

“BY CRUELL LOVE NOW SLAINE”:
VIRGILIAN STRUCTURES AND THEMES IN *ENGLANDS HELI-
CON*

ELENA DOMÍNGUEZ ROMERO
University of Huelva

Englands Helicon (1614) can be considered one of the most attractive collections of lyrical poetry published between *Tottels Miscellany* (1557) and the *Golden Treasury* (1861). Though the identity of the editor does not seem to be clear enough, he is sure to have had a quite definitive goal in mind when making a pastoral anthology. This is the reason why the *Arcadia* (1547), Greene's *Menaphon*, and Lodge's *Rosalynd* (1590) are to be found among his main sources; for the same reason, the anthology includes a large number of poems from Bartholomew Yong's translation of Sannazaro's *Diana* (1558-9). Nevertheless, the editor of *Englands Helicon* seems to leave the nearest and most basic sources of the anthology aside for a while, in order to focus on Eclogues II and VII by Virgil. Thus, he presents a group of poems by different authors which, read together, can be said to conform a "Pastoral of Phillis and Coridon" within the anthology. This includes Surrey's "Harpalus complaynt on Phillidaes love bestowed on Corin", and "Another of the same subject"; as well as other poems by different authors. The thematic and structural analysis of all these poems, as well as the consideration of the *contaminatio* as a common mechanism of textual transmission possibly used by the editor in order to link all these poems together, supports the idea of grouping all these poems into a "Pastoral of Phillis and Coridon".

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suggest the pastoral tradition, and lead the reader to think of them as a single pastoral which could be entitled “Pastoral of Phillis and Coridon”, not only because of the names of its characters, but also because that would be the title of the first poem. At the same time, the pastoral itself includes a group of poems which, read together, could be said to conform an *imitatio cum variatione* or creative imitation, of what would be a *contaminatio* of Eclogues II and VII by Virgil; that is to say, a mixture of these two eclogues by the Latin author.

The editor seems to have selected these poems in accordance with the Latin models, with the intention of providing the pastoral with a clear thematic and structural unity. In this way, the poem of the pastoral entitled “Harpalus complaynt on Phillidaes love bestowed on Corin, who loved her not, and denyed him that loved her”, could be analyzed as a variation of the first 44 lines of Virgil’s second eclogue. Though attributed in the anthology to Lord Thomas Howard, Earl of Surrey, the poem is taken from *Tottels Miscellany*, where it is printed among “Poems by uncertain authors”. But in spite of its doubtful authorship, it bears clear thematic and structural similarities to Eclogue II. Both poems present a mixed structure consisting of a narrative in third person, and a song by a desperate shepherd who is suffering from unrequited love.¹ In addition to that, both songs follow a similar line of argument when the two shepherds introduce themselves as worthy lovers, and take examples from nature before arising to the conclusion that they will be never able to get their beloveds’ favors. Then, Virgil’s Corydon accepts this situation and adopts an Epicurean stance on lines 40-4 of Eclogue II: “Nay more, two roes—I found them in a dangerous valley... 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”.² Meanwhile, the shepherd of the pastoral will resort to the idea of suicide at the end of the poem by Surrey. He thinks that this traditional motif known as *taedium vitae*,³ is the only possible solution to his sufferings: “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” (85-9). Lines 45-55 in Eclogue II, would be represented in the pastoral by the poem entitled “Phillidaes Love-call to her Coridon and his replying”. But this poem signed Ignoto and attributed to Sir Walter Raleigh on the ground that the pseudonym usually designated this author, could be considered a variation of lines 29-36 of Eclogue VII by Virgil. Thus, the poem of the pastoral entitled “Phillidaes Love-call” would follow the structure of those lines of Virgil’s seventh eclogue, rather than that of Eclogue II by the same author in which it is Corydon alone the one who introduces a catalogue of the possessions that he would like to give to his beloved

1. 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.

2. “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”.

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

as a present. On lines 29-36 of Eclogue VII, Virgil's Corydon and his opponent Thyrsis participate in a *carmen amoebaeum* or alternating singing, in which they take it in turns to introduce votive epigrams; just as if they were exchanging offerings. And that is exactly what the shepherd Corydon and his beloved Phillis will do in this poem by Sir Walter Raleigh entitled “Phyllidaes Love-call”. From line 56: “Corydon you are a clown! Alexis cares not for gifts, nor if with gifts you were to vie, would Iolas yield”,⁴ and till the end of Eclogue II, Virgil's Corydon reflects upon the Epicurean need to wait for another beloved. Otherwise, he would be heading for suicide, a possibility the shepherd only considers at the beginning of his song. These reflections are also present in the pastoral through the poems “Coridon to his Phillis” by Sir Edward Dyer, and Thomas Bastard's “Coridons Hymne in praise of Amarillis”. The poem by Dyer would make reference to the beginning of Corydon's song in Eclogue II by Virgil, as well as to the last lines of the poem attributed to Surrey: “Poore Coridon for love of thee must die:/ Thy beauties thrall, and conquest of thine eye” (Dyer: 24-5). But the Epicurean intentions expressed by Corydon at the end of his song would be directly put into practice through the poem by Bastard mentioned above. In this poem, the shepherd of the pastoral makes up his mind not to go on suffering from Phillis' unrequited love, and starts singing to Amarillis, a new beloved.

As it has been already explained, “Harpalus complaynt on Phyllidaes love” is a mixed poem attributed to Surrey and part of the pastoral that can be understood 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 his Corydon's song. Thus, both poems start with a third person narrative introducing two shepherds who spend the hot afternoons of the Summer burning in 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 by Virgil. Once the similar contexts are provided, both shepherds start their songs by showing the sorrows that unrequited love brings with. They portray themselves as victims of cruel beloveds who do not hesitate to “make their grief a game” (Surrey: 52). In fact, Corydon will even think of suicide at the beginning of his song in Eclogue II: “Oh cruel Alexis, care you naught for my songs? Have you no pity for me? You will drive me at last to death” (6-7).⁵ After this, from line 19 to line 44 of Eclogue II, Virgil's Corydon introduces a catalogue of his possessions as a way to prove that he is worthy of Alexis' love. With this same intention, but using a comparison of superiority on lines 57-64, Surrey's shepherd will try to convince Phillis to consider him a better lover than his opponent Corin: “He eates the fruites of thy redresse, / thou reap'st, he takes the sheaves./ My beast a-while your food refrain” (59-61). But this comparison only makes sense if one understands the identification of the shepherd with his flock, a very common motif in pastoral tradition.

4. “rusticus es, Corydon; nec munera curat Alexis,/ nec, si muneribus certes, concedat Iollas”.
 5. “O crudelis Alexi, nihil mea carmina curas?/ nil nostri miserere? Mori me denique coges”.

Line 44 in Eclogue II by Virgil: “and so she shall, as in your eyes my gifts are mean” already points to the final reaction of the despised Corydon who starts feeling the Epicurean need to look for another beloved on line 56 of the same eclogue by the Latin author: “Corydon you are a clown! Alexis cares not for gifts, nor if with gifts you were to vie, would Iollas yield”. From line 56 and till the end of the eclogue, Virgil’s Corydon goes on reflecting upon the impossibility of getting Alexis’ favors already expressed on 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” (58-9).⁶ After this, he simply makes up his mind to wait for another Alexis on the last lines of the Eclogue. But he will only reach this conclusion once he makes use of a *priamel* with examples taken from nature, in order to show his love for the boy as a normal, rather natural attitude, given the fact that both Corydon and Alexis are inhabitants of the forest whereas Iolas lives in the city: “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” (63-65).⁷ Surrey’s shepherd also takes examples from nature on lines 71-76 of this poem. By doing so, he arises to the conclusion that he will be never able to get Phillis’ love, for “tyranny and cruelty dwell in beautiful women’s hearts” (81-3). They do not need a partner in the same way as the “Ewe has the Ram by her or the young Cow has the Bull” (73-4). For this reason, he will even think of suicide as the only possible solution to his unrequited love; making reference to his own epitaph on the last lines of his amorous complaint:⁸ “Write you my friends upon my grave,/ this chaunce that is befall: “Heere lyeth unhappy Harpalus,/ by cruell love now slaine” (99-102). Surrey’s shepherd resorts to the motif of the *taedium vitae* or suicide, whereas Corydon opted for an Epicurean solution in Eclogue II, and only thought 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 on lines 45-55 of Eclogue II by Virgil, would be represented in the pastoral by a *carmen amoebaeum* or alternating singing not preceded by narrative and entitled “Phyllidaes love-call to her Corydon, and his replying”. Through this poem, Phillis and Corydon will exchange offerings while singing together. But this time, it is Phillis the one who calls Corydon. He had already lost his hopes in a previous poem by Richard Barnfield called “The unknowne shepherds complaint”, where he reflected upon Phillis’ inconstancy: “For now I see, inconstancie/ More in women than in men remaine” (11-2); and thought of loneliness and resignation as an Epicurean solution to his unrequited love: “Poore

6. “heu heu, quid volui misero mihi? Floribus Austrum/ perditus et liquidis imminsi fontibus apros”.

7. “torva laenea lupum sequitur, lupus ipse capellan,/ florentem cytissum sequitur lasciva capella,/ te Corydon, o Alexi: trahit sua quemque voluptas”.

8. Since Meleagrus (AP. V 215; XII 19; XII 74), the erotic epitaph has been 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), but it will be also present in poets from the Renaissance pe-

Coridon must live alone,/ other helpe for him, I see that there is none” (36-7). He had even wished “The Fates that favour Love” to curse Phillis for unkind on lines 25-30 of a following poem by Nicholas Breton entitled “Coridons supplication to Phillis”. These two poems 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 lead the reader of the pastoral back to line 44 by Virgil, and to the last part of Surrey’s poem. In this way, the poem entitled “Phyllidaes’ Love-call”, could be definitely considered a section of the pastoral which corresponds to lines 45-55 of Eclogue II by Virgil, but 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, according to Vicente Cristóbal (1996: 93), represents a kind of love which has not been even declared. As the critic explains, lines 4 and 5 of the narrative introducing the song:⁹ “...and there alone in fruitless passion fling these artless strains to the hills and woods” already point out that Corydon’s complaint should be understood as a monologue the shepherd recites in the solitude of the forest. Nevertheless, it is in Eclogue VII where the reader will be really able to appreciate a *carmen amoebaeum* similar to the alternating singing that could be found in the poem of the pastoral entitled “Phyllidaes Love-call”. Only on 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: 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” (29-32).¹⁰ That is to say, a similar structure to that used by Phillis and Corydon when they exchange offerings and praisings 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” (11-14). In addition to that, Phillis could be said to play the role of Thyrsis in the pastoral. Vicente Cristóbal explains (1996: 187) that he does not agree with those critics who try to justify Corydon’s victory over Thyrsis at the end of Eclogue VII, by pointing to formal and moral differences in order to portray him as a much more selfish and humiliating shepherd than his opponent Corydon. These differences would not be clear in the pastoral, if it were not for the fact that Phillis will be the one to break her own oath: “...heaven keep our loves alway” (61). But once she does, it is easy to try to identify her with the “cruel” opponent of the Eclogue. In fact, the only problem to relate 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 problem can be also solved by the presence in the pastoral of a poem by Anthony Munday entitled “Another of the same subject but made as it were in answer”. This poem consists of two narratives preceding each of the two parts of the alternating singing in which Phillis answers to Corydon’s

9. “ibi haec incondita solus/ montibus et silvis studio iactabat inani”.

10. “Sa etosi caput hoc apri tibi, Delia parvus/ et ramosa Micon vivacis cornua cervi”. “Sinum lactis et haec te liba, Priape, quotannis/ exspectare sat est...”

complaints for the first time in the pastoral. Through this poem by Anthony Munday, Phillis arranges to meet Corydon the following day: “Harpalus, I thanke not thee,/ For this sorry tale to mee./ Meete me heere againe to morrow,/ Then I will conclude my sorrow” (111-14). But they would not meet again until the poem entitled “Phillidaes Love-call to her Coridon and his replying”; that is to say, the poem of the pastoral covering the catalogue of offerings on lines 45-55 of Eclogue II by Virgil.

From line 56 and till 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” (69-73).¹¹ This shepherd only considers the possibility of committing suicide at the beginning of his song in Eclogue II:¹² “O cruel Alexis, care you not for my songs? Have you no pity for me? You will drive me at last to death” (6-7). Nevertheless, the motif of suicide would not be only present in the pastoral through the last lines of the poem by Surrey as it has been already explained; but also through the poem by Sir Edward Dyer entitled “Corydon to his Phillis”. In this poem by Dyer, the shepherd of the pastoral thinks of suicide as the only possible solution to his unrequited love: “For Phillis lookes 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” (29-32). As regards the Epicurean intentions expressed by Virgil’s Corydon at the end of Eclogue II, it is to be said that these intentions would be carried out in the poem of the pastoral entitled “Coridons Hymne in praise of Amarilis”. Through this poem by Thomas Bastard, the shepherd of the pastoral sings to Amarilis; a new beloved for whose favors he would be willing to die again: “Which if Amarilis chaunce,/ Hearing to make hast to see:/ To life death she may advance./ Therefore eyes and thoughts goe free” (33-6).

All the poems that have been analyzed, are related to the amorous state of the shepherds Phillis and Corydon in some way or another. For this reason, they have been said to be part of a single pastoral within the anthology *Englands Helicon*, which could be entitled, “Pastoral of Phillis and Corydon”. But at the same time, this pastoral would contain a group of poems which, read together, could be said to conform an imitation of what would be a *contaminatio* or mixture of Eclogues II and VII by Virgil. And that is exactly the group of poems which has been carefully analyzed here. This paper shows how the editor of the anthology has clearly selected these poems because of their strong relation with Eclogues II and VII by Virgil. In fact, the editor of the anthology seems to have selected this group of poems in accordance with the Latin models, with the intention of providing the pastoral with a clear thematic and structural unity, one which is revealed by the possibility of reading all these poems as a single *contaminatio* or mixture of Eclogues II and VII by Virgil.

11. “ah, Corydon, Corydon, quae te dementia cepit?/ semiputata tibi frondosa vitis in ulmo est.../ invenies alium, si te hic fastidit, Alexim”.

12. As a pastoral motif, suicide first appears in Idyll XXIII by Pseudo-Theocritus.

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