis Caryatis. (It is obvious from the story that the original lover of Dionysus was Artemis herself.) For further connections between Artemis and Dionysus see Reitzenstein (above, note 10) 216-17.

¹⁵ This Laconian version appears in all the ancient sources (above, note 13), and, with one exception, they are all in agreement about the details. Probus, however, is the only one who furnishes information about the name *astrabikon* (the term sounds authentic enough), but otherwise he seems to have indulged in some free-form embroidery; Xerxes, he tell us, was defeated in the battle of Marathon, and the victorious Spartans, arriving home on the very day of the feast of Artemis Caryatis, wanted to honor the occasion particularly, but the young women had fled to remote places and were still not to be found; thus the country folk took over.

¹⁶ Cf. E. Hoffmann, "Die Bukoliasten," *RhM* 52 (1897) 99-104; Welcker (above, note 6) 403, 404.

reasonable in beginning their discussions of bucolic origins with what must have appeared to be the parent-festival in the mother-country.

Continuing with the ancient sources, we find that others say bucolic rites were first performed at Tyndaris in Sicily.¹⁷ When Orestes was carrying off the *xoanon* of Artemis from Scythian Tauris, he was enjoined by the oracle to purify himself in several rivers flowing from one source. He accordingly went to Rhegium in Italy and washed away his pollution in the seven "Separating Rivers." From there he went to the Sicilian settlement of Tyndaris and established in honor of Artemis Phacelitidis a festival in which it was customary for herdsmen to take part.¹⁸ The wooden image or fetish of the goddess being set up in a temple, it became the practice to make presents of livestock to her; and when their number had grown, some countrymen took on themselves the duty of looking after the animals, with no other recompense than the milk and cheese that the herds produced.¹⁹

Taking the mythical elements of this story in a strictly mythical sense, here again one finds nothing intrinsically improbable. All boils down to the simple statement that in Tyndaris, Rhegium, and doubtless other adjacent Sicilian and south Italian townships there were festivals to Artemis of the Bundle, who must have been basically the Old Woman of the Corn, embodied in the last sheaf of reaped grain and dunked in a running stream as part of the celebration. In the course of such festivals herdsmen and other rustics put on their bucolic performances. Theocritus may well have witnessed some of these.

The third account, the one which some of the scholiasts most

¹⁷ This second version is not given by Isidorus or Diomedes.

¹⁸ The two Greek authorities, Theon and Tzetzes (who copies Theon almost *verbatim*), do not mention the epithet of Artemis. Donatus and Philargyrius (who also agree almost word for word) give the full title as Diana Fascelina and explain it as being due to Orestes' spiriting the goddess' image away from the Taurians in a bundle of wood (*in fasce lignorum*). Servius gives the epithet as Facelitidis, which would be a slightly Latinized Greek equivalent of the other, does not explain the etymology, omits the business of the purificatory bath, and puts Orestes into Sicily only because of a storm. Probus has Orestes cross into Sicily after the expiation; near Syracuse he is admonished in a dream to found a temple to the goddess, whose name is given as Diana Facelitidis also. Though the text is defective, Probus' etymology is obviously the same as the one above.

¹⁹ The details about the flocks attached to the temple are given by Probus. Le-grand (above, note 10) 145 ff. takes Reitzenstein to task for theorizing that here were the beginnings of the priesthoods of *boukoloi*.

favor, but which several do not mention at all, has to do with Syracuse itself.²⁰ After a factional strife in the city-state, or according to another version, after a plague either of beasts or men, Artemis Lyaea was given credit for bringing the catastrophe to an end; and a festival was instituted in thanksgiving. The manner of its celebration was as follows: crowds of rustics would flock to the theater and engage in singing-contests. They would bring with them loaves of bread in the shapes of animals both wild and domestic; they would wear garlands with horns set in them; they would have in their hands the shepherd's crook;²¹ they would carry leather pouches containing mixtures of all kinds of seeds; and from goatskins full of wine they would pour out libations to all they met. The victors in the contests would take over the losers' bread-loaves.²² And while the winning singers remained within the city, the vanquished would go out on a *quête* into the suburbs, in bands called "bucoliasts," begging for food, sporting about,²³ and shouting merry songs, among them in particular:

Good luck to you!
 Good health to you!
 These gifts we bring from the goddess.
 These gifts she has called down upon you.²⁴

The above description of the Syracusan festival sounds quite

²⁰ Theon calls this "the true account." The *Anecdoton Estense* adds an explanation of the symbolism in the festival. Probus gives it second place in his three narratives, as does Diomedes. These four differ in a number of minor details, but not in any substantial particular. But Servius, Donatus, Philargyrius, and Isidorus say nothing of this Syracusan origin.

²¹ Since *lagôbolon*, "shepherd's crook," also meant "curved stick for hunting hares," we perhaps have here yet another source of conflation in the equation of "shepherd" and "hunter," of Daphnis-figure and Adonis-figure; this conflation was an enduring one throughout the lifetime of pastoral.

²² But the ancient accounts are not at all clear about the circumstances here. The Greek manuscripts actually say that the winners took over "the defeated bread," which Ziegler changed to read "the bread of the defeated"; cf. Hoffmann (above, note 16) 100, note 2. But the manuscripts may be right: I am reminded of an Easter custom that lasted at least up until twenty years ago, when children would "fight" their colored eggs, holding them tightly in their fists and knocking the smaller ends together, the winner taking his opponent's smashed egg as prize.

²³ It might be pertinent to remark at this point that the element of play and the element of religious ritual are inseparable in primitive societies; see J. Huizinga, *Homo ludens* (Boston 1955) *passim*, but esp. 65, 68, 103, 106-8, 120, 122 ff. Hence any derivation of types of literature from mere "entertainment" confuses the issue. Primitive entertainment always has ritual as its model and *fons et origo*.

²⁴ There is some difficulty here with the Greek text, but the variant readings make little difference to the general import.

authentic. It could not have been made up out of whole cloth by the scholiasts, for all its features find numerous parallels in fertility-rites elsewhere. And it admirably accounts for the perennial form and enduring subject-matter of the pastoral throughout the ages. In the pastoral from the beginning, then, were the singing-contests, the carrying-off of prizes or the exchange of gifts, the dying and resurrection of a vegetation-spirit (whether Artemis or Apollo or Pan or Hermes or Bacchus), the human counterpart to this in a story of thwarted or successful love (whether of Daphnis or a nymph or some other), the easy introduction of nymphs and satyrs, the sympathy of nature with the sufferings or rejoicing of the human characters—the “pathetic fallacy,” in short ²⁵—and, lastly, the element of disguise, with all its possibilities for allegorization. When we reflect also that implicit in such fertility-celebrations were the themes of the Golden Age and the birth of a new era, we perceive that there is little in the subsequent development of the pastoral that such ritual origins do not account for.

And such origins account equally well for the disappearance of the pastoral as a separate genre in the nineteenth century. When modern man, thanks to his alienation from nature, came to feel that the sympathizing of nature with man was no more than a fallacy, pastoral had its heart torn out from its side, and was replaced by the romantic lyric, expressive of a mere yearning for universal union.²⁶ Ruskin, the formulator of this pathetic fallacy, had an intuition of the process. In an earlier portion of *Modern Painters* he had stated it very well: “. . . exactly in proportion as the idea of definite spiritual presence in material nature was lost, the mysterious sense of *unaccountable* life in the things themselves would be increased.”²⁷ The poet’s own love-affair with nature

²⁵ Frank Kermode, ed., *English Pastoral Poetry* (New York 1952) 21, says of Theocritus: “In his First Idyll he celebrates the death of the shepherd-hero Daphnis, which in folklore had represented the annual death of Nature itself. Thus the ‘pathetic fallacy’ . . . enters the pastoral tradition at the very beginning.” Cf. also Reuben A. Brower, *Alexander Pope* (Oxford 1959) 19, 24.

²⁶ The opinion of Wilamowitz, *Reden und Vorträge* (see above, note 12) 316–17, that pastoral died upon the nineteenth century’s discovery of “true Hellenism” seems highly dubious; as is that of Bruno Snell, *The Discovery of the Mind*, tr. T. G. Rosenmeyer (Cambridge [Mass.] 1953) 287: “. . . a genuine summons back to nature would silence the whole of pastoral poetry; as it turned out, that is exactly what happened in a later age.” But the nature of the romantics was actually less alive than that of the pastoralists.

²⁷ Vol. 3, pt. 4, ch. 14, sec. 7; when Ruskin, however, in discussing the pathetic

superseded the grand drama of nature's love-affair with herself, a drama in which man, and the poet as man, could regard himself as only a partial actor and a partial spectator. The modern alienation from all such sacramental views by the same token inevitably created a gulf between even the literary historian and all possible sympathy with ritual explanations.

Nevertheless it is the thesis of this paper that the ancient explanations of the ritual origin of pastoral are substantially true and indispensably valuable. They explain too much to be explained away themselves. The festivals described by the ancient scholiasts and grammarians could easily have been seen by Theocritus and could easily have suggested to his mature creative mind the form and content of its most distinctive products. Nothing else so reasonably accounts for the peculiar elements that distinguish the pastoral from other forms of literature.

fallacy (ch. 12, sec. 15) castigates "cold-hearted Pope" for not being sincere in "Where'er you walk, cool gales shall fan the glade," etc., he is beside the mark. Pope understood the pastoral tradition; Ruskin did not.