

VERGIL'S SIXTH *ECLOGUE* AND THE PROBLEM OF EVIL

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I

Eclogue 6 is one of Vergil's most ambitious and most difficult short poems.¹ Grand themes are its concern: passion, violence, cosmic and poetic creation, the relation between man and nature. No one formulation of the many subtle and complex relationships between these themes is likely to prove definitive, just as no one principle of unity for its bewildering exuberance of narrative material has emerged as

¹ I shall refer to the following by author's name only: Carl **Becker**, "Virgils Eklogenbuch," *Hermes* 83 (1955) 314-49; Karl **Büchner**, "P. Vergilius Maro," *RE* 8A1 (1955) 1219-24 (on E.6); John **Conington** and Henry **Nettleship**, edd., *P. Vergili Maronis Opera*, I⁴ (London 1881); J. P. **Elder**, "Non Iniusa Cano: Virgil's Sixth Eclogue," *HSCP* 65 (1961) 109-25; Charles **Fantazzi**, "Virgilian Pastoral and Roman Love Poetry," *AJP* 87 (1966) 171-91; G. Karl **Galinsky**, "Vergil's Second *Eclogue*: Its Theme and Relation to the *Eclogue* Book," *C & M* 26 (1965) 161-91; A. **Hartmann**, "Silenos und Satyros," *RE* 3A1 (1927) 35-53; Herbert **Holtorf**, *P. Vergilius Maro, Die grösseren Gedichten, I, Einleitung, Bucolica* (Freiburg/Munich 1959); Günther **Jachmann**, "Vergils sechste Ekloge," *Hermes* 58 (1923) 288-304; Friedrich **Klingner**, *Virgil, Bucolica, Georgica, Aeneis* (Zürich/Stuttgart 1967); Eleanor Winsor **Leach**, "The Unity of *Eclogue* 6," *Latomus* 27 (1968) 13-32; Brooks **Otis**, *Virgil* (Oxford 1963); Jacques **Perret**, *Virgile* (Paris 1959); H. J. **Rose**, *The Eclogues of Vergil* = "Sather Classical Lectures" 16 (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1942); E. de **Saint-Denis**, "Le chant de Silène à la lumière d'une découverte récente," *RPh* 37 (1963) 23-40; Otto **Skutsch**, "Zu Vergils Eklogen," *RhM* 99 (1959) 193-201; Bruno **Snell**, "Arcadia: The Discovery of a Spiritual Landscape," in *The Discovery of the Mind*, tr. T. G. Rosenmeyer (Cambridge, Mass. 1953) 281-309; Zeph **Stewart**, "The Song of Silenus," *HSCP* 64 (1959) 179-205; John B. **Van Sickle**, "The Unity of the *Eclogues*: Arcadian Forest, Theocritean Trees," *TAPA* 98 (1967) 491-508; Gordon **Williams**, *Tradition and Originality in Roman Poetry* (Oxford 1968); K. **Witte**, "Vergils sechste Ekloge und die Ciris," *Hermes* 57 (1922) 561-87. I wish to acknowledge a special debt of gratitude to my friend Professor John Van Sickle, whose detailed comments on this paper and scrupulous resistance to simplistic approaches to the *Eclogues* have been both a help and an example. I am especially indebted to his concept of dialectics in the poems, though I have not always interpreted the dialectical movement along lines with which he would agree.

entirely satisfactory. "No one can feel confident of exhausting all the possibilities of this poem or of understanding all that Virgil intended: it is the original creation of a fertile poetic imagination."²

There has been a growing dissatisfaction with attempts to interpret the *Eclogue* in terms of external criteria: the work of Gallus, Vergil's relations to Callimachean poetics or to Alexandrian themes or to contemporary literary genres or works.³ Recent interpreters like Otis, Klingner, and Mrs. Leach have concentrated more fully upon the moral and aesthetic attitudes which the poem implies,⁴ have allowed a more flexible, less mechanical unity to the whole and especially to Silenus' song, and have recognized that the poem may be far more than a "document of Virgilian literary autobiography."⁵ I propose to follow this line of approach, laying perhaps more stress than the above-mentioned scholars on the moral outlook implied in the poem, yet acknowledging that the poem's moral and aesthetic positions—the emphasis upon the creative power of poetry⁶—are inseparable. Not only does my interpretation posit a firm unity for the *Eclogue*, but it seeks to give the proem (1–12) a more integral part in that unity than most previous interpreters have done.

The entire corpus of Vergil's work involves a profound knowledge of and struggle with the reality of evil in the human psyche. Asking why history contains such suffering, the *Aeneid* finds a partial answer, at least, in the passions within man. From the *Eclogues* to the *Aeneid*, outward events and settings have a symbolical correspondence with the inner world of human emotional life; and the inner world is as much the subject of Vergil's poetry as the outer.⁷ Juno, obstructress

² Williams 249; it is worth repeating his quotation (246) from F. Leo, *Hermes* 37 (1902) 22: "Man wagt kaum mehr es laut zu sagen, aber ich glaube immer noch, wenn ich Vergil tractire, dass ich es mit einem Dichter zu thun habe."

³ For discussion and bibliography of the various views and especially those of Franz Skutsch, see Jachmann 288–89, Rose 97 ff., Saint-Denis 20–35, Stewart 181–83.

⁴ Otis 137–39, Leach *passim*, Klingner 106–11. See also Williams 243–49, who takes "strange and tragic love" as "a unifying thread" (248), yet hedges on the question of whether one should look for any unity at all (245).

⁵ The phrase is Elder's (121), though his own approach goes beyond the biographical interpretation in a narrow sense.

⁶ See Büchner 1219 and 1223–24, Elder 111, Klingner 110, Saint-Denis 40, Van Sickle 504.

⁷ *Aen.* 1.92–101 and 198–209 are the familiar examples: see Victor Pöschl, *The Art of Vergil*, tr. Gerda Seligson (Ann Arbor 1962) 48–53 and *passim*.

of a tranquil and stable order, is symbolically identified with these internal disorders and makes use of figures (like Allecto) who are as much symbols of the life of the soul as powerful agents in the external world.⁸ The *Eclogues*, as Bruno Snell has argued,⁹ go even further than the *Aeneid* in using the forms of the external world to create a symbolical landscape of the emotional life, a "spiritual landscape," in Snell's phrase. The emotions dealt with in the *Eclogues*, however, are not always so tender as Snell maintains. The sixth *Eclogue* especially casts into the terms of pastoral something of that correlation between disorder in the universe and evil within man which is so richly developed in the *Aeneid*.

One of Vergil's achievements in the sixth *Eclogue* is precisely the incorporation of these basic moral issues into his poetics and *vice versa*. Through his concern with the scope and character of creativity in pastoral (and by extension in all poetry), he seeks, as Mrs. Leach observes, "to present a satisfactory symbolic discourse encompassing all nature."¹⁰

II

The problem of evil is not foreign to the *Eclogues*. The idea of a *scelus*, a moral impurity infecting the whole Roman people, was much in the air (see G. 1.501-14, Horace, *Epod.* 7 and 16).¹¹ The political disorders of E. 1, the callous soldier of E. 9, death (E. 5), and above all the passion of love, are all tokens of the disturbing realities against and amid which the poet weaves his fragile symbolic refuge of art and love (see E. 10.71, E. 5.85).¹² The fourth *Eclogue* desiderates a

⁸ For the symbolical fusion of inner and outer realms, soul and action, see Pöschl (above, note 7) 17-18; Otis 230-33, 276-77, 322-28; Francis A. Sullivan, S. J., "Virgil and the Mystery of Suffering," *AJP* 90 (1969) 168-71.

⁹ Snell, *passim*, especially 301-2, emphasizing Vergil's union of "poetic reverie, unifying love, and sensitive suffering" (301) and the Vergilian idea of the special sensitivity of the poet who "receives the sympathy of nature . . . because his feelings are more profound than those of other men, and because therefore he suffers more grievously under the cruelties of the world" (302).

¹⁰ Leach 31; Klingner 109 also points out the *Eclogue's* concern with "etwas Allumfassendes."

¹¹ See Otis 139: "The dark *amores* and *metamorphoses* of 6 are . . . symbolic of the moral decline (*scelus*) of the 'iron age' through which Rome had just passed."

¹² Perret 64 speaks of "la fragilité de l'univers arcadien." See also my essay, "*Tamen*

visionary peace which will obliterate "the traces of our sin (*sceleris vestigia nostri*, 13) and free the world of fear (14). Yet even here, amid the bounty of the pacified nature of the *aurea aetas*, some traces of human sinfulness remain (*pauca tamen suberunt priscae vestigia fraudis*, 31).¹³ Thus even in this hopeful mood Vergil qualifies any total optimism about human destiny. *Scelus* recurs in the ninth *Eclogue*, as the shocked pastoral singer recognizes that invaders from the world of war and politics will dispossess and even kill the helpless Arcadian: *heu cadit in quemquam tantum scelus?* (17). War, at the end of the first *Georgic*, reveals the *multae scelerum facies* (G. 1.506).

Like the *Aeneid*, the sixth *Eclogue* correlates internal and external disorder and fixes the source of evil within man. He can, like the poet-shepherd, Tityrus, or like the poet Gallus on Helicon, follow the "orders" (*non iniussa cano*, 9) of Apollo and receive homage from "Apollo's band" (*Phoebe chorus*, 66). Or, like Pasiphae, Scylla, Tereus, he can sink into bestial degradation which finds its external ratification in bestial metamorphosis.

While *Eclogue* 4, like the end of the first *Georgic*, projects the problem of evil upon the history and traditions of man or the Romans generally, *Eclogue* 6, like *Eclogue* 10, examines it within the framework of the private, individual life as writ large in mythical paradigms (Pasiphae, Scylla, Tereus). Yet the sixth *Eclogue* also raises the question of a fundamental flaw in human nature. The myths of lines 41-42 involve a constellation of ideas centering upon human perversity and the loss of a happy state because of human evil:

hinc lapides Pyrrhae iactos, Saturnia regna,
Caucasiasque refert volucris furtumque Promethei.

In the story of Pyrrha and her husband, Deucalion, Jupiter destroys the human race with a flood because he cannot endure man's evil ways. The stones (*lapides . . . iactos*) out of which the new race of men

Cantabitis, Arcades—Exile and Arcadia in *Eclogues* One and Nine," *Arion* 4 (1965) 254-56; Van Sickle 505, note 30.

¹³ Otis 139 stresses "the inverse relation of *Eclogues* 4 and 6," though I think he oversimplifies the relation for the sake of his schematic symmetry: *scelus* by no means dominates *E.* 6; and the Pasiphae episode, though important, should not be exaggerated out of all proportion to the rest of the poem (see below, Section III). We should not forget the presence of Apollo along with the Dionysian Silenus: see Van Sickle 502-5 and below, note 40.

is created are, according to Ovid, a fitting aetiology for the hardness of his lot (*Met.* 1.414-15):

inde genus durum sumus experiensque laborum
et documenta damus qua simus origine nati.

The *Saturnia regna* of 41 are obviously connected with a happy time of innocence and purity lost in the harshness of a later time.¹⁴ Prometheus in 41, though not necessarily connected with an evil inherent in man, is yet a reminder of an anthropomorphic cunning and pride refractory toward the divine order; and his tale is also connected with the bad character of the female half of the species (see Hesiod, *Erga* 59-82; *Theog.* 570-602). Even more important, Prometheus is associated with the development of technology; and technology, as *Eclogue* 4 makes clear (see *E.* 4.18 and generally 18-45), accompanies the loss of the simple innocence of the Golden Age.¹⁵ The three myths of 41-42, then, all form a cluster of ideas focusing on that antinomy between innocence and sinfulness which is part of the Golden-Age theme. Vergil has perhaps deliberately jumbled the chronology of the three episodes in order to make the reader think about the element they have in common: the flawed character of human existence and man's removal from any absolute purity of life or spirit.

These very concise allusions should not be pressed too hard. Yet combined with the amount of space devoted to Pasiphae and with the eschatological frame of the preceding two *Eclogues* (in *E.* 5 see especially 57-64), they indicate a recurrent concern with the moral problem of human nature. By including the myths of Hylas, Phaethon, and Tereus along with those of Pasiphae and Scylla, incidentally, Vergil

¹⁴ For the theme of the *Saturnia regna* see Becker 321, Klingner 107, Leach 19, and Otis 138-39. One should recall in this context *Aen.* 6.791-94, 7.45-49, 8.324-27, and 11.252-54. On the first three of these passages see my remarks in *Arion* 5 (1966) 49-50, and most recently R. J. Rowland, *Latomus* 27 (1968) 832-42 with the bibliography cited in note 2, p. 832.

¹⁵ See Jachmann 293; Aeschyl. *PV* 436-506. Many of the arts of civilization listed in *E.* 4.18-45 belong, of course, in the culture-histories with which Prometheus is associated, notably sailing (*PV* 467-68) and the domestication of animals (*PV* 462-66). Agriculture and the city, though not specifically attributed to Prometheus, usually have a place in such lists; Soph. *Antig.* 335-60; Pl. *Protag.* 322 AD. For possible influence of the Aeschylean Prometheus figure on the *Eclogues* (somewhat straining the evidence) see William Berg, "Daphnis and Prometheus," *TAPA* 96 (1965) 15-20.

goes beyond Hesiod's localization of evil in the woman: Vergil distributes it more equitably between both sexes.¹⁶

The first two poems of the *Eclogue Book* pair war (*E.* 1) and love (*E.* 2) as both manifestations and causes of evil and disorder. War plays a relatively minor part in *Eclogue* 6, but it is not entirely negligible. The Apolline warning against *reges et proelia* (3) may be more than a literary program,¹⁷ if, as we have suggested, the moral and the aesthetic spheres are closely joined. War and love, kept separate in *Eclogues* 1 and 2, are first brought together, though haltingly, in *Eclogue* 6. *Eclogue* 10 will establish a still firmer connection, until, in the *Aeneid*, with its symbolical interplay between the political and psychological, external and internal realms, war and love are coordinate destroyers both of inward and outward order.

For a people destined *paci(s) imponere morem*, war represents the victory of chaos and unreason. *Bella, horrida bella* carry an especially ominous ring in the *Aeneid* (see 6.86, 7.41). Juno, exultant in the triumph of irrationality that she has engineered, bursts open the *geminae belli portae* (7.607–22) and lets in a mood of murderous violence that is not stilled even in the final outcome of the battles (12.945–52). Juno's minister, Allecto, with all her dark associations of the Underworld, is both the inspirer of inward *furor* and the inciter to war (7.324–26):

luctificam Allecto dirarum ab sede dearum
infernisque ciet tenebris, cui tristia bella
iraeque insidiaeque et crimina noxia cordi.

Allecto's sister, Tisiphone, rages amid the futile slaughter and "empty wrath" of the poem's most tragic battle (10.755–61); but she also punishes the guilty souls in Tartarus' *durissima regna* (6.555, 571–72). In the fourth *Eclogue* the disappearance of war accompanies a confidence in the regeneration of human nature, in man's capacity for order and

¹⁶ See Witte 571–72, who compares Theocr. *Id.* 13.64–71 and *E.* 6.47 and 52.

¹⁷ Skutsch 193; Wendell Clausen, "Callimachus and Latin Poetry," *GRBS* 5 (1964) 193–95. See the valuable reservations of Leach 26–27, with notes 1 and 3, p. 26. Clausen, however, also observes that Vergil's refusal to write about war "was not merely esthetic, it was also (as the reminiscence of the first *Eclogue* intimates) moral" (194).

happiness. Universal peace is a distinguishing trait of the new moral order and a sign of the conquest of evil. The *puer* will reign over a world made peaceful by the virtues of his father (17).

The sixth *Eclogue*, in introducing war, sets it against two related opposites: the pastoral world and pastoral-poetic *amor*. *Tristia bella* in line 7 may later become something of a cliché, but here it still has considerable force. *Tristis* itself is a strong word in the *Eclogues*.¹⁸ It is used again in connection with the horrors of war in *E.* 9.5: *nunc victi, tristes, quoniam fors omnia versat*.

Vergil places these *tristia bella* immediately against a line in which the language and careful word-order stress the delicacy, fragility, and contemplative peace of his poetic Arcadia (8):

agrestem tenui meditabor harundine Musam.

The echo of the opening lines of the collection (*E.* 1.1-2) suggests that Vergil is thinking of the *Eclogue Book* and his pastoral world as a whole. It also reminds us of the threats to Arcadian peace presented in that initial poem: *tu . . . silvestrem tenui musam meditaris avena: nos patriae finis et dulcia linquimus arva*. Yet in *E.* 6 Arcady is to win out over war. The Tityrus who in *E.* 1 escaped being exiled from Arcadia by making an unbucolic visit to the *urbs*, is here chosen to reject warlike themes. No urban *iuvenis* (*E.* 1.42), but Apollo himself will keep him within the realm of his *pinguis ovis*.

War and Arcadia, epic and pastoral, stand against one another in terms of content as well as style. Having framed their antithetical relation in lines 1-8, Vergil goes on to widen that antithesis by introducing poetic *amor*. If the reader, "caught by love" (*captus amore*), reads this poem, then "our tamarisks and every grove, Varus, will sing of you" (9-11). The *amor* of poetry serves both to create another opposition to war and to establish an antithesis with a different kind of *amor* later in the poem. Yet this *amor*, though it excludes the violence of war, does not necessarily exclude totally the violence of erotic passion (cf. Corydon in *E.* 2 and Gallus in *E.* 10). It thus hints at a dialectical union of the two poles of art which is to be explored more deeply in the interplay between Silenus and Apollo (see 13-30, 82-83, and below, sections III and V).

¹⁸ In addition to *E.* 9.5 see *E.* 2.14 (*irae*), *E.* 3.80 (*lupus*), *E.* 10.31 (the suffering Gallus).

Poetry turns the tables on war in two ways. First, the language of *captus amore* uses a military metaphor (*captus*) for a most unmartial experience.¹⁹ Second, pastoral incorporates the warrior. The pastoral world threatened by the warrior in *E. 1* can now enclose the warrior Varus, metaphorically, amid its groves and make his name one of those songful echoes which the exiled Meliboeus of the first *Eclogue* finds such pain in leaving (*E. 1.5*).

At the same time Vergil recognizes that love and desire do not always lead to peaceful themes. Despite Tityrus' own Apolline call to the *deductum carmen*, there will be more than enough (*super*) of others who "desire" (*cupiant*) to sing of war (6-7). Presumably the reader who is *captus amore* in Vergil's sense will not feel such "desires." Here too the poem intimates the divergent paths which love and desire may take.

Deepening and sharpening the opposition between pastoral and epic, Arcadia and Varus, enters the figure of Silenus (13). Mythical, grotesque, fantastic, he stands as far as possible from the flesh-and-blood, responsible Varus.²⁰ Not only is he an Alexandrian symbol of poetry, as O. Skutsch has pointed out;²¹ he is also a drunken, amorous reveler, a sensualist and a follower of Dionysus.²² As part of this opposition, the line which introduces him (13),

pergite, Pierides. Chromis et Mnasyllus in antro
Silenum . . . videre,

belongs fully to poetry (*Pierides*) and to bucolic levity. As a nature-

¹⁹ Elder 112 calls attention to *amor* in a similar context in Lucret. 1.924-25, *amorem / Musarum quo nunc instinctus*. Cf. also G. 2.476 and 3.291-92. If Vergil had this passage in mind, the change from *instinctus* to *captus* is a typically Vergilian toning down of Lucretian violence. Snell 302 stresses the peculiarly Vergilian (and un-Callimachean) emotionality implied in the phrase: "This sympathetic affection is the mark of the poet, and the poet seeks to transmit his compassion to his reader." Van Sickle 505 notes the possible ambiguity of the *amor* of *E. 6.10*. In the light of the attitude toward war through the *Eclogues* one may wonder if *tristia condere bella* does not play on the double sense of *condere*, viz. "compose" and "put away": cf. *E. 9.52* and Holtorf *ad loc.*

²⁰ See Büchner 1220: "Übermutiger Scherz . . . und laszive Andeutung . . . spielen in diesem Stück, das aus dem Vollen schöpft, wie sonst nirgends in den Eklogen eine Rolle."

²¹ Skutsch 194.

²² For Silenus' connections with Dionysus see Hartmann 39 and 43; James A. Notoopoulos, "Silenus the Scientist," *CJ* 62 (1966-67) 308-9.

god, Silenus' sphere is totally removed from the urban atmosphere where war and politics have their seat. His audience, Chromis, Mnasyllus, and Aegle, are doubly removed from Roman political realities by their associations with a mythicized nature and by their suggestive Greek names.²³

If the ambiguous possibilities of love and poetry are hinted at in lines 6–10, they are fully developed in Silenus. He is an embodiment of the opposites which Vergilian poetry seeks to span.²⁴ Hence his song will embrace that array of diverse myths which has puzzled interpreters. Here too we should not try to reduce to a bare schematic simplicity what Vergil intended to stand as deliberate multiplicity.

Silenus is central to the poem's fusion of the aesthetic and moral realms. He is a poet whose song moves all nature in rhythmic harmony (27–28). Yet he is also a mythical figure who brings into focus the problematical quality of human nature. He is, according to tradition, part animal himself; yet he is possessed of supernatural powers and mysterious wisdom about life and death.²⁵ Pindar makes of him a sort of impassioned dancer.²⁶ His veins are full of Dionysiac spirit, in more than one sense (cf. *Iaccho*, 15; *gravis attrita . . . cantharus ansa*, 17).²⁷ Yet at the end his song is identified with that of Dionysus' opposite, Apollo (82–84).²⁸ He has obvious affinities with the natural world and its earthy appetites: witness his offer to Aegle (26) and his

²³ Klingner 106 observes the mythical and unreal quality of the setting. On the effect of such names in the *Eclogues* see also Snell 306.

²⁴ See my essay, "Vergil's *Caelatum Opus*: An Interpretation of the Third *Eclogue*," *AJP* 88 (1967) 300–4, 307–8.

²⁵ E.g. Cic. *Tusc. Disp.* 1.48.114; [Plut.] *Cons. ad Apoll.* 27 (115B). For the complexity of Silenus see Hartmann 40 ff., esp. 43: "Weit entfernt von der rohen und lächerlichen Figur, die man später ihn gern machen lässt, ist er ein sehr ernst genommener Gott, dem tiefste Weisheit und Erfahrung eignet, der Musik und Tanz liebt" (43). Also Servius on *E.* 6.13 and Conington's introductory note; Klingner 111, Saint-Denis 37–39, Stewart 197, Holtorf on *E.* 6.14 (p. 190), and Notopoulos (above, note 22) 308–9. The name of Tityrus also has something in common with satyrs, as appears in the lexicographical equation, *satyroi-tityroi-tragoi*: see Hartmann 52.

²⁶ Pindar, frag. 156 Snell³ = 142 Bowra (Pausan. 3.25.2) ὁ ζαμενῆς δ' ὁ χοροῦτύπος. See also Lucret. 4.580–89.

²⁷ Servius on line 17 notes *attrita ansa, frequenti scilicet potu*. See also the Berne scholia *ad loc.*

²⁸ It is now generally agreed that 82–84 mark the identification of Silenus' song with Apollo's, not another item in Silenus' song as F. Skutsch and Leo had held: see Witte 572 and Stewart 196.

effect on the Fauns and wild beasts (27). Yet the subject of his first song is philosophical (31-40); and serious themes of both philosophical and historical import continue in the stories of Pyrrha, the *Saturnia regna*, and Prometheus (41-42), with their implications of didactic and theological poetry.²⁹

The scene between Silenus and his captors forms a little drama illustrating his special relation to the energies of nature and his easy participation in its mythical life of rustic demigods. Chromis and Mnasyllus, as Servius (followed by Heyne) suggests, are Fauns or satyrs;³⁰ and hence they are plausible acquaintances of the Naiad, Aegle. *Pueri* (14) and *saepe* (19) emphasize the familiar terms on which they and Silenus stand. Aegle, "the shining one," is, as her name might suggest, "the most beautiful of the Naiads" (21). The young Fauns would bind, though hesitantly (*timidis*, 20), this mysterious figure; but they are warned off by the somewhat ominous reminder of his strange power: *satis est potuisse videri* (24): "It is enough to have seemed able (to bind me)."³¹ The allusion to Silenus' sensual appetite in 26 clearly marks him as one of the gay crew of nature-spirits, figures close to the earth and fully endowed with spontaneous animal

²⁹ See Stewart 186-88.

³⁰ Most modern scholars seem to assume that Chromis and Mnasyllus are human shepherds. Yet their long-continued familiarity (cf. *saepe*, 18) with Silenus, their easy association with a Naiad, the liberties they take with Silenus himself tell against this view. It is true that in Theopompus' *Thaumasia* it is shepherds who capture Silenus (cf. Servius on line 13 and 26 and Aelian, *VH* 3.18). But that tale is only a loose parallel to Vergil's, and Vergil's freedom in transforming his originals is well known. The presence of sheep in 85 is also inconclusive. Mortals ran a risk from *seeing* figures like Silenus, and with the present question is therefore connected the interpretation of line 24, for which see the next note. For fuller discussion see my forthcoming paper, "Two Fauns and a Naiad? (Virgil, *Ecl.* VI, 13-26)," *AJP* 92 (1971).

³¹ The two possibilities are given by Servius *ad loc.*: (1) "It is enough for me to have been able to be seen," and (2) "It is enough for you to have seemed able (to bind me)." Servius also notes that (1) implies that the attackers must be men to whom Silenus would usually be invisible. This interpretation involves a contradiction (of which Servius seems unaware) with his previous identification (on 13 and 14) of the *pueri* as Satyrs. Conington arrives at no solution, though he points to *videre* in 14 as favoring (1). This point, however, is not necessarily valid, for the specialness of "seeing" Silenus would seem to contradict the frequent association between Silenus and his attackers. Further, if the emphasis in 14 and 24 were on seeing, one would expect the active voice in 24. *Potuisse* could also be taken absolutely (as in *Aen.* 5.231), but this would not substantially change the meaning of (2).

energies. Yet he is not merely a participant in nature's life. He also stands apart from nature and exerts a creative power over it, as the next lines (27-28) show. We have here a dichotomy particularly suggestive for the nature of poetry, but relevant equally to the nature of man.

Silenus gives an amusing twist to the rejection of *tristia bella* in the proem. Martial language figures in the attack upon him: *adgressi* (18), the chains (*vincula*), and the "bloody" (*sanguineis*, 22) mulberries with which the *pueri* paint his face. But naturally these warlike gestures are all play. Play is the appropriate way to approach such a figure, who is himself playful (*luserat*, 17). Playfulness of a sort also characterizes the Apolline *deductum carmen* of pastoral (*ludere versu*, 1). The language used of Silenus in 18-19 and 22 dramatically heightens the rejection of Varus' *tristia bella*: the attack on Silenus transforms war into its opposite, a bit of light horseplay appropriate to Arcady and its mythical characters. *Grandia* are stood on their heads. Yet there is an underlying seriousness, "Ernst im Spiel," as Klingner remarks of the entire Silenus-scene.³² By neutralizing war (and the language of war, line 3) through play, poetry offers a restorative perspective in which it can survive the threats posed to it by the unplayful reality which appears in *Eclogues* 1 and 9.

Silenus will sing at length of the terrible passion of Pasiphae (45-60). Yet in his own person he handles love with a healthful frolicsomeness and an open naturalness far from any morbidity (cf. 26).³³ Like Vergil himself in the proem, he answers war (or mock-war) with song and love. The balanced phrasing of lines 25-26 presents song and love as equal, coordinate elements: *carmina vobis, / huic aliud mercedis erit*. Taken together, Silenus' two gifts stand in a balance of appetite and intellect, sense and spirit, which is, once again, both aesthetic and moral in its implications: it applies both to poetry and to the question of human nature.

The binding of Silenus and the extortion of a song, therefore, are on the one hand poetry's attempt to encompass that mysterious, magical realm where Silenus dwells, to fix its forms in song, to "capture" the essence of nature's movements, and ultimately to relate

³² Klingner 111.

³³ In Pindar, frag. 156 (above, note 26), he is "the Naiad's husband" (*ἀκοίρας*).

nature's vitality to art's. On the other hand, it is an attempt to confront and grasp intuitively the duality of human nature and seize through imagination and myth the basic forms of experience.³⁴ Silenus may be compared with Proteus in the fourth *Georgic*, also a deity to be bound, also located between man and nature and encompassing all experience (G. 4.387-414).³⁵

As in the case of Proteus, approaching Silenus has its dangers: *solvite me pueri; satis est potuisse videri* (24): Behind the laughing face (23) lies the demonic otherness of nature, a realm to which men dare not abandon themselves fully. But Silenus, through his song, belongs both to humanity and to nature. He is, in a sense, the subject of his song as well as the singer, or, in Yeats' terms, both "the dancer" and "the dance."

Like his counterpart, Proteus, Silenus points to the elusiveness of the creative energies in ourselves, the Dionysiac in the midst of the Apollonian (cf. 82-84)—imagination, playful spontaneity, love—and to the shifting, iridescent quality in the experiences in which these energies are present. To touch these Dionysian energies and the sources in ourselves from which they spring, Vergil has, of necessity, recourse to a symbol: the mythical magic of a charmed *locus* removed from time and space (the only indications are *in antro* and *hesterno*), where Satyrs, Fauns, and Naiads drink wine, play, sing, make love.³⁶ This concern with the shifting quality of our experience and the duality in our nature upon which it is in part founded is perhaps another reason for the poem's emphasis upon metamorphosis. Silenus' realm, no more than Silenus himself, is not easily held firm; its essence is a kaleidoscopic intensity.

Not only human experience, but the natural world envisaged by the poem is full of movement and instability. The first part of Silenus' song (31-40) stresses the changes of state in nature. The soft becomes hard, the liquid elements become firm (33-36), and nothingness (cf. *magnum per inane*, 31) gives way to the solid matter of the

³⁴ For a different interpretation of the binding-motif see Leach 24-25.

³⁵ See Klingner 106.

³⁶ One might compare Hermann Hesse's use of the Dionysian figure of Pablo (a mysterious jazz-player) and his "magisches Theater" ("Eintritt nur für Verrückte, kostet den Verstand") to explore (far more morbidly) this area of experience in *Der Steppenwolf*.

present world. The effect of Silenus' singing is to change the clear, fixed relation between the animate and inanimate in favor of more fluid relationships: he makes the "stiff (*rigidas*) oaks move their tops" (28). He knows how things find their forms (*et rerum paulatim sumere formas*, 36). This mastery of the *rerum formas* applies to the elements of experience as well as to the elements of the physical world. Singing of the creation of the natural world both illustrates poetry creating a world and is a symbol of the encompassing power of poetic creativity. Poetry, like cosmogonic processes, gives form to reality. Silenus, standing between human and animal impulses, a playful dealer in love and war as well as in song, a singer both of nature and of myth, philosophy and love, is the archetype of the poet reaching out to give shape to all of reality. His active power over nature is continued in the active verbs which describe his song (*solatur*, 46; *erigit*, 63; and see note 47, below). Yet his art does not just order nature: it also invites nature to participation and shared joyous fusion (27-30).

The poem provides an analogue to the binding of Silenus which puts that action into perspective, namely the attempt of Pasiphae's Nymphs to close in the bull (55-56):

claudite, Nymphae,
Dictaeae Nymphae, nemorum iam claudite saltus.³⁷

In the bull, symbol of nature's animal energies from Minoan times on, Pasiphae seeks to possess something of that power with which Silenus is in touch. The Dictaeon Nymphs on whom she calls are kindred to Silenus' Fauns and Naiads. But, of course, she fails. Passion *per se* cannot make up for the spontaneous animal life of these nature spirits, nor does it give her a controlling intellectual order through which she could hold such energies within the frame of human life.³⁸ Instead her passion distorts her grasp on reality, on the relation between man and nature. Her Dictaeon Nymphs thus become a part of her delusion rather than an indication of reconciling man and nature. She is too

³⁷ For the attribution of the lines to Pasiphae see Servius *ad loc.* On the scene see Leach 20-21.

³⁸ It is interesting that where Pasiphae returns in the *Aeneid* there is a not dissimilar contrast between the creative, encompassing order of the artist, his pity, and his mastery of darkness and the maze on the one hand (*Aen.* 6.28-30), and the queen's bestial *crudelis amor*, the *Veneris monumenta nefandae* (*Aen.* 6.23-26) on the other.

willing to abandon the human form. In this, she stands at the opposite extreme from the daughters of Proetus with whom she is unfavorably compared (48–51), for in one version of their myth they become mad because of their resistance to Dionysian rites.³⁹

Silenus in a sense stands between Pasiphae and Apollo, comprehending both in his many-faceted nature. Thus his song is in touch with the earthiness of Fauns, wild beasts, trees; yet he is compared to Apollo and Orpheus (29–30). His *vincula* and the laughter at the *dolum* of his captors (23) contrast with the serious bondage and *furtum* of Prometheus (42), as his playful sexual proclivities are the lighter side of what emerges later in Pasiphae, Scylla, Tereus. Everything about him, as we first see him, is formless, slack, dissipated (14–17, where note *delapsa* and *pendebat*); yet his concern is with a creative ordering of experience. The contrast between his outward appearance and his power of song is itself an attempt to confront the Dionysian–Apollonian duality of his nature and to resolve what a recent critic has called “the pure dialectics of passion and form.”⁴⁰ The rhythmic play (*in numerum ludere*) to which he moves the Fauns and beasts (27–28) expresses just this transcendence of the dichotomy between passion and form, animal energies and spirit. *Ludere* is a word which applies both to poetry and love.⁴¹ Its poetic meaning occurs in the first line of the *Eclogue*, and both meanings are perhaps present in the allusive description of Silenus’ past relation with his rustic attackers: *nam saepe senex spe carminis ambo luserat* (18–19). Such a being can elicit spirit from matter (27–28), but also knows of the violence in nature’s processes (cf. *discludere*, 35; *stupeant*, 37). Communicative (albeit reluctantly, 13–26) of Apolline order, he is also a Dionysian participant in those experiences which efface the barriers between man and nature: wine (15–17) and love (26).

Later in the *Eclogue* a mortal poet is also given the power to move

³⁹ Apollodorus 2.2.2; but this version of the myth has been doubted: see G. Radke, “Proitides,” *RE* 23.1 (1957) 118–19, 123.

⁴⁰ Van Sickle 504, who also goes on to assert (505) that *E.* 6 is “the most Dionysian” of the *Eclogues*. From another point of view (cf. the proem and Gallus’ “Dichterweihe”) it is also the most Apollonian: this too is part of the “dialectic.” For the importance of Apollo in the poem see Becker 317–18, Elder 115–16, Williams 249.

⁴¹ For *ludere* see Leach 27 with note 1. For its combination of erotic and literary meaning cf. Catull. 2.2, 2.9 and 50.2, 50.5. Poem 50 probably exploits the double sense.

nature. Linus presents Hesiod's reed-pipe to Gallus with the explanation that Hesiod too could "by singing lead the stiff ash trees down the mountains": *cantando rigidas deducere montibus ornos* (71). *Rigidas* . . . *ornos* is a verbal and metrical echo of the *rigidas* . . . *quercus* of line 28. Yet there is a subtle difference. There is no mention here of the playing (*ludere*) of Fauns and wild beasts (27-28). *Deducere* too implies an element of direction and constraint absent from the simple *motare cacumina* of 28. Indeed *deducere* can even have the connotation of leading the trees *away* or *down from* their mountains, removing them from their natural setting.⁴² The Dionysian poet thus seems able to allow nature a greater measure of its inherent spontaneity, a greater freedom on its own terms, than the purely Apolline band on stately Helicon.

III

Love is an important motif in the *Eclogue*, extending from the proem (10) through the meeting with Silenus (26) to the song he sings and finally by implication to Apollo at the end (82-83). In love, as in Silenus himself, Vergil reveals contrasting possibilities and thus poses from a different point of view that complexity of experience which the poem seeks to confront.

The two extremes are the poetic *amor* of line 10 and the passion of Pasiphae (45-60). Pasiphae's tale receives both more space and a more dramatic coloring than any other single episode (e.g. the second-person address of 47, 52, 55-60).⁴³ This emphasis confers a special importance upon her. She is the fullest embodiment of the problematical side of human nature. Although Vergil's generalizing diction and the lyrical call to the Nymphs enable him to keep the tale within the distanced, imaginary frame of Silenus' song, her desire for union with the bull is the poem's most disturbing instance of the potential bestiality in man.

The word *amor* occurs only in line 10 and line 46. Art and animal

⁴² Holtorf *ad loc.* (p. 197), however, explains *deducere* as leading "zum Tanz nach dem Takt des Flötenspiels," but offers no evidence. For a different interpretation see Leach 28-29.

⁴³ See Stewart 179, 189-90.

passion, both forms of *amor*, are thus made to contrast. The one subordinates nature to human imagination, filling the groves with song; the other leads the human imagination to run riot in a lustful and deranged union with nature. Silenus unites the best of both realms. He joins song and love (25–26); and his healthy, playful love (cf. also *luserat*, 19) keeps an exquisite balance between the two extremes.

Amor is usually a negative force in the *Eclogues*.⁴⁴ In *Eclogue* 6, however, though the negative side preponderates, Vergil also lets us glimpse other possibilities, obviously in the *amor* of line 10, but also within the myths of Silenus' song.

The story of Hylas (43–44) alludes to a passion which balances Pasiphae's,⁴⁵ though neither Theocritus nor Vergil would regard the homosexual attachment, unlike Pasiphae's bestiality, as "unnatural." But through its connection with the Argonauts' expedition, it is also connected with the positive side of close male companionship, wherein, of course, erotic ties may play a part. If Vergil has intensified the emotional and lyrical side of the tale in using the repeated, melodious *Hyla, Hyla*, instead of Theocritus' more formal anaphora, *τρὶς μὲν Ὑλαν αὔσεν, . . . / τρὶς δ' ἄρ' ὁ παῖς ὑπάκουσεν . . .* (*Idyll* 13.59–60), he has also laid greater stress on the human community by having the cry come from the sailors (*nautae*, 43). In Theocritus it is Heracles, alone in the woods, who shouts (13.58); and there is in fact a sharp and somewhat hostile division between the rest of the expedition and Heracles (cf. 13.69–75). The *nautae* of 43–44 are also to be connected with another group of marine adventurers, the *timidi nautae*, victims of Scylla, with whom the singer commiserates in 77. In both cases we have a hint of the human bonds of fear and cooperation—not just erotic love—which may exist among men involved in a common enterprise and subject to the dangers of supernatural forces. In the Hylas episode, however, this humane companionship is left unfulfilled and helpless as the sailors' cries echo along the empty shore.⁴⁶ There is a strong contrast with the controlled and friendly aspect of nature which appears in the songful echoes of pastoral woods in lines 10–11 and 84.

⁴⁴ E.g. (in addition to *E.* 10) *E.* 2.68, 3.101, 8.18 and 47.

⁴⁵ See Witte, cited above, note 16.

⁴⁶ See Leach 20.

The sisters of Phaethon are another partial corrective to Pasiphae's subhuman passion. They exemplify a sisterly rather than an erotic love, a strength of affection which makes them worthy of pity rather than reproach. Hence their love unites them with nature in a more positive way than Pasiphae's. The expression *'solo proceras erigit alnos* (63) suggests life and creation.⁴⁷ There is even a sad, vague beauty in their metamorphosis: not only is the bark "bitter," but it is "the moss of bitter bark," *musco amarae corticis*. This expression is a lovely synecdoche. *Musco* is chosen not only for the sound and the association with water (cf. *muscosi fontes*, *E.* 7.45), but also for the suggestiveness of the genitival construction which appears to make the bark less real, stranger, even gentler. One is again reminded of that shifting between different tactile senses in 31-40. The metamorphosis is very different from the shocking transformation which Pasiphae desires, and it has a beauty to which Vergil, like Euripides before him (*Hipp.* 737-40), was highly sensitive, as his fine lines in the *Aeneid* show (10.189-90). Though the girls are surrounded by "bitter" bark, that "bitterness" also has associations with poetic creation and enduring life: the shepherd Linus, "of divine song," is crowned with "bitter parsley" only six lines later (68, where *amarus* also stands emphatically at the end of the verse).⁴⁸

After the account of Gallus on Helicon, Silenus returns to the passionate and disastrous type of love in the Scylla and Tereus narratives (74-81). But the last tale of love to which the poem alludes is the story of Hyacinthus in 82-84:

omnia quae Phoebus quondam meditante beatus
audiit Eurotas iussitque ediscere lauros,
ille canit (pulsae referunt ad sidera valles) . . .

Here Apollo himself is the lover, and his love for a mortal leads to a song which once more fruitfully bridges the gap between man and

⁴⁷ Stewart 191-92 tries (implausibly) to find a connection with "the activity created uniquely by the dramatist" (192). To Leach 22, "*Erigit*, a word usually associated with some form of mental stimulation or renewal, even with cheering and consolation, seems ironic in this context." I agree about the "renewal" or "cheering," but not about the irony.

⁴⁸ On the repetition see Leach 22. For the suggestive connotations of *amarus* see *E.* 1.77, 3.110, 7.41 and Segal (above, note 24) 306. Perhaps *Doris amara* in *E.* 10.5 anticipates the tone of sadness and defeat in that poem.

nature and repeats nature's response to Silenus in 27-28. Here too, as in line 10, love and poetry are joined to create an order which overlaps the dualities (man-nature, sense-spirit) of our world.⁴⁹ The fusion of Silenus' song with Apollo's in 82-84 is the ultimate statement of confidence in the power of art to unify experience. This confidence is affirmed by the active participation of nature: the valleys carry this plaint of death-tainted love to the remote stars. Celestial rhythms end the poem, but all the gods (not just Apollo) have been involved: *invito processit Vesper Olympo* (86).

In another way too poetry bridges dualities here at the end, for the ending joins the lofty personifications, Vesper and Olympus, with the humble pastoral task of driving home and tallying the sheep (85). *Numerumque referre* (85) recalls the songful echo, *referunt*, in the previous line (84), and also the *numerus* (= "rhythm") with which the Fauns and beasts danced to Silenus' song in 27. Through these verbal parallels the prosaic terms of pastoral life are made to overlap with the wide-reaching metaphors of echoing nature and divine singers. Rather unexpectedly, the "sheep-pasturing" and the "slight song" of line 5 attain the full measure of dignity which the opening lines claimed for them. Even more, the earthy side of pastoral life seen in 5 and 85-86 has been transfigured through the Silenus episode of 13-30 and the scenes of 64-73 and 82-84. The shepherd's humble pastoral realm in the proem has been touched by the power of mythical singers and encounters with hallowed poets on sacred mountains. The rustic Muse whom the poet meditates in 8 gains both in dignity and solidity as we hear of Gallus being ushered into the Muses' presence (cf. 65, 69). As the poem goes on, the groves and tamarisks of lines 10-11 become increasingly a magical realm of Fauns, Naiads, and mountain Nymphs.

IV

Giving form to the formless, reconciling passion and order involve not only poetry and love, but also nature. Throughout the sixth *Eclogue* it is the natural world which stands in antithesis to man as the substance and the symbol of recalcitrant matter. The recurrent

⁴⁹ For a fuller discussion of the ending see below, Section v.

exclamations of compassion and the adjectives expressing or implying moral evaluation in Silenus' song define the distinctively human qualities of feeling and judging and thereby set into sharper relief the differences between man and nature. We may list here *fortunatam*, *a virgo infelix*, and *tam turpis* of Pasiphae (45, 47, 49), the richly connotative *amarae* of 62, the exclamatory *a timidos nautas* in 77, *infelix* again of Philomela in 81, and *beatus* in 82.

Vergil is careful to keep before us the concreteness and the multiplicity of the natural world. He attains this effect through the presentation of the power of the elements and the diversity of earth, sea, sun, forests in 31-39, through the sounds and suggestive phrasing of some of his descriptions of natural phenomena, like *summotis nubibus imbres* in 38 or *musco . . . amarae corticis* in 62-63, or the carefully juxtaposed adjectives of 53-54. He gives scrupulous attention to different kinds of trees, all enumerated in concrete detail (see 10, 22, 28, 54, 63, 71, 83).⁵⁰ Although nature, like almost everything else in the poem, becomes symbolical of the ramifying struggle between passion and order, Vergil also allows it to stand in its own right as the physical setting of our experiences.

He skilfully uses the "pathetic fallacy" to break through the reductive dichotomizing of man and nature. The trees move in response to song (27, 71), the mountains feel joy and wonder (*gaudet, miratur*, 29-30),⁵¹ the river Eurotas is "happy" as it hears Apollo's song (82) and teaches the laurels (83). Yet the artificiality and conventionality of the device keep us aware that this deliberate humanization of nature is only a metaphor, a way of expressing the power of art. Vergil retains the complexity and the truth of our relation to the world in two ways. First, he keeps in the background the ungentled violence of nature which cannot be absorbed into the pathetic fallacy: the deserted shore of Hylas, Pasiphae's bull, Scylla's dangerous sea. Second, by his descriptions of the actual processes of nature (31-40) and the concrete particularity of its phenomena, he allows nature to resist total symbolification and enables it to keep its autonomy and its mystery.⁵²

⁵⁰ See Elder 118. Cf. also the contest of trees in *E.* 7.61-68.

⁵¹ See *E.* 8.3, where the lynxes are *stupefactae* at the shepherds' song.

⁵² For a similar point on the bees of *G.* 4 see R. D. Williams, "Virgil," *G & R, New Surveys in the Classics* 1 (1967) 22.

Like Silenus and *amor*, nature is also a focal point of fundamental antinomies. It has both negative and positive aspects. The forests (*silvae*) of line 2 form a place of Arcadian peace where the Muse does not blush to dwell. Related to this image of nature, which is really a metaphor for pastoral poetry and the atmosphere it both needs and creates, are the *agrestis Musa* of line 8 and the tamarisks (significantly "*our*" tamarisks) and the echoing grove of lines 10–11.

Yet forests can also reflect the elemental power of nature's processes and a realm less immediately amenable to the gentle Muse. The earth, when it "gapes in amaze" at the new sunlight (37), and the forests, when they "first begin to rise forth" (39), show a vital potency in nature which contrasts with the gentler landscape, the tamarisks and groves of 10–11 and the *deductum carmen* to which it belongs. So we have the *agrestis Musa* of 8 and the Grynean grove of Apolline song (73–74), yet also the *agri* which the maddened daughters of Proetus fill with their lowing (48) and the grove of Pasiphae's bull (55–56). The shore which resounds to Hylas' cry (43–44), the ominous "deep sea" (76) where Scylla preys on "frightened sailors" (contrast Mopsus' joy in the power of the sea in the preceding *Eclogue*, 5.82–84),⁵³ the "deserted places" traversed by the transformed Philomela (80), are all reminders of nature's vast and threatening power. The beginning of Silenus' song describes a *mundus* which is *tener* (34), "new" or "fresh." The adjective also connotes the delicacy and gentle beauty of the pastoral landscape where the down of apples, myrtle, rushes, grass, thickets, and trees may be *tener* (*E.* 2.51, 7.6, 7.12, 8.15, 10.7, 10.53). But this *tener mundus* comes into being with a force that awakens overpowering wonder (cf. *stupeant*, 37).

These glimpses of a non-pastoral nature are nevertheless incorporated into a pastoral song. Thus the modest self-limitation and self-deprecation in the proem prove to be a bit of playful, ironic understatement. Vergil here follows an amusing device common in the *recusatio* (e.g. Horace, *C.* 1.6). His *agrestis Musa* shows herself able, after all, to reach beyond her *deductum carmen* with its groves and tamarisks. Indeed not only the didactic verses of 31–40, but the

⁵³ Cf. also the quiet beauty of the calm sea (if that is the meaning of *aequor*) in *E.* 9.57–58, though there too the dangerous violence of sea is in the background: *insani feriant sine litora fluctus* (43).

entire *Eclogue* anticipates the *Georgics* in commanding a broad range of natural phenomena and appreciating nature's violence beside her pastoral charm.

In Silenus' song, as elsewhere in Latin poetry, contact with nature's mysterious power often takes the form of wandering.⁵⁴ Wandering in the mountains can be a sign of disorder, passion, potential violence.⁵⁵ The *rara animalia* wandering through *ignaros montis* in 40 belong to a world still in the process of being created and hence in some sense imperfect. It is "in the mountains" that the luckless Pasiphae "wanders" (52), while her bull's wandering tracks (*errabunda vestigia*) are to be found in the meadows (55-58). On the other hand, Gallus, "wandering to the streams of Permessus" (64), is led to the Muses' mountain, symbolical center of Apolline order and beauty. Why should the poet too be a "wanderer"? Perhaps Vergil means to suggest that poetry is akin to erotic passion in confronting (but overcoming) the threat of disorder and formlessness. Inspired poetry too, as the figure of Silenus implies, is in touch with nature's vital energies and animal force, but ultimately, unlike Pasiphae, contains the potential for bending them to its will (see 27-28, 71). Against the nameless mountains of the *rara animalia* (40) and Pasiphae (52) stand the mythical mountains connected with Orpheus, Apollo, the Muses: Parnassus, Rhodope, Ismarus in 29-30; the "Aonian mountains" (Helicon) in 65.

Though nature yields to the Apolline order of poetic form (27-28, 71, 82-84), it also has its own lessons to teach. It is not simply the utter negation of order. In this respect it shares the complexity of its poet, Silenus. The human Pasiphae is inflamed by a shameful and unnatural passion, while the bull's quiescence on the "pale grass" (53-54) stands almost as nature's reproach to her wild search (52). The bull is not even *captus amore* (10), but *herba captus viridi* (59). The effect of this animal's ruminatory peace is analogous to the contrast between the regular work on the land and Corydon's *dementia* at the

⁵⁴ See Lucret. 1.926; Verg. G. 3.291-93. For the theme of wandering generally in E. 6 see Elder 118-19, Leach 28-29.

⁵⁵ Cf. E. 8.41, *me malus abstulit error*. The story of Hylas too suggests wandering: cf. Theocr. *Id.* 13.66-71. Note too the dangerous wandering in remote places in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*: 1.479, 3.25, 3.175, 3.370, 4.292-95.

end of the second *Eclogue* (67–72), a passage which, in fact, Vergil has in mind here (*quae te dementia cepit?* *E.* 2.69 and *E.* 6.47).⁵⁶ Nature's peace here reads a lesson to human passion, as poetic *amor* and the pastoral echoes do to man's delight in war and warlike poetry in the poem (6–11).

From Homer and Hesiod on, a bounteous and harmonious order of nature is a symbol and a proof of a larger moral order.⁵⁷ This symbolical significance of nature still has validity for Vergil. At a time when the civil wars—the symptom and expression of moral disorder—have interrupted work on the land, order, peace, and the regular cultivation of nature's goods are easily felt to go together. *E.* 4.18–45 makes just this correlation between moral, political, and natural order. To that set of analogies *Eclogue* 6 adds order brought through art, while Silenus' cosmogonic song (31–40) and Pasiphae's love expand and intensify the themes of natural and moral order to include nature's remoter processes and man's inner being.

V

It is significant that it should be Vesper, the personification of one of nature's rhythms, that ends the poem. He commanded (*iussit*, 86) the bringing in of the sheep and then "strode forth" (*processit*), though the gods were still held by the song: *invito processit Vesper Olympo* (86). *Processit*, like the "rising up" (*surgere*, 39) of the primal forests, is a reminder of nature's autonomous energies. The Olympians, the gods of light and the day, must give way, and a new power enters to lead in the realm of darkness which does not belong to them. Earlier Apollo had given his commands to the poet (*non iniussa cano*, 9), and the poet has commanded nature (27–28, 70–71). Now it is nature which commands man.

The poet stands in both an active and a passive relation to the world. He may move trees and animals to his rhythms; yet, as the double nature of Silenus and Gallus' wandering imply, he may also participate in her animal energies. The end of *Eclogue* 6, like the natural frame

⁵⁶ See Büchner 1221, Galinsky 178.

⁵⁷ Homer, *Od.* 19.109–14; Hesiod, *Erga* 225–47.

at the end of *Eclogues* 1 and 2, extends to him the possibility of receiving the boon of her beauty and regularity. The sheep here at the end evoke (as in *E.* 2) the fruitful bond which must exist between man and nature if man is to survive, both physically and spiritually.⁵⁸ At the same time the closing in of the sheep (*cogere . . . ovis stabulis*, 85) points back to the Nymphs' attempt to close in the bull (55-56). That effort, within the frame of Silenus' song and thus in the realm of art and imagination, belongs to a love which violates nature's laws. The shepherd's safe enclosure of his sheep, however, reflects an obedience to those laws in the tranquil round of daily labor and implies an objective reality to which imagination and art are ultimately subject.

Love, however, continues to be present at the end in the figure of Eurotas. He is chosen because the river Eurotas is the setting for the tale of Hyacinthus, and Apollo presumably sang this song to assuage his grief.⁵⁹ Like Vesper, Eurotas belongs to nature. Yet he also reflects that bridging of the dichotomy between human personality and the impersonality of nature with which the poem has been struggling. He too gave "commands" (*iussit*, 83). Yet his commands resemble not just those of Vesper, but those of the poets, Silenus, Orpheus, Hesiod: he bids the laurels to learn Apollo's song and proves again the harmony between art and nature, between human feeling and the material world.

As the poem's last two lines reflect a return to a harmonious relation to nature's laws, so the Eurotas reminds us of a kind of love that breaks through the antinomy of passion *versus* order. The Eurotas, scene of unhappy love, can be *beatus*. There is an obvious contrast with the *infelix* of Pasiphae and Philomela (47, 52, 81), which in turn measures the difference between Apolline and Pasiphaean love. The latter leaves only an infamous name; the former, though also tragic in its outcome, leaves the "soft hyacinth" (cf. 54 and Linus' flowers in 68)⁶⁰ and the beautiful song which makes the Eurotas "happy."

⁵⁸ For the "overarching frame" of "bucolic elements" in *E.* 6 see Elder 117-18, with note 36 on p. 124; also Fantazzi 190-91. On the ending of *E.* 2 see Eleanor Winsor Leach, "Nature and Art in Vergil's Second *Eclogue*," *AJP* 87 (1966) 442-45.

⁵⁹ See Williams 247.

⁶⁰ It may be that the hyacinth in 54 is meant to help prepare for the allusion to the Hyacinthus myth at the end. *E.* 3 seems to use this kind of anticipation (lines 63 and 106-7): see Segal (above, note 24) 297-98.

But the "happy Eurotas" also implies some unresolved antitheses. Nature (here the personification of a landscape) can be "happy" as the lover (god or man) cannot; the echoing song brings joy, though it is the outpouring of grief. *Pulsae referunt ad sidera valles* (84) may suggest the indifference of nature's vast spaces as well as possible sympathy. We may note once again the ambiguity of the "pathetic fallacy" in the poem pointed out above (p. 425).⁶¹

The rather abrupt and arbitrary allusion to the Eurotas and the story of Hyacinthus implies that Apollo, the symbol of poetic order, restraint (3-5), and beauty throughout the *Eclogue*, can also experience love and pain. Even the Apolline realm can be affected by *amor*. Poetry and love are thus once more associated in a positive sense as they were in the proem (10, *captus amore*). The order imposed by art is not stark and rigid, not out of touch with suffering.

The allusion to Apollo's love confirms in another way the identification of Silenus' song with Apollo's. The Dionysian satyr and the god of the orderly, intellectual aspect of art are identified, not opposed. Both have a common ground in a susceptibility to love (cf. 26). So the Apolline poet's "wandering in the mountains" (64-65) and the "bitter" parsley which crowns Linus (68) have affinities with the preceding tales of passion and suffering (52, 62), realities which the poet incorporates but holds in tension with his commanding power of form.⁶²

It is Silenus, as we have seen, who is the chief representative of this freer, more flexible, more encompassing view of the order under which art and passion meet and grapple with one another. Hence it is appropriate that the song, with all its intensity and diversity of experience, should be his. But by fusing Silenus' song with Apollo's

⁶¹ *Beatus* occurs only here in the *Eclogues* and only twice in the *Aeneid*, both in emphatic emotional contexts stressing an impossible happiness or a tension between suffering and happiness: *o terque quaterque beati*, 1.94; *sedesque beatos* of the Elysian fields, 6.639. Both in this latter passage and in Horace's *beata arva* (*Epod.* 16.41-42) the word carries associations of an innocent joy far from the world's trouble or the ordinary state of human existence, but a joy quite remote from present reality. On *E.* 6.82-83 Galinsky 178 remarks, "But the desire for *beatitudo* clashes strongly with the actual subjects of Apollo's and Silenus' songs, i.e. the *infelices* and *indigni amores* which are described in gruesome detail."

⁶² "Wonder" (*mirari*) may be inspired in the realms of both art (30, Orpheus) and love (61, Atalanta).

and by hinting at Apollo's experience of love, Vergil deepens these responsive connections between art and passion, the ordering human mind and nature's unbound, wayward energies.

VI

In the light of the poem's confrontation of opposites we may look again at the puzzling appearance of Gallus. Gallus, writer of love-elegies, is potentially a representative of passion in its disordered aspect. It is in this function that he appears in *Eclogue* 10, and we must now briefly consider that poem's connection with *Eclogue* 6.

In *Eclogue* 10 love, in its violent invincibility, defeats the pastoral tranquillity for which Gallus longs (see *E.* 10.36-43). *Nunc insanus amor* of the next line (44) sets Arcadian peace sharply against the reality of passion. With this *insanus amor* are to be compared the other statements of love's power throughout the poem: *sollicitos amores* (6); *indigno . . . Gallus amore peribat* (10); *crudelis Amor* (29); *deus ille malis hominum mitescere discat* (61). Apollo, Pan, and Silvanus all appear, but to no avail. They recall the fanciful mythology of the Silenus scene of *Eclogue* 6, and Pan is painted by the "bloody berries" (*E.* 10.27), like Silenus (*E.* 6.22). The helplessness of Pan and Silvanus only underlines the defeat of the creative power of imagination and art which triumphed so exuberantly through Silenus in *Eclogue* 6.

Though Gallus imagines pastoral amours with a Phyllis or an Amyntas (38-41), his language is that of the disruptive passion of the Pasiphaean type (note *furor*, *E.* 10.38). Even the quiet he thinks of has an erotic tinge in the first two words of *molliter ossa quiescant*, 33. His thoughts of a serene natural setting (*gelidi fontes, mollia prata, nemus*, 42-43) are vitiated by the vehemence of his emotional vocabulary in these same lines: *consumerer* (43) and *insanus amor* (44).⁶³

The potential wildness of nature which appeared in Hylas' shore or Pasiphae's mountains or Philomela's *deserta* in *E.* 6 becomes much more tangible and ominous in *E.* 10. Now it engulfs not just remote

⁶³ See Fantazzi 183-84 and Perret 64-65, who see in Gallus' defeat the "décomposition de l'univers arcadien" (64): "Mais l'amour est le plus fort, Gallus s'en va, la poésie n'a pu sauver l'un des meilleurs de ses fidèles et pour lui l'Arcadie désormais n'est plus qu'un rêve" (65). Snell 296 underestimates the irony and bitterness in the passage when he speaks of its "sentimental sensuality."

mythical characters, but the "real," living Gallus (see *E.* 10.47-52, 55-56). Gallus will wander on the mountains hunting savage (*acris*) boars (56-57), and he will surround the peaceful Arcadian meadows with hunting dogs (*E.* 10.57; contrast the meadows of *E.* 6.53-56).

In using the violent pursuit of hunting to solace his love, Gallus reveals how far his restlessness stands from the peacefulness of an Arcadian romance. Hunting and love can go together, at least in imagination, for the regular figures of pastoral too (see *E.* 2.29, *E.* 3.75). But Gallus will hunt with a "Parthian bow" (*E.* 10.59). The epithet is more than just decoration. It marks another abrupt intrusion of an un-Arcadian reality, the presence of a foreign and brutal world with which Gallus is in closer touch than the shepherds. The Parthian bow is also a small example of the other threat, besides passionate love, to pastoral serenity: that is, war and politics. War and love, as we have seen, both have their place in *Eclogue* 6. But *Eclogue* 10 expands the negative power of both. Gallus, both a warrior and a lover, is doubly removed from the Heliconian poet led to Apollo's band in *E.* 6.63-73. Gallus' initiation into that Apolline realm in *E.* 6 is both an expression of confidence in the encompassing power of art in that poem and a measure of Gallus' defeat through *furor* in *E.* 10.

Yet Vergil does not end *Eclogue* 10 on an entirely negative note. After Gallus' capitulation (*omnia vincit Amor: et nos cedamus Amori*, *E.* 10.69), Vergil, with a rare intrusion of the first person (*mihi*, 73), declares his own *amor* for his friend.⁶⁴ The growing (*crescit*, 73) of this love answers the growing of the trees into which the desperate Gallus carved the tale of his stubborn passion (*crescent illae, crescetis, amores*, *E.* 10.54; contrast the *crescentem poetam*, to be adorned with ivy, in *E.* 7.25).⁶⁵ *Amor* in 73, unlike the disruptive, dispersive *amor* of Pasiphae or Gallus' *insanus amor*, has a creative, unifying force, like the *amor* of *E.* 6.10.

As in *Eclogue* 6, Vergil ends the tenth *Eclogue* with evening and with the humble pastoral task of driving home the flock (*E.* 10.76-77). Here, however, the remote mythical figures in the sixth *Eclogue*—

⁶⁴ The interpretation of *E.* 10.73-74 as referring to "Gallus' love for Lycoris" recently suggested by R. R. Dyer, *CP* 64 (1969) 233-34, seems to me unconvincing, though his remarks on Vergil's rejection of escapism are valuable and interesting.

⁶⁵ On *E.* 7.25 see Van Sickle 502-3.

Apollo, Eurotas, Olympus—are subordinated to the small, intimate details of personal life and personal affection. The little basket woven of the slender hibiscus (*gracili fiscellam texit hibisco*) suggests the creative efforts of poetry and recalls the *deductum carmen* of *E.* 6,⁶⁶ as the humble goats at the end of *E.* 10 also recall Apollo's command about the sheep in *E.* 6.4–5. The *Pierides* are here too (*E.* 10.72), as in the other poem (*E.* 6.13). But the basket, symbol of poetry, makes creation a much humbler, yet also a more personal, more human, more accessible activity. The power lies not with mythical figures on Greek mountains, but in the hands of the "I" who speaks of his friend and "sits" (*sedet*) quietly at his work.

Here Vergil retreats from the lofty claims of *Eclogue* 6. But he holds to at least one part of the achievement of that poem, the bridging over of the gap between emotional intensity and artistic order. The woven basket, a sign of order and artistic "making," not only answers the violent *amor* which drives Gallus from Arcadia; it is followed by an offer of personal *amor* which grows with the alder in the new springtime (*E.* 10.73–74). This love, growing in the spring, brings together the poet's participation both in emotional life and in the rhythms of nature. One kind of *amor* can cut Gallus off from the peace of pastoral glades and founts; another *amor* can join the poet with his friend and with the freshly burgeoning green of vernal growth.

These alders recall another attempt to connect human emotion and nature. The alders of *Eclogue* 6 are the trees into which Phaethon's sisters are transformed (62–63). In this episode growth and movement are also present, though more faintly than in *E.* 10, as an answer to death: *solo proceras erigit alnos*, *E.* 6.63; *viridis se subicit alnus*, *E.* 10.74. In both passages a non-passionate, fraternal, or sisterly love is associated with a union with nature. The fact that Phaethon's sisters are usually transformed into poplars, not alders, enhances the possibility of a deliberate connection between the two passages.

Yet in the calmer, less Dionysian atmosphere of the end of *E.* 10 the poet will retain his poetic and human self-consciousness (cf. *poetam*, 70; *mihi*, 73), while still sharing in the warmth of affection associated

⁶⁶ On the *fiscella* Fantazzi 184 remarks, "The key word is *gracili*, symbolic of his *carmen deductum*."

with those trees in *E.* 6. But both the *amor* and the identification with nature's rhythms in *E.* 10.73–74 mark a greater concession to the realm of nature, feeling, matter. It is as if the lesson of Gallus' disruptive *amor* has brought the poet closer to a Silenus-like participation in nature than to Apolline-Orphic control over it.

At the same time this very openness of participation in nature raises the possibility that the poet may be more exposed to its dangers and to the mystery of its unfathomed power. The darkness which comes with the regular close of day can be harmful to singer and crops alike: *gravis cantantibus umbra, . . . nocent et frugibus umbrae* (75–76). At the close of *E.* 6, Olympus was unwilling to see the night descend, but there was no sense of a potential danger. Here nature, not art, has the upper hand.

Silenus' play with the Fauns and Naiad of *E.* 6 implied that *amor*, poetry, and participation in nature's life go together. But *E.* 10 is much less sanguine about the power of art to hold passion or nature at a safe distance. Both realities are much less amenable to enclosure in the frame of a Silenus' song, and the "singers" have a healthy appreciation of their subjection to nature (75). Yet the poet's little basket—to which nature, the hibiscus, contributes the material—marks a modest yet courageous gesture of artistic independence. Nature's forbidding desolation and the waves of human passion do not submerge the poet's capacity to realize beauty and love, albeit in little things. The poet of this *Eclogue*, nevertheless, less innocent and less hopeful about nature's power, knows that he dare not expose himself to night's *gravis umbra*.⁶⁷

VII

To return to our starting point, *Eclogue* 6, like *Eclogues* 4 and 10, is concerned with the *sceleris vestigia nostri*, man's capacity for destructive passion in love and incidentally in war (*E.* 6.7). It knows of tragic passion, but incorporates it into the playful, controlling framework of a song sung by a grotesque character immersed in the fanciful

⁶⁷ It is part of the deliberate tension at the end of the *Eclogue Book*, however, that these goats are *saturae* and have a *domus* (i.e. unlike *E.* 1). For this positive aspect of the passage see Segal (above, note 12) 261–62, which should now be balanced by the interpretation offered in the present essay.

world of Fauns and Naiads. In *E.* 10 the destructive forces within man, war and love, are in the ascendant; and Apollo—along with Silenus' mythical kindred, Silvanus and Pan—are helpless bystanders of passion's triumph (*E.* 10.21-27).

Eclogue 6 suggests an answer to the tension between order and passion in man by fusing them in the process of artistic creation and symbolically in the figure of Silenus. In *Eclogue* 10, however, the fusion fails. War and passion win out. Gallus, carried to Helicon in *E.* 6, falls a victim to *crudelis Amor* in 10.

This somber end to the *Eclogue Book* is a typically Vergilian acknowledgment of the complexities of existence and of the need for a "dialectical" response to them. Moving from the liberating buoyancy of Silenus' joyful spanning of sense and spirit to the irresistible harshness of *crudelis Amor*, Vergil refuses to dwell entirely in the world of the imagination. The refusal is already implicit in the presence of war and history in *Eclogues* 1, 4, 9, and passion in *Eclogues* 2, 6, 8.

This movement from *E.* 6 to *E.* 10 is itself, in small, a foreshadowing of the poet's development to the stern, tragic realities of the *Georgics* and the *Aeneid*. Yet the *amor* and the green alder at the end of *E.* 10, like the *captus amore* and the rising alders of *E.* 6.10 and 63, imply an ability to face the chaos of human existence without losing sight of the positive potential of human nature and human creativity. Not all emotion need be destructive, not all love selfish and unnatural.

If the defeat of Gallus foreshadows the disastrous *furor* of Orpheus in the fourth *Georgic* or Dido's passion and Aeneas' all too human violence in slaughtering Turnus; if the ominous *gravis umbra*, dangerous to singers, anticipates in its hint of nature's foreignness to man the savage Ciconian matrons who tear the poet apart to vindicate the claims of nature, nevertheless the poet's personal declaration of love for his lost friend anticipates those redeeming moments of melancholy tenderness that illumine the dark sufferings of the *Aeneid*: Creusa at the end of 11, Anchises and Marcellus in VI, Nisus and Euryalus in IX, Pallas and Lausus in X.