

READING THE *HELICON* COLLAGE: HIDDEN STORIES IN THE COLLECTED FRAGMENTS

ELENA DOMÍNGUEZ ROMERO

Universidad Complutense de Madrid

elenadominguez@filol.ucm.es

13

***Helicon* Anthology —Parts into Wholes and Vice-versa**

The pastoral anthology *Englands Helicon* is a collection of 150 poems which was first published in 1600 and republished with additions in 1614. Nine new poems were included in the 1614 edition of the work. Besides the nine new poems located among the first 150, the second edition also added a table of “All the songs and pastorals with the authors names contained in this book”, including the nine new poems as well as a title page which emphasises the bucolic tone of the work.

The tendency to break wholes into parts and separate them from the original was strong at the time. Robert Graves and Laura Riding’s *Pamphlet against Anthologies* (1928) claims, for instance, that anthologies spoil their users’ reading habits making them read too superficially and blunting their sensitivity to the “handwriting quality” of individual poets. The Tudors, however, also had a clear notion of the wholeness of a work and of the principle that some of its parts could not be made sense of or properly understood without the patience to hear the whole, whether that whole was a collection of scattered parts in the Petrarchan manner, a story, a mystery, or a point of Christian dogma.

The study of Tudor reading, writing and printing habits leads in fact to the conclusion that the Tudors read, wrote and printed fragmentarily but also structurally or organically. Even specialised anthologies can be read either as

random fragments, that is, making no connections and no generalizations about the whole, or as structured wholes composed of parts onto which a structure is imposed. The only point that emerges with clarity is that the purpose for which one reads affects how one reads. The suggestion made by Barbara Korte (2000: 20) that certain poems “belong together” when more than one poem is found on one page is also very strong.

Barbara Korte’s (2000: 20) idea that “printing poems in close vicinity was not only used to save space but also specifically to signify unity and coherence”, hence, justifies the attempt to read some of the poems of the *Helicon* as sequences. All the poems are arranged like this in both editions. For that reason, the present study sets out to show that the pastoral anthology *Englands Helicon* can be read as a compilation of separate poems or fragments, or of fragments interspersed with sequences of poems that form love stories here and there throughout the anthology. Both possibilities were equally valid for seventeenth century readers who knew the literary tradition of the time. It all depended on how they chose to approach the text. This study also contends that most contemporary readers—unless specialists in Early Modern Literature— would need to be given the appropriate tools in order to be able to organise the fragments into love stories, that is, to read the *Helicon* poems in sequence.

14

Anthological Meaning —Editorial Specialisation and Commercialisation

H.E. Rollins (1935: 64) does not acknowledge the commercial interests of pastoral in the *Helicon*. Nevertheless, the author does underline the editor’s interest in making it a pastoral anthology. He says bluntly that the editor “bucolises” or turns into pastoral the original poems that he has selected from previous printed works in order to make the anthology work as a pastoral sequence. His position is supported by those poems of the work in which “a silly man” has been turned into “a silly swain” [30: 1], “the foster” into “the Shepheard” [121: 27], “a Sweet saint” into “a Sweet nymph” [121: 29], or an unmeaning title like “An Ode” into “The Shepheards Ode” [51]. As H.E. Rollins points out, some poems have added titles and bucolic characters [58, 71, 77, 80, 82, 91]. As an example of a poem with title and first line added he refers to “The Shepheards description of Love” [54] Rollins also warns the readers of his edition of the presence of some poems which are only pastoral in their added titles [79, 89 y 148].

Similarly, Rollins also points out that the compiler seems to be less concerned with great names and great poetry than with choosing “pastorals” wherever he could find them:

All is fish that came to his net, and it is noticeable that minor verse-mongers are given more space than the great poets, and that the compiler enjoyed mediocre as well as good poems. Thus it happens that the leading contributor, so far as concerns quantity, is Bartholomew Young with twenty-five poems; Sidney is a poor second with fifteen; Lodge follows with fourteen (only ten of which are actually credited to him), Breton with eight, Shepherd Tony and Greene with seven, and so down the number goes, through the mob of gentlemen who wrote with ease, to authors as important as William Browne and Shakespeare or as unimportant as T.B. or Christopher Brooke. (1935: 23-24)

Moreover, H.E. Rollins also considers that there is a considerable directness, as well as naiveté, in the method of procedure followed by the editor of the 1600 edition:

The editor had his own standard, elementary and superficial though it was, of judging poems, and he lopped or stretched them on his pastoral Procrustean bed with no excuses and no compunction. Various poems that at first did not harmonize with his plan became pastoral with revised or invented titles [...] For texts as texts the editor had little respect. He altered at will, not only wherever he wished to make a “pastoral” out of a simple lyric, but also whenever he thought he could improve the rhythm or the sense. (1935: 64-65)

15

For this reason, Rollins can be considered to be here one of “these days readers” mentioned by Anne Ferry (2001: 37) who are “likely to be surprised by the way in which the texts of poems in early English anthologies were handled”. Much more surprising is the fact that such mistreatments went on being perpetrated even long after vastly stricter notions of textual authenticity and editorial accuracy were firmly in place.¹ Still —Anne Ferry also explains (2001: 69)— “anthologists since the beginning, and at least until quite recently, have left their imprint on poems by adding or changing their titles, correcting or modernising their language, even restructuring their forms”. Inevitably, to some degree or other, these revisions lead to reinterpretations of the poems so treated. Failure to realise this fact is hence to miss the anthological meaning of the work.

This point will be exemplified in the following sections by analysing the importance of perceiving the influence of Virgil and Barnfield in the *Helicon* for the full understanding of the meaning of the work as a collection of closely juxtaposed poems.

Cycles and Romances: Virgil and Barnfield —*Helicon* Linkers

In order to make it a pastoral anthology, the editor of *Englands Helicon* goes for his poems to such books as the *Arcadia*, Robert Greene’s *Menaphon*, Thomas

Lodge's *Rosalynde* and Bartholomew Yong's translation of the Spanish pastoral romance by Jorge de Montemayor entitled *Diana*.² Thus, *Englands Helicon* shares the characteristics of the pastoral romances and pastoral dramas, as well as the sonnet cycles which were so popular at the time. Both the Classic and the Early Modern sources of *Englands Helicon* provide the key to the arrangement of many of the poems in this pastoral anthology that has remained unstudied for years in spite of its popularity at the time it was published.³ They also provide an explanation for the importance and the novelty of the anthology at a time when readers had already started to get tired of conventional compilations of poems.

Englands Helicon takes advantage indeed of the popularity of its pastoral romances and sonnet cycle models. But it goes beyond these models, always incorporating the necessary innovation to catch the readers' attention. The use of Virgil's Eclogues II and VII—"Corydon's Love for Alexis" and the conventional alternate singing in "Meliboeus, Corydon, Thyrsis"—and the novelty that this classical influence brings with it was a notable innovation. In fact, the acquaintance with this classical source allows the identification of a group or sequence of poems in the anthology with Phillis and Coridon's love story, which takes the form of any number of the conventional pastoral narratives to be found in any pastoral romance or sonnet cycle of the time.

16

Pastoral romances were very popular in Elizabethan England. J.J. Jusserand explains it in the introduction to his *The English Novel in the Time of Shakespeare*:

The truth is that the novel shed its first splendour during the age of Elizabeth; but the glory of Shakespeare has overshadowed the multitude of the lesser authors of his time, a multitude which included the early novelists. While they lived, however, they played no significant part; now they are so entirely forgotten that it will perhaps be heard with some surprise that they were prolific, numerous and very popular. So great was the demand of this kind of literature that some succeeded in making an income out of their novels. Their books went through many editions for that age, many more than the majority of Shakespeare's plays. They were translated into French at a time when even the name of the great dramatist was entirely unknown to the French people. (1966: 26-27)

And, within the novel, the pastoral enjoyed great popularity. As J.J. Jusserand goes on to explain in his chapter on pastoral romances:

No class of heroes either in history or fiction has uttered so much verse and prose as the keepers of sheep. Neither Ajax son of Telamon, nor the wise king of Ithaca, nor Merlin, Lancelot, or Charlemagne, nor even the inexhaustible Grandison, can bear the least comparison with Tytirus. (1966: 217-218)

The last decade of the sixteenth century was also marked by an outburst of sonneteering and collections of poems. The production of sonnet cycles at the

time was such that Chapman already reveals his critical attitude in the opening sonnet of his *Coronet for his Mistress Philosophy* (1595):

Muses that sing Love's sensual empery,
And lovers kindling your enraged fires
At Cupid's bonfires burning in the eye,
Blown with the empty breath of vain desires
You that prefer the painted cabinet
Before the wealthy it doth store ye,
That all your joys in dying figures set,
And stain the living substance of your glory,
Abjure those joys abhor their memory,
And let my love the honoured subject be
Of love, and honour's complete history;
Your eyes were never yet let in to see
The majesty and riches of the mind
But dwell in darkness; for your god is blind.

Martha Foote Crow explains the monotony of the sonnet-cycle in the following terms:

It may reasonably be expected that in any sonnet-cycle there will be found many sonnets in praise of the loved one's beauty, many lamenting her or his hardness of heart; all the wonders of heaven and earth will be catalogued to find comparisons for her loveliness; the river by which she dwells will be more pleasant than all other rivers in the world, a list of them being appended in proof; the thoughts of night-time, when the lover bemoans himself and his rejected state, or dreams of happy love, will be dwelt upon; oblivious sleep and the wan-faced moon will be invoked, and death will be called upon for respite. (1896: viii)

17

The monotonous love and the praise of the beloved were always themes in the ever-popular sonnet cycles as they were in the pastoral romances of the time. This is also the case in the *Helicon*, though with innovative variations, as in the previous collection of poems by Richard Barnfield entitled *The Affectionate Shepherd* (1594). Harry Morris (1960: 13) points out that “Barnfield belongs, perhaps, no higher than in the third rank of Elizabethan poets, but his work is not completely insignificant”.

It is my contention in this essay that his work is not insignificant at all, that he achieves innovation thanks to his use of the classics and that his *The Affectionate Shepherd* owes much to his use of the classical model of Virgil's Eclogue II. That is exactly what the editor of *Englands Helicon* does when he follows Virgil's Eclogues II and VII using Barnfield's model to make his a popular anthology some years later.

Like conventional shepherds, Richard Barnfield's praises his beloved Ganimedé's beauty:

If it be sinne to love a sweet-fac'd boy,
Whose amber locks trust up in golden trammels
Dangle adowne his lovely cheekes with joy,
When pearle and flowers his faire haire enamels;
If it be sinne to love a lovely lad,
Oh then sinne I, for whom my soule is sad.
His ivory-white and alabaster skin
Is staind throughout with rare vermillion red,
Whose twinkling starrie lights doe never blin
To shine on lovely Venus, Beauties bed;
But as the lillie and the blushing rose,
So white and red on him in order growes. (7-12)

He laments his loved one's hardness of heart and explains the painful love triangle in which he has become involved by loving Ganimede. That is, though he is deeply in love with Ganimede, the shepherd's love is despised because Ganimede is in love with fair Guendolena, Queen of Beauty. At the same time, though, she is in love with a third party who does not love her in return:⁴

18

Face, that was to Guendolen more deere
Than love of lords, or any lordly peere.
This was that fair and beautiful young man,
Whom Guendolena so lamented for;
This is that Love whom she doth curse and ban,
Because she doth that dismall chaunce abhor:
And if it were nor for his mothers sake,
Even Ganimede himselfe she would forsake. (78-83)

In trying to convince Ganimede to accept his love, the affectionate shepherd even includes the possibility of death on two different occasions in his speech as the only possible solution —*remedium amoris*— to his unrequited love:

But if thou wilt not pittie my complaint,
My teares, nor vowes, nor oathes, made to thy beutie:
What shall I doo but languish, die, or faint,
Since thou dost scorne my teares, and my soules duetie:
And teares contemned, vowes and oaths must faile,
And where teares cannot, nothing can prevaile. (198-203)

If thou wilt love me, thou shalt be my boy,
My sweet delight, the comfort of my minde,
My love, my dove, my solace, and my joy;
But if I can no grace nor mercie finde,
Ile go to Caucasus to ease my smart,
And let a vulture gnaw upon my heart. (253-258)

Virgil's Eclogue II is also present in the catalogue of all the possessions the affectionate shepherd says he would share with his beloved if he were willing to live with him and to be his love:

If thou wilt come and dwell with me at home,
My sheepcote shall be strowed with new greene rushes
Weele haunt the trembling prickets as they rome
About the fields, along the hauthorne bushes;
I have a pie-bald curre to hunt the hare,
So we will live with daintie forrest fare. (82-87)

The image of the rustic wooer courting some comparatively refined mistress is a common aspect of pastoral courtship based on the well-known story of Polyphemus and Galatea.⁵ H.M. Richmond describes the convention in the following terms:

It might aptly be called "the bucolic temptation", since what happens is that the unpolished countryman addresses his intended mistress in uncouth but forthright speech —attempting to translate into terms of rural resources those costly temptations to indulgence of which a metropolitan lover might dispose. (1960: 230)

Nevertheless, the monotonous conventions of earlier sonnet cycles and pastoral romances apart, the author takes Corydon's homosexual love in Eclogue II as the perfect model for his innovative work. Thus, following the same convention of "the bucolic temptation" that typifies Corydon in Eclogue II, the affectionate shepherd tries here to prove himself a good homosexual lover, superior to his opponent in love:

Compare the love of faire Queen Guendolin
With mine, and thou shalt [s]ee how she doth love thee:
I love thee for thy qualities divine,
But she doth love another swaine above thee:
I love thee for thy gifts, she for hir pleasure;
I for thy virtue, she for beauties treasure. (203-208)

Daniel F. Pigg (1998: 14) agrees that it is possible to see that "Barnfield attempts a critique of the normative, heterosexual sonnet tradition". But Pigg points to Barnfield's refashioning and reappropriation of that discourse to represent same-sex attraction under the guise of sublimation and transferred desire without mentioning Virgil. Nevertheless, the classical convention is clearly used for purposes of innovation in this work by Richard Barnfield.

As pointed out by Rafael Vélez (2004: 5-6) Virgil's second Eclogue celebrates homosexual desire between two shepherds called Corydon and Alexis. But the allegorical readings of and commentaries on Virgil's *Bucolics* appeared soon after

Virgil's death, and the Middle Ages witnessed an important revival of his work, which was adapted to, interpreted as, and commented on from a Christian perspective, obviously implying an erasure of the homoerotic nuances. This tradition was handed down unchanged to Renaissance times when the same-sex tone of the second eclogue was accordingly read as an allegory of friendship.

Nevertheless, this particular Latin poem continuously challenges the traditional unsexing or heteronormativity of the great literary and moral icons. And Richard Barnfield's *The Affectionate Shepherd* (1594) openly reinterprets the eclogue's unambiguous discourse on same-sex affection. One year later, the author had to answer the criticism levelled at his introduction to *Cynthia* (1595). And he argued that his pastoral was just an imitation of the great classic poet Virgil:

Some there were, that did interpret *The affectionate Shepherd*, otherwise then (in truth) I meant, touching the subject thereof, to wit, the love of a Shepheard to a boy; a fault, the which I will not excuse, because I never made. Onely this, I will unshadow my conceit: being nothing else, but an imitation of *Virgill*, in the second Eglogue of *Alexis* (1595: 3).

Eclogues II, VII and the *Helicon* —The Collage Cycle

The editor of *Englands Helicon* was familiar with Richard Barnfield's work. Love and the praises of the loved one are also the themes of many of the poems in the *Helicon*. He even takes one of Barnfield's poems in the narrative sequence of Coridon and Phillis that can be read in the *Helicon*. But at the same time, he makes his selection of poems fit the organizational pattern of Virgil's Eclogues II and VII so that his visitation of Barnfield, combined with that of the Latin author, results in innovation.

As pointed out already, some of the 159 poems of the *Helicon* deal with the love story of two shepherds, Phillis and Coridon. This fact allows the possibility of reading this group of poems in the anthology as a kind of pastoral narrative which could be entitled "Pastoral of Phillis and Coridon". Read together, this group of poems takes on the structure of a creative imitation —imitation with slight variation or *imitatio cum variatione*— of what would be a combination —*contaminatio* in Latin terms— of Virgil's Eclogues II and VII.

The editor of the *Helicon* follows the Latin models when selecting the poems that deal with Coridon and Phillis' amorous story and thus he provides a clear thematic and structural unity that allows for a sequenced reading of the group of poems in the anthology that constitute the pastoral narrative of Phillis and Coridon. Thus,

the poem of the pastoral entitled “Harpalus complaynt on Phillidaes love bestowed on Corin, who loved her not, and denyed him that loved her” [24], can be analyzed as a variation of the first 44 lines of Virgil’s second eclogue. It bears clear thematic and structural similarities to the first 44 lines of Eclogue II. Both poems present a mixed structure consisting of a narrative in third person and a song by a desperate shepherd who suffers from unrequited love.⁶

Corydon, the shepherd, was aflame for the fair Alexis, his master’s pet, nor knew he what to hope. As his one solace, he would day by day come among the thick beeches with their shady summits, and there alone in fruitless passion fling these artless strains to the hills and woods.⁷

Moreover, both songs follow a similar line of argument when the two shepherds introduce themselves as worthy lovers and take both mythological *exempla* and examples from nature before reaching the conclusion that they will never gain their beloveds’ favours:

Corydon, you are a clown! Alexis cares not for gifts, nor if with gifts you were to vie, would Iollas yield. Alas, alas! what wish, poor wretch, has been mine? Madman I have let in the south wind to my flowers, and boars to my crystal springs!⁸

21

In lines 40-44 in Eclogue II, Virgil’s Corydon accepts the situation and adopts an Epicurean stance:

Nay more, two roes —I found them in a dangerous valley— their hides still sprinkled with white, drain a ewes udders twice a day. These I keep for you. Thestylis has long been begging to get them from me —and so she shall, as in your eyes my gifts are mean.⁹

The shepherd of the *Helicon*, meanwhile, resorts to the idea of suicide at the end of the poem by the Earl of Surrey entitled “Harpalus Complaynt” [24]. In this poem, he reflects upon the idea that the traditional motif known as *taedium vitae* is the only possible solution to his sufferings:¹⁰

I see therefore to shape my death,
she cruelly is prest:
To th’ end that I may want my breath,
my dayes beene at the best. (85-88)¹¹

Lines 45-55 in Eclogue II are represented in the pastoral by the poem entitled “Phillidaes Love-call to her Coridon and his replying” [46], a poem signed Ignoto though attributed to Sir Walter Raleigh. Nevertheless, this Coridon and his beloved Phillis’ exchange of offerings reaches the anthology as a variation of lines 29-36 of Eclogue VII by Virgil. It follows the structure of those lines of Virgil’s

seventh eclogue rather than that of Eclogue II. In Eclogue II, Corydon is the only one who uses a catalogue of the possessions that he would like to give to his beloved in exchange for his favours. But there is not any kind of dialogue whatsoever:

Come hither, lovely boy! See, for you the Nymphs bring lilies in heaped-up baskets; for you the fair Naiad, plucking pale violets and poppy-heads, blends narcissus and sweet scented fennel-flower; then, twinning them with cassia and other sweet herbs, sets off the delicate hyacinth with the golden marigold. My own hands will gather quinces, pale with tender down, and chestnuts, which my Amaryllis loved. Waxen plums I will add —this fruit, too, shall have its honour. You too, O laurels, I will pluck, and you, their neighbour myrtle, for so placed you blend sweet fragrance.¹²

In lines 29-36 of Eclogue VII, as in the poem by Sir Walter Raleigh entitled “Phyllidaes Love-call” [46], Virgil’s Corydon and his opponent Thyrsis participate in a *carmen amobaeum* or alternate singing in which they take it in turns to introduce votive epigrams, just as if they were exchanging offerings:

CORYDON

To thee, Delia, young Micon offers this head of a bristling boar and the branching antlers of a long lived stag. If this fortune still abides, thou shalt stand full length in polished marble, thy ankles bound high with purple buskins.

THYRSIS

A bowl of milk, Priapus, and these cakes, are all thou canst expect year by year; the garden thou watchest is poor. Now we have made thee of marble for the time; but if birds make full the flock, then be thou of gold.¹³

From line 56 and to the end of Eclogue II, Virgil’s Corydon reflects upon the Epicurean need to wait for another beloved:

Corydon you are a clown! Alexis cares not for gifts, nor if with gifts you were to vie, would Iollas yield.¹⁴

Ah, Corydon, Corydon, what madness has gripped you? Your vine is but half-pruned on the leafy elm. Nay, why not at least set about plaiting some thing your need calls for, with twigs and pliant rushes? You will find another Alexis, if this one scorns you!¹⁵

Otherwise, he would be heading for suicide. But this is a possibility the shepherd only refers to at the beginning of his song, where he tries to convince Alexis to pity him:

O cruel Alexis, care you naught for my songs? Have you no pity for me? You will drive me at last to death.¹⁶

Similar reflections are present in the poems of the pastoral narrative “Coridon to his Phillis” [53] by Sir Edward Dyer, and Thomas Bastard’s “Coridons Hymne in praise of Amarillis” [59]. On the one hand, the poem by Dyer connects with the beginning of Corydon’s song in Eclogue II, as well as with the last lines of the poem attributed to Surrey:¹⁷

Poore Coridon for love of thee must die:
Thy beauties thrall, and conquest of thine eye. [53: 24-25]
Oh cruel Alexis, care you naught for my songs? Have you no pity for me? You will drive me at last to death.¹⁸

On the other hand, the Epicurean intentions expressed by Corydon at the end of his song materialize in the poem by Thomas Bastard. The shepherd of the pastoral makes up his mind here not to keep on suffering from unrequited love of Phillis’ and starts singing to a new beloved called Amarillis.

As has been already explained, “Harpalus complaynt on Phillidaes love” is a mixed poem attributed to Surrey now and may be analysed as an *imitatio cum variatione*, or variation, of the first 44 lines of Virgil’s second eclogue. This eclogue also presents a mixed structure in which Virgil introduces a narrative preceding Corydon’s song. Thus, both poems start with a third person narrative introducing two shepherds who spend the hot summer afternoons burning with love and singing to those who do not love them: whereas Phillis is clearly in love with Corin and makes garlands of flowers for him in the poem of the pastoral, Alexis seems to be his master Iollas’ favourite in Eclogue II. In similar contexts, both shepherds start their songs by showing the sorrows that unrequited love provokes. They both portray themselves as victims of their cruel beloveds who do not hesitate to “make their grief a game” [24: 52].

After contemplating suicide at the beginning of his song, Virgil’s Corydon introduces a catalogue of his possessions (lines 19-44, Eclogue II). He needs to prove that he is worthy of Alexis’ love. With the same intention, but using an argument based on his superiority (lines 57-64), Surrey’s shepherd will try to convince Phillis to consider him a better lover than his opponent Corin:

Corin, he liveth carelesse,
he leapes among the leaves:
He eates the frutes of thy redresse,
thou reap’st, he takes the sheaves.
My beast a-while your food refrain,
and harke your Heard-mans sound. [24: 59-61]¹⁹

Fernández-Galiano (1984: 236) speculates on the possibility of linking line 44 to line 56 in Eclogue II:

and so she shall, as in your eyes my gifts are mean²⁰
Corydon you are a clown! Alexis cares not for gifts, nor if with gifts you were to vie,
would Iollas yield.²¹

In this way, line 44 would directly lead to the final reaction of the despised Corydon who feels the Epicurean need to look for another beloved who would really appreciate his gifts. From line 56 and to the end of the eclogue, Virgil's Corydon goes on reflecting upon the impossibility of winning Alexis' favours as already expressed in line 44:

Alas, alas! What wish, poor wretch, has been mine? Madman, I have let in the south
wind to my flowers, and boars to my crystal springs.²²

After this, in the last lines of the Eclogue, he simply makes up his mind to wait for another Alexis. But he will only reach this conclusion once he has made use of a *priamel*²³ with examples taken from nature with which he tries to prove his love for the boy to be an instinctive attraction impossible to repress:

The grim lioness follows the wolf, the wolf himself the goat, the wanton goat the
flowering clover, and Corydon follows you, Alexis. Each is led by his liking.²⁴

24

Fernández-Galiano (1984: 236) would then see the second catalogue of offerings in lines 45-55 to be a mere *amplificatio* or enlargement of Eclogue II which could be easily removed without changing its meaning. Since the catalogue is not to be found in the poem by Surrey, this hypothesis could definitely justify the identification of the poem of the anthology with an *imitatio cum variatione* of the first 44 lines of Eclogue II by Virgil. Surrey's shepherd also takes examples from nature in lines 71-76 of this poem. In doing so, he arrives at the conclusion that he will never be able to win Phillis' love, for "tyranny and cruelty dwell in beautiful women's hearts" [24: 81-83]. Women do not seem to need a partner in the same way as men do:

The Turtle-Dove is not unkind
to Him that loves her so.
The Ewe she hath by her the Ram,
the young Cow hath the Bull:

The Calfe with many a lusty Lamb,
doo feede their hunger full. [24: 71-76]

For this reason, he even thinks of suicide as the only possible solution to his unrequited love, making reference to his own epitaph in the last lines of his amorous complaint:²⁵

Write you my friends upon my grave,
this chauce that is befall:
Heere lyeth unhappy Harpalus,
by cruell love now slaine:
Whom Phillida unjustly thus,
hath murdered with disdain. [24: 99-102]

Surrey's shepherd resorts to the motif of the *taedium vitae* or suicide whereas Corydon opts for an Epicurean solution in Eclogue II by Virgil, only thinking of suicide at the beginning of his song. But the thematic and structural similarities between the two poems seem to be clear.

The catalogue of offerings in lines 45-55 of Eclogue II is represented in the pastoral by a *carmen amobacuum* or alternate singing not preceded by narrative and entitled "Phillidaes love-call to her Coridon, and his replying" [46]. Through this poem, Phillis and Corydon exchange offerings while they sing together. But this time, it is Phillis who calls Corydon. He had already lost his hopes in a previous poem by Richard Barnfield called "The unknowne shepherds complaint" [35], where he had been reflecting upon Phillis' inconstancy: "For now I see, inconstancie/ More in women than in men remaine" [35: 11-12], and had thought of loneliness and resignation as an Epicurean solution to his unrequited love: "Poore Coridon must live alone,/ other helpe for him, I see that there is none" [35: 36-37]. He had even wished "The Fates that favor Love" to curse Phillis for being unkind in lines 25-30 of a following poem by Nicholas Breton entitled "Coridons supplication to Phillis" [40].

25

These two poems by Richard Barnfield and Nicholas Breton provide the plot of the pastoral with an evolution of the amorous state of the shepherd that Corydon's complaint lacks in Eclogue II. But, at the same time, they also seem to take the line of argument of the pastoral narrative back to line 44 by Virgil, as well as to the last part of Surrey's poem. In this way, the poem entitled "Phillidaes' Love-call" [46] could be considered to be a section of the pastoral narrative which corresponds to lines 45-55 of Eclogue II, though following the structure of lines 29-36 of Eclogue VII.

Eclogue II includes the catalogue of offerings that Corydon introduces in his solitary song, which represents a kind of love which has not even been declared. Vicente Cristóbal (1996: 93) explains that lines 4 and 5 of this introductory narrative already point out that Corydon's complaint should be understood as a monologue the shepherd recites in the solitude of the forest:

and there alone in fruitless passion fling these artless strains to the hills and woods.²⁶

Nevertheless, it is in Eclogue VII that the reader will really be able to appreciate a *carmen amobacuum* similar to the alternate singing found in the pastoral entitled

“Phyllidaes Love-call” [46]. Only in lines 29-36 of Eclogue VII, do Corydon and his opponent Thyrsis sing two stanzas which, according to Vicente Cristóbal (1996:187), follow the structure of the Greek votive epigrams.²⁷ That is to say, a similar structure to the one used by Phillis and Coridon when they exchange offerings in this poem of the pastoral:

Phil. Heere are cherries ripe my Corydon,
eate them for my sake:
Cor. Heere’s my oaten pipe my lovely one,
sport for thee to make”
Phil. Heere are threeds my true-Love, fine as silke,
to knit thee, to knit thee
a pair of stockings white as milke.
Cor. Heere are my Reedes my true-Love, fine and neate,
to make thee, to make thee
a Bonnet to with-stand the heate.
Phil. I will gather flowers my Coridon,
to set in thy cap:
Cor. I will gather Peares my lovely one,
to put in thy lap.
Phil. I will buy my true-Love Garters gay,
for Sundayes, for Sundayes,
to weare about his legs so tall:
Cor. I will buy my true-Love yellow Say,
for Sundayes, for Sundayes,
to weare about her middle small. [46: 11-30]

26

In fact, the only difficulty in relating this poem of the pastoral to those lines of Eclogue VII would be that the poem is not preceded by a narrative in the same way as the Eclogue is. But this possible problem can be solved by just including a new poem by Anthony Munday in the pastoral narrative entitled “Another of the same subject but made as it were in answer” [25]. This poem consists of two narratives preceding each of the two parts of the alternate singing in which Phillis answers Coridon’s complaints for the first time in the pastoral. Phillis arranges to meet Coridon the following day, in this poem by Anthony Munday:

Harpalus, I thanke not thee,
For this sorry tale to mee.
Meete me heere againe to morrow,
Then I will conclude my sorrow
Mildly, if may be: [25: 111-115].

But they do not meet again until the poem entitled “Phyllidaes Love-call to her Coridon and his replying” [46], that is to say, the poem of the pastoral which has

been previously identified with the catalogue of offerings in lines 45-55 of Eclogue II.

From line 56 and to the end of Eclogue II, Virgil's Corydon reflects upon the Epicurean need to wait for another beloved:

Ah, Corydon, Corydon, what madness has gripped you? Your vine is but half-pruned on the leafy elm... You will find another Alexis if this one scorns you.²⁸

At the beginning of his song in Eclogue II, all he can think about is the possibility of suicide:

O cruel Alexis, care you not for my songs? Have you no pity for me? You will drive me at last to death.²⁹

Nevertheless, the motif of suicide is not only present in the last lines of the poem by Surrey —as has already been explained— but also in the poem by Sir Edward Dyer entitled “Corydon to his Phillis” [53]. In this poem by Dyer, the shepherd of the pastoral thinks of suicide as the only possible solution to his unrequited love:

For Phillis looks no hartly love doo yeeld,
Nor can she love, for all her lovely face.
Die Coridon, the spoile of Phillis eye:
She can not love, and therefore thou must die. [53: 29-32]

27

The Epicurean intentions expressed by Virgil's Corydon at the end of Eclogue II are to be found in the poem of the pastoral by Thomas Bastard entitled “Coridons Hymne in praise of Amarilis”. The shepherd of the pastoral sings to Amarilis, a new beloved, saying that he would not hesitate to die once and again for her favours.

Conclusions

All the *Helicon* poems that have been analysed in this study deal somehow with the love story of the shepherds Phillis and Coridon. For this reason, they have been said to be part of a single pastoral narrative within the anthology that could be entitled “Pastoral of Phillis and Coridon”. Moreover, when read in sequence, these poems can also be said to make up an imitation of what would be a *contaminatio* or mixture of Virgil's Eclogues II and VII. The editor of the anthology seems to have followed the Latin models for his selection with the intention of providing the pastoral with a clear thematic and structural unity that is reinforced, at the same time, by the possibility of reading these poems as a single

contaminatio or mixture of Eclogues II and VII. That is, as a single pastoral narrative that makes the anthology innovative and attractive to the readers of the time thanks to the use of the classical models. If Richard Barnfield resorts to Eclogue II to break conventions and to avoid the monotony of common compilations of poems and sonnet cycles, the editor of *Englands Helicon* is definitely aware of this fact and seems to have made up his mind to go a little bit further than his predecessor. For *Englands Helicon*, he takes Eclogues II and VII in order to create a sequence of fragment poems or pastoral narrative within his pastoral anthology. Both of them are using classical conventions to counteract the monotony of the conventions of their time.

Notes

28

¹. Anne Ferry exemplifies what she calls “These continuing abuses by anthologists of the poems in their charge” in her chapter “Anthologist in the Poem”: In the first sections of *Songs and Sonnets* given separately to Surrey and Wyatt, the compiler acted as editor (2001: 37). That is, it seems he tried to gather and arrange all the poems—never before collected in print—that he could find by each of these poets (he added at the end of the book some presumably found after the first arrangement was made); grouped them separately, roughly according to formal kinds; and gave a title to each of the entries attributed to each poet. In the section at the end of *Songs and Sonnets* consisting of a miscellaneous gathering of separate pieces by many unidentified authors, the compiler acted as an anthologist.

². The pastoral romance by John Dickenson entitled *The Shepherd's Complaint* (1595), *The Shepherd's Calendar* (1579) by Edmund Spenser, George Peele's *The Arraignment of Paris* (1584), some books of madrigals by John Dowland or Thomas Morley and some anthologies such as *Bower of Delights* (1591), *The Phoenix Nest* (1593), or *Songs and Sonnets* (1557) can be also mentioned as important sources of poems for the editor of *Englands Helicon*.

³. It was not forgotten during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries as was so much other Elizabethan poetry.

⁴. Love triangles are very common in pastoral romances. Hallet Smith explains that love is simple in essence, but the variety and complexity of its consequences make for a total paradox: “Though there is no jot of reason in love, the lover invariably reasons about it. Pastoral provides amply for this paradox. It utilizes for the purpose various devices which taken out of their context seem absurd. The most common perhaps is the “cross-eyed Cupid” situation, in which A loves B, B loves C, C loves D, and D loves A. It is used in Montemayor, and of course it is a device in Lodge's *Rosalynde* and Shakespeare's *As You Like It*, as well as in the woodland part of a *Midsummer Night's Dream*. The paradox is that love itself is so simple; the Lyric and plot elements of pastoral romance work together to enforce the contrast between simplicity and complexity” (1952: 17-18).

⁵. This theme has regularly attracted major poets as varied as Homer (*Odyssey*, Book 9), Theocritus (*Idylls* 6, 11), Ovid (*Metamorphoses*, “Acis and Galatea”), Virgil (*Aeneid*), Ben Jonson and Marlowe.

⁶. Corydon reflects as an Epicurean philosopher when he stops to consider the inconveniences of blind love. See Lucretius (IV 1063-1067) and Ovid's *Remedia Amoris* (vv.169-199) where he recommends agriculture as a solution to unrequited love: Formosum pastor Corydon ardebat Alexim, / delicias domini, nee, quid speraret, habebat. / tantum inter densas, umbrosa cacumina, fagos / absidue veniebat. ibi haec incondite solus / montibus et silvis studio iactabat inani (II: 1-5).

⁷. All translations from Virgil's *Eclogues* have been taken from *Virgil*. Rushton Fairclough, H. Trans. 1999-2000. Cambridge, MA: Harvard U.P.

⁸. In the original: rusticus es, Corydon; nec munera curat Alexis, / nec, si muneribus certes, concedat lollas. / heu, heu, quid volui misero mihi? floribus Austrum / perditus et liquidis immisi fontibus apros (II: 56-59).

⁹. In the original: praeterea duo, nec tuta mihi valle reperti, / capreoli, sparsis etiam nunc pellibus albo; / bina die siccant ovis ubera; quos tibi servo. / iam pridem a me illos abducere Thestylis orat; / et faciet, quoniam sordent tibi munera nostra (II: 40-44).

¹⁰. On this occasion *taedium vitae* appears as *remedia amoris acerbi*; that is to say, suicide due to amorous despair.

¹¹. All quotations from *Englands Helicon* have been taken from Rollins, H.E. Ed. 1935. *Englands Helicon*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard U.P.

¹². In the original: huc ades, o formose puer: tibi lilia plenis / ecce ferunt Nymphae calathis, tibi candida Nais, / pallentis violas et summa papavera carpens, / narcissum et florem iungit bene olentis anethi; / tum, cassia atque aliis intexens suavibus herbis, / mollia luteola pingit vaccinia caltha. / ipse ego cana legam tenera lanugine mala / castaneasque nuces, mea quos Amaryllis amabat; / addam cerea pruna: honos erit huic quoque pomo; / et vos, o lauri, carpam et te, proxima myrte, / sic positae quoniam suavis miscetis odores (II: 45-55).

¹³. In the original: CORYDON: Saetosi caput hoc apri tibi, Delia, parvus / et ramosae Micon vivacis cornua cervi. / Si proprium hoc fuerit, levi de marmore tota / puniceo stabis suras evincta coturno. THYRSIS: Sinum lactis et haec te liba, Priape, quotannis / exspectare sat est: custos es pauperis horti. / nunc te marmoreo pro tempore fecimus; at tu, / si fetura gregem suppleverit, aureus esto (VII: 29-36).

¹⁴. In the original: rusticus es, Corydon; nec munera curat Alexis, / nec, si muneribus certes, concedat lollas (II: 56-57).

¹⁵. In the original: ah, Corydon, Corydon, quae te dementia cepit? / semiputata tibi frondosa vitis in ulmo est. / quin tu aliquid saltem potius, quorum indigent usus, / viminibus mollique paras detexere iunco? / invenies alium, si te hic fastidit, Alexim (II: 69-73).

¹⁶. In the original: O crudelis Alexis, nihil mea carmina curas? / nil nostri miserere? mori me denique coges (II: 6-7).

¹⁷. Remember lines 85-88: "I see therefore to shape my death, / she cruelly is prest: / To th' end that I may want my breath, / my dayes beene at the best".

¹⁸. In the Latin version: O crudelis Alexi, nihil mea carmina curas? / nil nostri miserere? Mori me denique coges (II: 6-7).

¹⁹. Notice that the comparison makes sense if understanding the identification of the shepherd with his flock. This is a very common motif in pastoral tradition.

²⁰. In the original: et faciet, quoniam sordent tibi munera nostra (II: 44).

²¹. In the Latin version: rusticus es, Corydon; nec munera curat Alexis, / nec, si muneribus certes, concedat lollas (II: 56).

²². In the original: heu heu, quid volui misero mihi? Floribus Austrum / perditus et liquidis immisi fontibus apros (II: 58-59).

²³. *Priamel* is a rhetorical device consisting of a series of listed alternatives that

serve as foils to the true subject of the poem, which is revealed in a climax. See, for example, Fragment 16 by Sappho.

²⁴. In the original: torva leaena lupum sequitur, lupus ipse capellam, / florentem cytismus sequitur lasciva capella, / te Corydon, o Alexi: trahit sua quemque voluptas (ll: 63-65).

²⁵. From the time of Meleagrus (AP. V 215; XII 19; XII 74), the erotic epitaph was very important in authors such as Ovid (*Her.* II 145-148; VII 195-196; *Ars.* III 39-40; *Fasti* III 549-550; *Met.* IX 563) and Propertius (II 1, 77-78; II 13, 35-36); it accordingly had an important place in Renaissance poetry.

²⁶. In the original: ibi haec incondita solus / montibus et silvis studio iactabat inani (ll: 4-5).

²⁷. Remember lines 29-32 in Eclogue VII: Cor. "To thee, Delia, young Micon offers this head of a bristling boar..." Thy. "A bowl of milk, Priapus, and these cakes, are all thou canst expect year by year..."

²⁸. In the Virgilian version: ah, Corydon, Corydon, quae te dementia cepit? / semiputata tibi frondosa vitis in ulmo est... / invenies alium, si te hic fastidit, Alexim (ll: 69-73).

²⁹. In the original: O crudelis Alexi, nihil mea carmina curas? / nil nostri Miserere? mori me denique coges (ll: 6-7).

Works cited

- BARNFIELD, Richard. 1594. *The Affectionate Shepheard. Containing the Complaint of Daphnis for the love of Ganymede*. London: John Danter.
- CHAPMAN, George. 1595. *Ovids Banquet of Sence: A Coronet for his Mistresse Philosophie, and his Amorous Zodiacke. With a Translation of a Latin Coppie, Written by a Fryer, anno Dom. 1400*. London: Iames Roberts, Richard Smith.
- CLAUSEN, Wendell. 1997. *A Commentary on Virgil: Eclogues*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- CLITHEROE, Fred (ed.) 1992. *The life and selected writings of Richard Barnfield 1574-1627*. Newcastle: Lymes Press.
- DAALDER, Joost. Review of Klawitter, George (ed.) 1993. "The complete poems of Richard Barnfield". *Review of English Studies* 44: 175.
- DOMÍNGUEZ, Elena. 2002. "By cruell love now slaine": Virgilian structures and themes in *Englands Helicon*". *SEDERI XI*: 59-65.
- FERNÁNDEZ-GALIANO, Manuel. 1984. *Títiro y Melibeo: la poesía pastoril grecolatina*. Madrid: Fundación Pastor de Estudios Clásicos.
- FOOTE CROW, Martha (ed.) 1896. *Elizabethan Sonnet Cycles. Phillis by Thomas Lodge and Licia by Giles Fletcher*. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner and Co.
- GIANTVALLEY, Scott. 1981. "Barnfield, Drayton, and Marlowe: Homoeroticism and Homosexuality in Elizabethan Literature". *Pacific Coast Philology* 16:2.
- HUGHES FOWLER, Barbara. 1994. *Vergil's Eclogues*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.
- JUSSERAND, J.J. 1966. *The English Novel in the Time of Shakespeare*. Trans. by Elizabeth Lee. Ed. Philip Brockbank. London and New York: E. Benn, Barnes & Noble.
- KLAWITTER, George (ed.) 1990. *Richard Barnfield: The Complete Poems*. Selinsgrove: Susquehanna UP.

Reading the *Helicon* collage: hidden stories in the collected fragments

- MONTEMAYOR, Jorge de. 1996. *La Diana*. Montero, Juan. Ed. Barcelona: Crítica.
- MORRIS, Harry. 1960. "Richard Barnfield: The Affectionate Shepherd". *Tulane Studies in English*: 13-38.
- RICHMOND, H.M. 1960. "Polyphemus in England: A Study in Comparative Literature". *Comparative Literature* 12: 229-242.
- ROLLINS, H.E. (ed.) 1935. *Englands Helicon*. Cambridge (MA): Harvard U.P.
- RUSHTON FAIRCLOUGH, H (Trans). 1999-2000 (1916). *Virgil*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard U.P.
- SMITH, Bruce R. 1994. *Homosexual Desire in Shakespeare's England*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- SMITH, Hallet. 1952. *A Study in Conventions, Meaning, and Expression*. Cambridge (MA): Harvard U.P.
- TUDEAU-CLAYTON, Margaret. 1998. *Jonson, Shakespeare, and Early Modern Virgil*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP.
- VÉLEZ NUÑEZ Rafael. 2004. "Bucolic Uneasiness: A Comparative Study of Translations and Adaptations of Virgil's Second Eclogue in Early Modern England". *BELLS: Barcelona English Language and Literature Studies* 13.
- VIRGILIO. 1996. *Bucólicas*. Cristóbal, Vicente (ed.) Madrid: Cátedra.

Received: 30 June 2010

Revised version: 29 January 2011

