Les Études Classiques 71 (2003), p. 151-174

THE BULL AND THE BEES[1]

Résumé. — En tenant pour établi que la seconde moitié du quatrième livre des *Géorgiques* (v. 281-558), qui comprend l'épisode d'Aristée, constitue une unité, l'auteur de cet article s'intéresse à la pratique de la *bugonia* (qui consiste à faire naître une ruche à partir d'une carcasse de bœuf) en Égypte, ainsi qu'à Aristée, qui usera d'une pratique similaire en Arcadie, quand il perdra sa propre ruche. Une chaîne de signes métapoétiques, présents dès l'ouverture (v. 281-286), incite à lire le passage comme un discours sur la poésie. L'ensemble de la description de l'Égypte et du « sacrifice » du bœuf fait allusion aux mythes du bœuf sacré des Égyptiens (Apis), dont les qualités représentent les différentes parties des *Géorgiques* jusqu'au point où commence la *bugonia*. Parallèlement, Aristée présente toutes les caractéristiques d'un *poète*, tandis que la phraséologie du passage sur les abeilles renferme des allusions à la poésie et aux poètes – surtout si on le lit en songeant à l'*Ion* de Platon. Lorsqu'une forme de poésie a accompli son cycle biologique, elle doit se renouveler. La nouvelle ruche qui en résultera sera la nouvelle poésie.

One of the most vexing and yet intriguing issues in Virgilian scholarship is that of the *bugonia* in Book 4 of the *Georgics*. The structure, in fact the whole narrative from 4.281 to the end of the last book of the *Georgics* at 559 where the *sphragis* begins, has perplexed scholars and the discussion of the issue has often produced more questions than answers. In one attempt to approach such an obscure subject it may be as good a start as any to begin with the truism that in Latin literature the interpretation of a text depends to a great extent on the sources located each time by research. But in the case of the *bugonia* the problem seems to be created partly *because* of the sources, for the obvious reason that many of them have never come down to us while others are particularly enigmatic and terse. In such a case, we cannot really proceed to an evaluation of Virgil's originality and the extent to which he relied on source material with a similar or a different

1. A version of this paper was read at the Leeds International Latin Seminar on 1st May 1998. I sincerely thank those who participated in the discussion. My special thanks go to Prof. R. Thomas for his insightful remarks and his support as well as to Prof. Papanghelis for his valuable criticism. I am also indebted to the anonymous readers of the periodical for their useful suggestions.

theme. But beyond this, we often feel unable to decipher his reasons for including such a cryptic passage in the work. From what we know from antiquity, the questions as to the purpose the *bugonia* served in the Virgilian text has been raised since Servius' times, when the ancient commentator thought that this unit of the *Georgics* substituted for the poet's praise of Gallus.[2] What, therefore, we have to admit from the start is that this paper treads on very slippery ground.

By the term *bugonia* the ancients meant, in general terms, the technique of creating a new hive of bees out of the carcass of an ox.[3] If we accept that Aristaeus' 'epyllion' is a separate unit in itself, covering lines 4.315-558, then reference or description of this technique is placed both before (proem: 4.281-286[4] and at 4.287-314), as well as at the end of it (538-558). On the basis of the characters appearing in it, the 'epyllion' is then articulated in the following manner: [*bugonia*] – Aristaeus – Cyrene – Proteus – Orpheus – Proteus – Cyrene – Aristaeus – *bugonia*. The presentation, therefore, of the characters involved in the narrative is interwoven in a well-knit pattern. In it, Aristaeus is the first character to appear (317 and f.) as well as the last, applying the *bugonia* technique in Arcadia. His presence, however, has been anticipated before the first description of the *bugonia* in Egypt within the proem (*Arcadii* [...] *magistri*,[5] 283). The second and also the penultimate character to appear in the 'epyllion' is Cyrene; then Proteus appears—the third character—recounting the story of Orpheus' love and death; his role in the narrative comes to an end together with his story. In this way Orpheus' embedded story is placed at the centre of the whole intricate structure.[6] The transition from one section to the next is effected smoothly and in stages. At each stage, there seems to be some kind of a *rite-of-passage*[7] which leads to the acquiring of knowledge of a sort.[8]

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2. Ad *Ecl.*, 10.1 and ad *Georg*. 4.1. J. FARRELL (1991), p. 255.

3. L. MORGAN (1999), p. 133: "*Taurus*, *iuuencus*, *bos* and *uitulus* are effectively interchangeable terms in the *Georgics*". According to L. P. WILKINSON (1969), p. 268-269, this technique was recommended till the 17th century; see also p. 106-107. and note, about the riddle of Samson (*Judges*, 14.12-18); on this see also R. D. WILLIAMS (1979), ad 4.281-314; R. A. B. MYNORS (1990), ad 4.281-314; M. O. LEE (1996), p. 99 and note 12.

4. L. MORGAN (1999), p. 111.

5. L. P. WILKINSON (1969), p. 112 thinks that *Arcadius magister* may not be necessarily Aristaeus and suggests as a better translation: "*an* Arcadian master", a view that did not prevail.

6. R. THOMAS (1988), ad 4.315-558.

7. M. C. J. PUTNAM (1979), p. 280.

8. A. SCHIESARO (1993), p. 144-145; (1997), esp. p. 81-82.

There seems to be in all these, however, a crucial detail that has hardly drawn the proper attention of scholars. It concerns the description of the *bugonia* technique before and at the end of the 'epyllion'. Habinek—and, in response to him, Thomas—are two who have noticed the difference between these two cases.[9] The issue, I feel, is not concluded, and we still have to answer the question as to why the first *bugonia* takes place in Egypt and the second in Arcadia.[10]

Here we shall simply try to show the way the poet approaches some of his sources for the *bugonia* and to examine the reasons why it is placed initially in Egypt. What, in other words, is the role of the *bugonia* itself and what does the bee-hive, which is going to be created, represent?

As we have already noted, it is generally considered that the 'epyllion' of Aristaeus constitutes a separate unit within the *Georgics* starting at line 315.[11] This immediately raises the question of the function of lines 287-314 (the *bugonia* in Egypt) and, more importantly, of the proem (281-286). Contrary to the above view, I would like to suggest that lines 281-314 (the proem and the *bugonia* in Egypt) on the one hand, and the 'epyllion' of Aristaeus on the other should be read as parts of the same unit which should thus start at 281 (at the middle, that is, of the book) and continue to the end of Book 4, at 558.[12] The reasons for this I shall explain presently:

(1) When we look at the Virgilian œuvre thus far, the *Eclogues* and the *Georgics*, we notice the poet's keen interest in the middle position[13] of a

9. T. Habinek (1990); R. Thomas (1991); L. Morgan (1999), p. 112-113.

10. It is a problem which entails a more specific research and is the subject of my *forthcoming* (2) work.

11. For a recent discussion on the term 'epyllion' in the case of 'Aristaeus' see L. Morgan (1999), p. 17 and f.

12. This is how Servius sees it, too: *quartus Georgicorum* a medio *usque ad finem eius* [i.e. *Galli*] *laudes teneret; quas postea iubente Augusto in Aristaei fabulam commutauit* (ad *Ecl.*, 10.1). The unit, which substituted for the *laudes Galli* appears differently ad *Georg*. 4.1: *ultimam partem huius libri esse mutatam; nam laudes Galli habuit locus ille, qui nunc Orphei continet fabulam, quae inserta est, postquam irato Augusto Gallus occisus est*. L. P. Wilkinson (1969) thinks that when Servius (ad *Ecl.*, 10.1) writes that the text *a medio usque ad finem* is the substitute for the *laudes Galli* he means the unit which begins at 315, so that the second half could cover 314 lines (p. 280). C. Jacobson (1984), p. 273.

13. As it has already been observed: G. B. Conte (1992); R. Thomas (1983b), p. 175-184 = (1999), p. 310-320; (1985), p. 61-73 = (1999), p. 101-113; (*forthcoming*, 2004), in S. Kyriakidis & Fr. De Martino (ed.); S. Kyriakidis (1998).

work or a poem,[14] which he considers a place for a new 'beginning' or metaliterary discourse. Obvious examples of this are *Eclogue* 6, the proem to *Georg*. 3, later the proem to *Aeneid* 7, but also the internal proem in *Georg*. 3 (284-294). They all show that the poet has selected this position of a work or a part of it as a particularly appropriate position to talk about himself and his work and / or develop a new theme. This observation is in itself a good enough indication, I believe, that a new section starts at line 281 which runs to the end of Book 4.

(2) Another reason for considering 4.281 as the line which introduces us to this single unit is the thematic *ring composition* which involves the *bugonia* at the beginning of this part of the Book and at the end of it. The same technique, functioning in a similar fashion but embracing the Virgilian opus existing at the time, also appears at the end of the *Georgics*: I am referring to the well-known *sphragis* with which Virgil concludes both the *Eclogues* and the *Georgics*.[15] The last line, *Tityre, te patulae cecini sub tegmine fagi,* is nearly a repetition of the first line of *Eclogue* 1: *Tityre, tu patulae recubans sub tegmine fagi*.

(3) The change from the didactic second (*appone,* 280) to the first singular person (*tempus* [...] */ pandere* [sc. *me*] 284; *expediam*, 286) adds the necessary emphasis by which the poet signifies his intention to start something new at 281. In particular the application of the verb *expediam* (286), which is also used in the same form at other crucial points of the Virgilian œuvre,[16] implies that we are at the beginning of a thematically long and important unit.

(4) Virgil at the proem (281-286) refers to the bloody sacrifice[17] of the *bugonia* (*insincerus apes tulerit cruor*, 285) which should not be identified with the practice of the bloodless Egyptian *bugonia* (*per integram* [...] *pellem,* 302) that follows immediately after (287 and f.). In other words the proem appears to be connected not with the Egyptian *bugonia* but rather with the Arcadian which comes later in the narrative (538 and f.).

(5) The two passages starting at 281 and 315 correspondingly have been closely connected by Virgil himself through the lines 283-284 (*tempus et Arcadii memoranda inuenta magistri / pandere*) and 317 where there is

14. Structurally the poet follows the corresponding characteristics of Lucretius' *DRN*: see for instance, R. THOMAS (1988), mainly vol. 1, p. 3-4; J. FARRELL (1991), *passim*; M. GALE (1991), p. 414; (1995), p. 37 and f.

15. D. FOWLER (1989), p. 82-84; S. KYRIAKIDIS (2002), p. 276.

16. Mainly *Aen*. 7.40, but also *Georg*. 4.150; see also *Aen*. 3.379, 6.759, 11.315.

17. R. THOMAS (1991) in his response to Habinek thinks that we do not have a proper 'sacrifice'. See, however, L. MORGAN (1999), p. 113-114; D. FOWLER (1997), p. 5-6.

clear mention now of Aristaeus (*pastor Aristaeus*). Therefore, the invocation of the Muses at 315-316 and the rhetorical question *Quis deus hanc, Musae, quis nobis extudit artem? / unde noua ingressus hominum experientia cepit?* is a marker that we proceed to a new phase of the same unit in the narrative.[18]

In the proem the poet treats the art of the *bugonia* as Aristaeus' *memoranda inuenta* (283). The word *memoranda* (of *memoro*) often refers to the mnemonic material a poet draws.[19] The other word of the phrase, *inuenta* (283) attributes qualities of a sort of πρῶτος εὑρετής to Aristaeus in relation to the *bugonia*.[20] The word, however, and its cognates (similarly with the verb εὑρίσκω and its cognates for the Greeks) has been used by Roman poets in relation to poetry. Horace (*Sat*. 1.10.48) calls Lucilius the *inuentor* of the genre and Propertius (2.1.11-12) explains how the poet-in-love 'perceives' his love poetry: *inuenio causas mille poeta nouas* (12). Ovid, too, calls Mercury *inuentor curuae* […] *fidis* (*Fasti*, 5.104). This kind of reading recognises Aristaeus as *primus*, a claim Roman poets kept for themselves and their poetry.[21] In other words, we have here a transference of the famous *primus ego* syndrome from the first person of the poet to that of Aristaeus. Aristaeus is also a *magister*. The word also sometimes refers to a poet, as is the case with *Ecl*. 5.48: *nec calamis solum aequiperas, sed uoce magistrum*.[22] The above references, metapoetic in character, form a chain of signs which increase in number by more poetological signs in the proem, as we shall see. The presence of the poet himself gains strength by the phrase *tempus* ([…] / *pandere*)[23] whose meaning can be adverbially rendered with *nunc*. This in turn shows that the poet is starting something new *now,* as for example in the "proem in the middle" in *Aeneid* 7, with the *nunc age* (37).[24]

The phrase which seems mainly to disclose the poetic intention—again from the proem—is *altius omnem / expediam prima repetens ab origine famam* (285-286).[25] By this, the poet seems to state in so many words that he will look into *all kinds of sources* (*omnem famam*) and will explore the

18. C. JACOBSON (1984), p. 277.

19. E.g. *Aen*. 1.8; G. B. CONTE (1986), p. 52; S. HINDS (1998), p. 1 and f.

20. R. BLUM (1991), p. 20; on this case, see M. GALE (2000), p. 52, note 102.

21. See, e.g., the famous Lucretian 'primus' (*DRN*, 1.117) about Ennius or Virgil, *Georg*. 3.10: S. HINDS (1998), p. 52 and f.

22. For a metapoetic use of the word, see *Aen*. 5.867: S. KYRIAKIDIS (1998), p. 73.

23. *Tempus pandere*: Is perhaps *pandere* a response to the Lucretian proemic *pangere* (*DRN*, 1.25)?

24. Also at *Georg*. 4.149. R. THOMAS (1985), p. 64.

25. L. MORGAN (1999), in the first part of his work, attempts a totally different approach which naturally ties in well with the arguments in his book (p. 17 and f.).

older (*altius*) tradition (older than the Aristaeus' *bugonia*?) from its first beginnings (*prima* [...] *ab origine*). The word *altius* has been understood either as pointing to a 'higher mode'[26] or to 'in greater depth'.[27] But why shouldn't we read it with the meaning of 'older', as other similar cases show?[28] I think that here we have one of the clearest statements as to *how* the poet will compose his piece: this will be done by *going back* to all sources in search of the origins of the art of the *bugonia*. The phrase *prima ab origine* (286) is of particular importance as it seems to refer to a stage prior to that of Aristaeus: to the first beginning, that is, of the *bugonia*'s development. Text and context here indicate that things concerning Egypt are prior to those which have to do with Aristaeus, as the *nam* clause implies immediately after (287).

283 *tempus et Arcadii memoranda inuenta magistri*
pandere, [...]
..... *altius omnem*
expediam prima repetens ab origine famam.
287 nam *qua Pellaei gens fortunata Canopi*
accolit [...]

Egypt—among other regions of the world—was also called Ἀερίη.[29] The name Ἀερίη or Ἠερίη, which in many cases[30] is explained as *dark*,[31] is etymologically connected to the word ἀήρ.[32] If this is so, then we can take it one step further and think that even from the beginning of *Georg*. 4, Virgil programmatically[33] alludes to the thematic connection between honey

26. R. THOMAS (1988), *ad loc*.

27. L. MORGAN (1999), p. 98-99.

28. Cinna, 1.4: alta *Tyrii iam ab* origine *Cadmi* (Courtney) or Tac., *Hist*., 2.27: *quam* altiore initio [...] *repetam*.

29. E. LIVREA (1973), ad Apoll., *Arg*., 4.267.

30. See LSJ, *s.v.*; E. LIVREA (1973), ad Apoll., *Arg*., 4.267: "Ἠερίη [...] che significava o 'remota terra nebbiosa' (Delage, p. 35) o 'il paese dell mattino'." J. FARRELL (1991), p. 222-223; M. CAMPBELL (1994), ad Apoll., *Argon*. 3.417.

31. T. G. TUCKER (1889) ad 66: "ἀερίας: The scholiast explains σκοτεινῆς. μέλαινα γάρ ἐστιν. ἢ ὅτι ταπεινὴ καὶ τοῖς ἀπὸ θαλάσσης ὡς ὑπόγειος φαίνεται. Hermann quotes Steph. Byzant. Ἀερία. ἡ Αἴγυπτος παρὰ τὸν ἀέρα. καὶ γὰρ ἠερόεσσαν αὐτήν φασιν." *Et. M.*, p. 421.11: Ἠερίη: ἡ Αἴγυπτος τὸ πρὶν ἐκαλεῖτο· [...] ὥσπερ ἐξ ὁμίχλης καὶ ἀέρος κεκαλυμμένη φαίνεται. But see also *Et. M.*, p. 421.40 and *Et. Gud.*, p. 237.52 ἠερία ἡ ἀορασία. In the Virgilian context therefore, the adj. *nigra* (291) may well be a learned Virgilian allusion to the name Ἠερίη or even to the name of Egypt, since "the ancient Egyptians called their country *Kmt*, 'the Black Land'" (1998), p. 828.

32. Also *Et. M.*, p. 421.20; *Et. Gud.*, p. 237.47; 237.55 < ἀήρ and note above.

33. We should always bear in mind the relation between beginnings / middles / ends of a work and their importance to a poet's work. Cf. above, note 13 and D. FOWLER (1997), p. 16, 20.

and the Egyptian *bugonia* with the phrase *protinus* aerii mellis *caelestia dona / exsequar* (4.1-2).[34]

This name of Egypt appears in the *Suppliants* of Aeschylus (Ἀερίη, 75)[35] as well as in the *Argonautica* of Apollonius Rhodius (Ἠερίη, 4.270), whose influence on Virgil's work has been definitively shown recently:[36]

Νισσόμεθ' Ὀρχομενὸν τὴν ἔχραεν ὔμμι περῆσαι
νημερτὴς ὅδε μάντις, ὅτῳ ξυνέβητε πάροιθεν.
ἔστιν γὰρ πλόος ἄλλος, ὃν ἀθανάτων ἱερῆες
πέφραδον, οἳ Θήβης Τριτωνίδος ἐκγεγάασιν.
οὔπω τείρεα πάντα, τά τ' οὐρανῷ εἰλίσσονται,
οὐδέ τί πω Δαναῶν ἱερὸν γένος ἦεν ἀκοῦσαι
πευθομένοις· οἷοι δ' ἔσαν Ἀρκάδες Ἀπιδανῆες,
Ἀρκάδες, οἳ καὶ πρόσθε σεληναίης ὑδέονται
ζώειν, φηγὸν ἔδοντες ἐν οὔρεσιν· οὐδὲ Πελασγὶς
χθὼν τότε κυδαλίμοισιν ἀνάσσετο Δευκαλίδῃσιν,
ἦμος ὅτ' Ἠερίη πολυλήιος ἐκλήιστο,
μήτηρ Αἴγυπτος προτερηγενέων αἰζηῶν,
καὶ ποταμὸς Τρίτων ἠύρροος, ᾧ ὕπο πᾶσα
ἄρδεται Ἠερίη. Διόθεν δέ μιν οὔποτε δεύει
ὄμβρος· ἅλις προχοῇσι δ' ἀνασταχύουσιν ἄρουραι.
(4.257-271)

We were bound for Orchomenos, which is where that unerring prophet,
whom you earlier met, foretold you should make landfall.
For another sea route exists, which priests of the immortal
gods have made known, those sprung from Triton's daughter Thebe.
All the star clusters wheeling in heaven were then still nonexistent,
no one then could have answered questions about the sacred
race of the Danaans: only Arkadians existed,
Arkadians who (so it's rumored) were living even before
the moon, in the hills, eating acorns. Nor was the Pelasgian
land then ruled by Deukalion's lordly line,
in the days when Aigyptos, mother of earlier mortals,
was known as the Land of Mists, rich in fertile
harvests, and Nile, the broad-flowing stream by which
all the Land of Mists is watered; there from Zeus never
comes enough rain; it's Nile's flooding makes crops grow.
(transl. R. HUNTER.)

The above passage of Apollonius is of particular importance to us, since Virgil may have turned his mind to it and especially to lines 4.267-

34. This view does not exclude the other function of the word by which a kind of divinity is attributed to the bees and their work (Aristotle, *HA*, 553 b, 29). See also *Georg*. 4.220-221.

35. T. G. TUCKER (1889), *ad loc*.

36. D. NELIS (2001a, b).

270[37] (Ἠερίη πολυλήιος ἐκλήιστο, / [...] / καὶ ποταμὸς Τρίτων[38] ἠύρροος, ᾧ ὕπο πᾶσα / ἄρδεται Ἀερίη) when he refers to the Nile with his phrase *Nilum* [...] *et uiridem Aegyptum nigra fecundat harena*[39] (288-291). In this passage of Apollonius Egyptians and Arcadians are considered the two oldest nations of mankind,[40] but what the poet seems to say is that Egypt comes first. According to Herodotus—among other sources[41]—this belief was also held by the Egyptians themselves: ἐνόμιζον ἑωυτοὺς πρώτους γενέσθαι πάντων ἀνθρώπων (2.2). In other words they seem to be the *prima origo* of our poet. It is exactly the same combination, that we find here in the *Georgics* with regards to the *bugonia* (286): the poet will narrate the story of the *magister* from Arcadia, but before he does that, he will trace the story from its first, the Egyptian, beginnings.

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At 4.287 Virgil tells us that the favoured race of Macedonian Canopus (*Pellaei* [...] *Canopi,* 287) who dwells on the land watered by the Nile relies for its *certam salutem* on this technique (294). Virgil persists in his description of Egypt for eight verses (287-294)[42] which actually announce the description of the *bugonia* (295 and f.). This poetic insistence[43] serves

37. However, we must have in mind that this sort of description concerning Egypt appears in many and various sources.

38. That is the Nile. E. Livrea (1973), ad 4.269.

39. I do not think that L. Morgan (1999) is right in describing *harena* generally "as the image *par excellence* of infertility" and "inimical to life" (p. 137). For example, Virgil uses the word *harena* as ἰλύς, for the delta of the Tiber which naturally cannot be described as sterile (*Aen*. 7.31). Morevoer, ancient sources, and especially the etymological lexica, which refer to the Nile leave no doubt as to the etymology of the river's name from νέος + ἰλύς (R. Maltby [1991], *s.v*). See also, e.g., Aeschl., *PV*, 851 or *Et. M.*, 602.9, where at the end of the lemma it is stated: ἐξερχόμενος ποτίζει πᾶσαν τὴν γῆν ἐκείνων. Plut., *Mor.*, 363E. In real terms the delta of the river is full of silt and is, therefore, *nigra*, a colour signifying a particularly fertile soil.

40. E. Livrea (1973), ad 4.263.

41. See also Diod. Sic., 1.10.1.

42. R. Thomas (1988) ad 4.287-294 is right when he sees that an excessive number of verses is applied in order to say that "bugonia is practised in Egypt." Actually line 294 introduces the reader to the *bugonia*.

43. Tibullus at 1.7.23-28 also insists on his reference to the Nile: P. Murgatroyd (1980), *ad loc.*; R. Maltby (2002), *ad loc*. and 23-24.

to concentrate our attention on the name of the place.[44] Egypt, therefore, is indelibly and emphatically associated with the ritual of the *bugonia*. Besides, the poet's partiality for ethnographic details is a well-established Hellenistic tendency.[45]

The reference to this place is made in relation to the Nile and its extremely rich black silt, as shown by the phrases *effuso stagnantem flumine Nilum* (288) and *uiridem Aegyptum nigra fecundat harena* (291). The black (*nigra*[46]) colour of the river silt is one of the constituting parts of the area and it corresponds to the reality of the Nile delta.

But the question here is what the *bugonia* has to do with Egypt and why does Virgil use it?

When the poet begins to narrate the story from the beginning (*omnem* / [...] *prima* [...] *ab origine famam*, 285-286) he starts by describing Canopus, situated at the delta of the Nile. The place was allegedly named after Kanobos, the captain of Menelaus' ship, who was lost there.[47] Canopus was a particularly important place in Egypt as can readily be seen not only from the archaeological finds but also from the many literary references to the place.[48] It was an ideal place for festivities and celebrations due to its climate.[49] It had a temple to Sarapis,[50] a deity which seems to be a Ptolemaic invention.[51] This god's name originated from the Egyptian god Osiris who, according to some sources, is identical with

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44. L. MORGAN (1999), p. 136 and f.

45. R. THOMAS (1982).

46. The adjective could also be an allusion to the river's name: Servius, ad 4.291: *nam antea Nilus Latine* Melo *dicebatur* (see also notes 31 and 39 above). Plutarch says that Egypt was μεγάγγειος (*Mor.*, 364C).

47. E.g., Serv. and Serv. auctus, ad 4.287.

48. See, e.g., Call., fr. 110.58 (Pf.): Κ]ανωπίτου ναιέτις α[ἰγιαλοῦ; also epigr. 55 (Pf.); and Cat., 66.58 *Canopeis litoribus*. Canopus was apparently used as a synonym for Alexandria since it was *iuxta Alexandriam*: Servius, ad *Georg*. 4.287 and e.g. M. C. J. PUTNAM (1979), p. 272; R. A. B. MYNORS (1990), ad 287-288; A. BARCHIESI (1999), p. 119. For a different interpretation, see, e.g., C. PERKELD (1989), p. 76.

49. Strabo, 17.1. 16. L. KOENEN (1976), p. 151, note 97. See also A. BARCHIESI (1999), p. 119.

50. Strabo, 17.1.17: Κάνωβος [...] ἔχουσα τὸ τοῦ Σαράπιδος ἱερόν.

51. J. E. STAMBAUGH (1972), p. 60; G. J. F. KATER-SIBBES and M. J. VERMASEREN (1975), p. ix.; L. KOENEN (1976), p. 141. But Plut., *Mor.*, 376A : οὐ μὴν ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον ὑφείμην ἂν τοῦ Σαράπιδος Αἰγυπτίοις ἢ τοῦ Ὀσίριδος, ἐκεῖνο μὲν [οὖν] ξενικόν, τοῦτο δ' Ἑλληνικόν, ἄμφω δ' ἑνὸς θεοῦ καὶ μιᾶς δυνάμεως ἡγούμενος ("indeed I should prefer to yield that of Sarapis to the Egyptians than that of Osiris, for I believe that the former is foreign and that the latter is Greek, but that both belong to one god and one power," transl. D. S. RICHTER [2001], p. 195 and f.).

Apis[52] and in Memphis was worshipped as Osorapis.[53] Apis is the sacred bull of the Egyptians and is considered to be the incarnation of Osiris.[54] When the sacred bull dies, it is buried magnificently and the priests search for the new bull; when found, the mourning of the people is over, according to Hecataeus.[55] In Egypt, therefore, people mourn Apis, until they find his substitute in the same way Aristaeus mourns the hive he has lost (*tristis*, 319; *querens,* 320; *luctus* 350; *tristis*, 355; *lacrimans*, 356).[56]

Canopus moreover, is connected with the birth of Epaphus,[57] son of Io who is also identified with Apis, according to the sources.[58] The fifth generation of his descendants will come to the Peloponnese,[59] thus bringing into one genealogy Egypt and Peloponnese. The myth of Io is not foreign to Virgil's interests.[60] In the *Georgics* we have a reference at 3.148 and f.[61] and in the *Aeneid* it is the main theme on Turnus' shield: *argumentum ingens*, as the poet characterises it.[62] But the connection of the Osiris myth to that of Io is part of the poetic tradition before Virgil's time; see, for instance, Lycophron's *Alexandra*:

> ὅλοιντο ναῦται πρῶτα Καρνῖται[63] κύνες,
> οἳ τὴν βοῶπιν ταυροπάρθενον κόρην
> Λέρνης ἀνηρείψαντο, φορτηγοὶ λύκοι,
> πλᾶτιν πορεῦσαι κῆρα Μεμφίτῃ[64] πρόμῳ
> ἔχθρας δὲ πυρσὸν ᾖραν ἠπείροις διπλαῖς (1291-1295).

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52. Diod. Sic., 1.85 etc.; Plut., *Mor.*, 368C.

53. L. Koenen (1976), p. 141.

54. Strabo, 17.1.31: ἔχει δὲ ἱερά, τό τε τοῦ Ἄπιδος ὅς ἐστιν ὁ αὐτὸς καὶ Ὄσιρις; Diod. Sic., 1. 85: τὸν ἱερὸν ταῦρον τὸν ὀνομαζόμενον Ἆπιν [...] τῆς δὲ τοῦ βοὸς τούτου τιμῆς αἰτίαν ἔνιοι φέρουσι λέγοντες ὅτι τελευτήσαντος Ὀσίριδος εἰς τοῦτον ἡ ψυχὴ μετέστη. See also Hecat., *FGrH* 264, F 25 (p. 56.41), etc.; Plut., *Mor.*, 359B, 362D, 368C, 380E. See also Augustine, *Civ.*, 18.5.

55. Hecat., *FGrH* 264, F 25 (p.56.34).

56. L. Morgan (1999), p. 142-143.

57. Aeschyl., *Suppl.*, 311 and f.; *PV*, 846 and f.

58. Hrd., 2.153, and 3.28; Plut., *Mor.* 365F; L. Morgan (1999), p. 169 note 83.

59. Aeschyl., *PV*, 853.

60. R. Thomas (1998), ad *Georg*. 3.531-533; R. A. B. Mynors (1990), ad *Georg*. 3.147-148. The influence of Calvus' *Io* is obvious in *Ecl*. 6 "in the Pasiphae / Proetides sequence": J. Farrell (1991), p. 308; Th. Papanghelis (1995), p. 149-150.

61. R. Thomas (1987), p. 249; (1988), ad 3.147-148; R. A. B. Mynors (1990), ad 3.147-148; M. Gale (1995), p. 50.

62. *Aen*. 7.791. N. Horsfall (2000), ad 789.

63. G. Mooney (1988), *ad loc*.

64. "Io was brought by the Phoenicians to Egypt, where she wedded Osiris (hence called Μεμφίτης πρόμος), and was identified with the goddess Isis": G. Mooney (1988), *ad loc*.

Cursed first of all be Carne's sailor hounds,
Who carried off the ox-eyed horned maid
From Lerne's shores—those wolves, those traffickers,—
A baneful bride to give to Memphis' lord.
They raised a war-torch for two contintents (transl. G. MOONEY).

I strongly believe, therefore, that Virgil insistence on Canopus and the Nile—which incidentally Plutarch identifies with Osiris[65]—aims at recalling that complex of myths.[66]

The same myth and worship of Osiris / Apis[67] is used by Tibullus, especially on 1.7.28 with his phrase *Memphitem*[68] *plangere* docta *bouem,* which refers mainly to the Callimachean[69] εἰδ[υῖ]αι φαλιὸν ταῦρον ἰηλεμίσαι (fr. 383.16 Pf.)[70] from the *Victoria Berenice's*.[71] It is more than certain, therefore, that Virgil not only knew the complex of these myths and the rites about the sacred bull by the name *Apis* but was also concerned with the worship of Osiris. As early as at *Georg*. 1.1-3 by the phrase *quo sidere terram / uertere, Maecenas, ulmisque adiungere uitis / conueniat* Virgil seems to refer to the practice that Tibullus attributes directly to Osiris: *hic docuit teneram palis adiungere uitem* (1.7.33). Osiris' presence, therefore, as implied from the first proemic verses of the *Georgics* and in relation to 1.19 (*uncique puer monstrator aratri*) shows perhaps that it is programmatically placed in Virgil's work.[72]

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65. Plutarch, *Mor*., 363D: οὕτω παρ' Αἰγυπτίοις Νεῖλον εἶναι τὸν Ὄσιριν, 364A, 365B, 366A. L. MORGAN (1999), p. 138, 141 and f.; cf. J. U. POWELL (1925, Parmeno) p. 237: Αἰγύπτιε Ζεῦ Νεῖλε and test.

66. Virgil not only knew Osiris' cult but he was also concerned with it: J. REED (1998).

67. The relation between Apis and the bull in Egypt was known in Rome. See Suet. (*Tit*., 5.3) who says that when Titus went to Alexandria he put the diadem (*in consecrando apud Memphim boue Apide diadema gestauit, de more quidem rituque priscae religionis*).

68. The first use of the word in Latin (P. MURGATROYD [1980], ad 1.7.27-28); the elegiac poet seems to follow a Hellenistic practice (see above Lycophron's text).

69. The Callimachean text is in many ways a major source for the *Georgics*. On its significance esp. in the proem to Book 3, see R. THOMAS (1983a), p. 92 and f. The Callimachean text also functions as the *structural macro-model* for the *bugonia* story, since the latter is structured within the *Georgics* in patterns reminiscent of Book 3 of the *Aetia* (the technique of the embedded stories). P. J. PARSONS (1977), p. 42. See also the reference made to the "Pallene's seer". The phrase naturally refers to Proteus who is also active in Virgil's 'epyllion' of Aristaeus: *SH*, fr. 254.5-6: εἰς Παλληνέα μά[ντιν, / ποιμένα [φωκάων]: L. MORGAN (1999), p. 25. H. PERAKI-KYRIAKIDOU (1998), p. 119-120.

70. G. LEE & R. MALTBY (1990), ad 7.28.

71. See also: Hor., *Epist*., 1.17.60; Ovid., *Amor*., 2.12-14; *Met*., 9.693; Juv., *Sat*., 6.539 and f., 8.29.

72. See also H. PERAKI-KYRIAKIDOU (*forthcoming* 1), p. 12 and f.

In addition, the existing striking phonetic similarity between the name of the dying bull, *Apis* and the *apes* which will be created from its carcass, should not pass unnoticed. However, if Virgil does indeed allude to the Egyptian myth of Apis and Osiris, what does the Egyptian sacred bull represent to Virgil's readership? Or the bees for that matter?

First of all Osiris / Apis is no stranger to music and poetry.[73] Then, according to Hecataeus and Diodorus Siculus,[74] Apis / Osiris is also connected with agriculture:

> τοὺς δὲ ταύρους τοὺς ἱερούς, λέγω δὲ τόν τε Ἆπιν καὶ τὸν Μνεῦιν, τιμᾶσθαι παραπλησίως τοῖς θεοῖς, Ὀσίριδος κατα-δείξαντος, ἅμα μὲν διὰ τὴν τῆς γεωργίας χρείαν, ἅμα δὲ καὶ διὰ τὸ τῶν εὑρόντων τοὺς καρποὺς τὴν δόξαν ταῖς τούτων ἐργασίαις παραδόσιμον γεγονέναι τοῖς μεταγενεστέροις εἰς ἅπαντα τὸν αἰῶνα (Diod. Sic., 1.88.4).[75]
>
> The sacred bulls—I refer to the Apis and the Mnevis—are honoured like the gods, as Osiris commanded, both because of their use in farming and also because the fame of those who discovered the fruits of the earth is handed down by the labours of these animals to succeeding generations for all time (transl. C. H. OLDFATHER).

In Tibullus, too, (1.7)—who has gathered a great amount of information from Greek sources—Osiris is clearly connected with the invention[76] of agriculture and in particular with the ploughing and sowing, arboriculture, viticulture and the vintage (29-38) and is also connected with Bacchus (39-42). This latter information is also found in Herodotus who explains that Osiris in the Greek language is Dionysus: Ὄσιρις δέ ἐστι Διόνυσος κατὰ Ἑλλάδα γλῶσσαν.[77] Dionysus / Bacchus is also identified with the bull in the *Paean in Dionysum* of Philodamus Scarpheus.[78]

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73. Diod. Sic., 1.19.4, 6: εἶναι γὰρ τὸν Ὄσιριν φιλογέλωτά τε καὶ χαίροντα μουσικῇ καὶ χοροῖς. διὸ καὶ περιάγεσθαι πλῆθος μουσουργῶν, ἐν οἷς παρθένους ἐννέα δυναμένας ᾄδειν καὶ κατὰ τὰ ἄλλα πεπαιδευμένας, τὰς παρὰ τοῖς Ἕλλησιν ὀνομαζομένας Μούσας [...] (6) κατὰ δὲ τὴν Αἰθιοπίαν διδάξαντα τοὺς ἀνθρώπους τὰ περὶ τὴν γεωργίαν [...] ("For Osiris was laughter-loving and fond of music and the dance; consequently he took with him a multitude of musicians, among whom were nine maidens who could sing and were trained in the other arts, these maidens being those who among the Greeks are called the Muses [...] In Ethiopia he instructed the inhabitants in agriculture", transl. C. H. OLDFATHER). Also Plut., *Mor.*, 356B; Tibullus, 1.7.37 and f.: *ille liquor docuit uoces inflectere cantu / mouit et ad certos nescia membra modos*.

74. Cf. Hecat., *FGrH* 264 F 25 (p. 58.25); Diod. Sic., 1.14.1; 1.15.6; 1.17.1.

75. Also Diod. Sic., 1.15.6; 1.19.6.

76. Parshia LEE-STECUM (1998), p. 216-217.

77. Hrd., 2.144, 42; Diod., 1.13.4, 1.25.2; Plut., *Mor.*, 356B, 362B, 364E; Serv. auct., ad *Aen*. 11.287.

78. J. U. POWELL (1925), p.165.

But agriculture, arboriculture and viticulture are also the themes of the *Georgics* I and II. Osiris / Apis' myth must be the mythological substratum of the work, and aims to represent the themes of these parts of the *Georgics*. Moreover, the bull is the animal *par excellence*[79] for the *arator* in *Georgics* 3, and one of the animals which in Book 3 falls victim to its erotic instincts and finally to the Noricum plague, thus nullifying all the *labor* of the *tristis arator* (3.517) and leaving him with the work undone (3.519). Furthermore, in Book 1, Virgil places man and animal on an equal footing[80] as regards their labour in the fields (*hominumque boumque labores*, 118) and states that it was the will of Jupiter that tillage be an arduous task (*haud facilem esse uiam uoluit*, 1.122). Given now that Osiris was also the inventor of the plough,[81] the bull appears to become the symbol of all the constituents of the *Georgics*. The myth, therefore, of the bull seems to represent not only all previous parts of the *Georgics* but also both the *arator* and his labour. The unity in experience shared by the animal, the man and the poet—and encapsulated in the word *labor*[82]—seems to be one of the central themes if not *the* central theme of the *Georgics*.[83]

The Bees

After the death of the bull the new hive will be created.

It has already been noted that the bees and their communal life in the hive in Book 4 represent human society.[84] But it can also be argued that the

79. Not only in Virgil. Cf. Hom., *Il*., 2.480-481: βοῦς ἀγέληφι μέγ᾽ ἔξοχος ἔπλετο πάντων / ταῦρος. ὁ γάρ τε βόεσσι μεταπρέπει ἀγρομένῃσι ("As a bull in a herd stands out far the chiefest, since he is preeminent among cattle as they gather", transl. A. T. MURRAY and revised by W. F. WYATT). See also Hrd., 2.41. Man and bull are also *socii*: R. THOMAS (1987), p. 237; L. MORGAN (1999), p. 108 and f.

80. An obvious Lucretian influence: M. GALE (1991), p. 416 and f.; L. MORGAN (1999), p. 108 and f.

81. Tib., 1.7.29: *primus aratra manu sollerti fecit Osiris*. R. MALTBY (2002), *ad loc*. Cf. also Servius, *ad Georg*. 1.19 and 147.

82. R. THOMAS (1982), p. 75 and f.

83. This is clearly shown in many ways and in the repetition of the word *labor* within a small number of verses and each time in different context: 4.106: *nec magnus prohibere labor* and 4.114: *ipse labore manum duro terat* for the bee-keeper who is never called with that name; 4.6. *in tenui labor*; 4.116-117: *atque equidem, extremo ni iam sub fine laborum / uela traham* for the poet's person; and at 4.156-157: *uenturaeque hiemis memores aestate laborem / experiuntur* for the bees; and at 4.184 in the gnomic looking phrase: *omnibus una quies operum, labor omnibus unus*. But the most prominent use of the word in Book 4 concerns Orpheus' vain attempts to bring his Eurydice back to life: *effusus labor* (4.492) to reconfirm what the poet has said in Book 3: *quid labor aut benefacta iuuant*? (3.525). R. THOMAS (1987), p. 256 and f.

84. E.g. R. THOMAS (1982), p. 70 and f.; (1987), p. 247 and (1988), p. 21-22.

bees here may represent poets[85] and poetry in particular,[86] a trope gradually formed (from Homer, Hesiod[87] and Pindar[88] to Callimachus[89]). At *Georg*. 4.6, Virgil, speaking for himself, states that from his own poetic *labor* with the microcosm (*in tenui*[90] *labor*) the fame (*gloria*) attained will not be small.[91] At 4.205, bees attain *gloria* from the production of honey (*generandi gloria mellis*). This association between bees and honey with the poet and his poetry—also found in other texts—, is enhanced by a set of metaphors from Plato's *Ion*. In particular:

(1) Plato says: κοῦφον[92] γὰρ χρῆμα ποιητής ἐστιν καὶ πτηνὸν καὶ ἱερόν (534 b, "For a poet is a light and winged and sacred thing", transl. LAMB). Virgil describes bees as "levium *spectacula rerum*" (4.3) when he introduces his theme to Maecenas, and further down he uses the word *leues* at 4.55 (as well as at 4.314 in a simile).

(2) Plato emphatically insists (533 d-534) that the poets are possessed by god (ἔνθεοι)[93]; he further insists on θείᾳ μοίρᾳ (the divine part), partaking in the poetic work.[94] Aristotle also considered the bees as having some divine element: [τὰ συγγενῆ ζῷα] οὐ γὰρ ἔχουσιν οὐθὲν θεῖον,

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85. J. GRIFFIN (1979), p. 78 note 18 had supported the opposite view; see also M. GALE (1991), p. 425 and note 58.

86. J. FARRELL (1991), p. 246-253.

87. Homer, *Il*., 1.249 Νέστωρ [...] τοῦ καὶ ἀπὸ γλώσσης μέλιτος γλυκίων ῥέεν αὐδή ("he from whose tongue speech flowed sweeter than honey", transl. A. T. MURRAY and revised by W. F. WYATT); *Od*., 8.171-172; 12.187; also Hes., *Theog*., 39-40, 83-84: M. L. WEST (1966), *ad loc*.; P. MURRAY (1996), ad Plat., *Ion*, 534 b1-2.

88. Pind., *O*., 7.7-9; *N*., 3.76-79: R. PFEIFFER (1968), p. 125-126 and *Excursus* to p. 126.

89. Mainly *Hymn* 2.110-112:

> Δηοῖ δ' οὐκ ἀπὸ παντὸς ὕδωρ φορέουσαι μέλισσαι,
> ἀλλ' ἥτις καθαρή τε καὶ ἀχράαντος ἀνέρπει
> πίδακος ἐξ ἱερῆς ὀλίγη λιβὰς ἄκρον ἄωτον.

90. Aratus, *Phaen*., 761: μόχθος μέν τ' ὀλίγος, τὸ δὲ μυρίον αὐτίκ' ὄνειαρ ("The effort is slight, but enormous is later the benefit [...]"): transl. D. KIDD (1997).

91. Cf. the word *gloria* again for the poet, at *Georg*. 1.168.

92. P. MURRAY (1996), *ad loc*.: "The association of wings and words goes back to Homer in the formulaic phrase ἔπεα πτερόεντα [...] Poets, of course, traditionally claimed to be divinely inspired and sacred to the Muses". See also the Callimachean πτερόεις: fr. 1.32 (Pf.).

93. Naturally, this view is shared by others; e.g., Democr., fr. D12, *apud* Clement., *Strom*., VI. 168.

94. Cf. καί μοι δοκοῦσι θείᾳ μοίρᾳ ἡμῖν παρὰ τῶν θεῶν ταῦτα οἱ ἀγαθοὶ ποιηταὶ ἑρμηνεύειν (535 a, "I believe it is by divine dispensation that good poets interpret to us these utterances of the gods", Lamb); (536 d); also: περὶ Ὁμήρου λέγεις ἃ λέγεις, ἀλλὰ θείᾳ μοίρᾳ καὶ κατοκωχῇ, ὥσπερ οἱ κορυβαντιῶντες [...]: (536 c).

ὥσπερ τὸ γένος τὸ τῶν μελιττῶν;[95] in a similar fashion Virgil says: *esse apibus* partem divinae mentis (4.220).[96]

(3) In Plato (534 a) [οἱ μελοποιοὶ] βακχεύουσι καὶ κατεχόμενοι, ὥσπερ αἱ βάκχαι, ἀρύονται ἐκ τῶν ποταμῶν μέλι καὶ γάλα ("[the lyric poets] act as frenzy-stricken and under possession—as the bacchants—they draw honey and milk from the rivers"): The Platonic verb ἀρύομαι (draw) becomes in Virgil the substantive "haustus[97] / *aetherios dixere*" (4.220-221) and *dixere* might be perceived as a reference to the Roman poet's sources.

(4) In Plato (534 a) οἱ ποιηταί [...] ἀπὸ κρηνῶν μελιρρύτων [...] δρεπόμενοι[98] τὰ μέλη ἡμῖν φέρουσιν, ὥσπερ αἱ μέλισσαι ("the poets bring us [...] the sweet they cull from honey-dropping founts [...], like the bees", transl. LAMB). In Virgil the bees that are created from the *bugonia*: *tenuem aera* carpunt (311). We note, therefore, that Virgil's verb corresponds to Plato's δρέπομαι (= *carpo*).[99]

In the Platonic text as well as in a considerable number of other Greek texts where the poets are related to bees and honey, the source of the poets' inspiration is often the flowers or a spring (ἐκ Μουσῶν κήπων τινῶν καὶ ναπῶν, "in certain gardens and glades of the Muses");[100] in Virgil there is a turn, one might say, towards the air and aether (*esse apibus partem diuinae mentis et haustus / aetherios dixere*, 220-221), an idea explained by the poet with a *namque* (221) and what follows it (*deum namque ire per omnis / terrasque tractusque maris caelumque profundum*, 221-222); for the god—Jupiter—is found everywhere, according to the Aratean proem to the *Phaenomena*.[101] This Virgilian turn, I would say, gives a new

95. Arist., *GA*, 761a; Verg., *Georg*. 4.219-221.

96. D. O. ROSS (1987), p. 210, rightly notes that from this passage we cannot prescribe any particular philosophic purpose to Virgil, like Pythagoreanism or Stoicism. See also S. BRAUND (1997), p. 209-210.

97. We should remember here of other instances in Latin poetry where the word *haustus* is used in a metaliterary way. Lucretius (1.412) for instance, applies the phrase "haustus *e fontibu' magnis / lingua mea suauis diti de pectore fundet*" whereas Horace (*Epist*., 1.3.10) writes: *Pindarici fontis qui non expalluit* haustus.

98. Cf. *AP*, 7.13: μέλισσαν / Ἡρινναν Μουσέων ἄνθεα δρεπτομένην: N. HOPKINSON (1988), p. 255.

99. See also *Georg*. 4.54, *purpureosque* metunt *flores*.

100. J. KORDATOS (1958), *ad loc*. Also Call., *Hymn*, 2.110-112 (note 89).

101. *Phaen*., 1: D. KIDD (1997), *ad loc.*, with further examples showing that the phrase had become a topos. See also Theocr., *Id*., 17.1 (A. S. F. GOW [1952], *ad loc*.); but even Call., fr. 1.34 (Pf.) and Virgil's *Ecl*., 3.60. Th. PAPANGHELIS (1994), p. 31-32; R. COLEMAN (1977), ad *Ecl*. 3.60; W. CLAUSEN (1994), *ibid*.

dimension to the source of poetic inspiration, which now could come from all kinds of sources (*omnem* / [...] *famam*, *Georg*. 4.285-286).[102]

(5) There is another major correspondence also between the poets in the Platonic *Ion* and the bees in the *Georgics*: In Plato the poets and Ion himself are likened to Corybantes (533 e-534 a, 536 c). The relation between Corybantes, Cybele and the Curetes is attested in antiquity;[103] in the *Georgics*, the bees are connected with the Phrygian goddess (40-41).[104] They are also connected with her cymbals when the beekeeper uses them in order to keep the bees from flying away: *tinnitusque cie et Matris quate cymbala circum* (64).[105] Again, in Virgil, the same technique seemed to be effective when they fed Jupiter. There they followed the sounds of the Curetes and their clashing bronze (4.150 and f.).[106]

(6) Plato chooses to present poets with the collective noun ὁρμαθός (533 d-e, a swarm, a cluster) in order to show their dependence from the divine δύναμις. Virgil, on the other hand, often uses words and phrases which highlight both their collective nature—a characteristic quality of the hive itself[107] (e.g., *obscurum trahi uento mirabere nubem*, 60; *densae miscentur*, 75-76; *concurritur*, 78; *glomerantur*, 79) and their dependence on their ruler, their king: *rege incolumi mens omnibus una est*, 212).

When we look at Virgilian phrases such as *genus immortale manet* (208) or *nec morti esse locum* (226)[108] concerning the bees and then see that the beehive dies and the bees *pulchramque petunt per uulnera mortem* (218), we might think that there is an inconsistency on the part of the poet. But both conditions may exist without making the text ambiguous if we are to think that death occurs to the individual bees[109] but the species enjoys

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102. One could support that in the phrase *aerii mellis* (4.1) there is a further allusion. See above, p. 156-157.

103. Strabo, 10.3.

104. D. O. Ross (1987), p. 196-197, combines the report of Phrygian Ida with the Trojan prehistory of Rome.

105. Cf. Varro, *RR*, 3.16.6: *Quae* [sc. *apes*] *cum causa Musarum esse dicuntur uolucres, quod et, si quando displicatae sunt, cymbalis et plausibus numero redducunt in locum unum*.

106. Also Lucr., 2. 618 and f.

107. Cf. *iamque arbore summa* / *confluere et lentis* unam *demittere ramis* (*Georg*. 4.557-558) recalling Hom., *Il*., 2.86-90: βοτρυδὸν δὲ πέτονται ἐπ' ἄνθεσιν εἰαρινοῖσιν (89). Such a vocabulary also comes from the technical description in Varro's *RR*, e.g., 3.16.29: ut uuae *aliae ex aliis pendent conglobatae*; J. Farrell (1991), p. 240.

108. Ph. Hardie (1998), p. 37-38; M. O. Lee (1996, p. 97-98) sees in lines 225-227 "a remarkable bit of Stoicism".

109. T. Habinek (1990), p. 219: "the bees of Book 4 are incapable of regenerating themselves, but rely on the intervention of the culture-hero Aristaeus".

immortality. This idea might be more clearly understood if we look at the things allegorized, that is poetry and the poets. Poetry is eternal and passes from one generation to the other. Virgil himself will announce the eternal nature of his poetry at *Aen.* 9.446-449, at the end of the Nisus and Euryalus episode.[110] But when we conceive eternity we should not only think of the everlasting quality[111] and the fame brought upon oneself by one's own poetry, but rather the eternity achieved through succession and poetic heritage. In Rome, succession had an important role to play and poets felt part of a cultural continuum, seen as the poetic tradition. In this continuum or tradition each generation of poets was succeeded by the next one and each poet working within that tradition often believed that his work was an important contribution to it.[112] It is this succession and continuity which ensures the perpetuity of poetry: *genus immortale manet, multosque per annos / stat fortuna domus, et aui numerantur auorum* (208-209).

In the *Georgics* the description of the bee world has been made in terms of an austere and loveless society[113] and heroism[114] is a prominent characteristic of theirs which they share with the epic world.[115] This becomes apparent, among other examples, at 218 *pulchramque petunt per uulnera mortem*[116] which clearly anticipates *pulchrumque mori succurrit in armis* at *Aen.* 2.317. I refer in particular to line 218, because it stands only a few lines before the beginning of the *bugonia* passage. The theme or war and collision runs throughout the *Georgics*.

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110. *Fortunati ambo! si quid mea carmina possunt, / nulla dies umquam memori uos eximet aeuo, / dum domus Aeneae Capitoli immobile saxum / accolet imperiumque pater Romanus habebit* (446-449), or Hor., *Odes*, 3.30, to give just two famous examples.

111. E.g., Apoll., *Argon.*, 4.1773-1775: αἵδε δ' ἀοιδαὶ / εἰς ἔτος ἐξ ἔτεος γλυκερώτεραι εἶεν ἀείδειν / ἀνθρώποις.

112. And this partly explains the *primus ego* syndrome and the allusivity of Roman poetry (also above, note 21).

113. Mainly R. Thomas (1982), p. 70 and f.; (1987), p. 247-248.

114. It has been repeatedly noted that the vocabulary used not only refers to the human communal life but it also recalls heroic terms.

115. I perfectly agree with R. Thomas (1982, p. 73), who believes that the society of bees "should not be made to represent an historical moment in the experience of the Roman people".

116. See further references in R. Thomas (1988) and R. A. B. Mynors (1990), *ad loc*.

Were we to draw conclusions, we might do so here: in the second half of Book 4 there is a recapitulation of the previous themes through the myth of the sacred bull and Apis; similarly, in the same part of the work the bees may represent poets and poetry. Each man—and each poet separately—is a social being with his *labores*,[117] his wars and losses. The sacrifice of the bull and of what it represents, from which a new bee-hive will spring, implies, or even suggests, the creation of a new poetry rejuvenated without the failing[118] symptoms[119] of an overworked poetic idiom. From the *Georgics* we proceed to the *Aeneid*.

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117. R. THOMAS (1987), p. 260.
118. R. THOMAS (1982), p. 78-79.
119. Like man, bees get sick and so does poetry. R. THOMAS (1991), p. 216; (1982), p. 85 and f.

Virgil, *Georg*. 4.281-317

Sed si quem proles subito defecerit omnis
nec genus unde nouae stirpis reuocetur habebit,
tempus et Arcadii memoranda iuuenta magistri
pandere, quoque modo caesis iam saepe iuuencis
insincerus apes tulerit cruor. altius omnem
expediam prima repetens ab origine famam.
nam qua Pellaei gens fortunata Canopi
accolit effuso stagnantem flumine Nilum
et circum pictis uehitur sua rura phaselis,
quaque pharetratae uicinia Persidis urget,
et diuersa ruens septem discurrit in ora
usque coloratis amnis deuexus ab Indis,
et uiridem Aegyptum nigra fecundat harena,
omnis in hac certam regio iacit arte salutem.
exiguus primum atque ipsos contractus in usus
eligitur locus; hunc angustique imbrice tecti
parietibusque premunt artis, et quattuor addunt
quattuor a uentis obliqua luce fenestras.
tum uitulus bima curuans iam cornua fronte
quaeritur; huic geminae nares et spiritus oris
multa reluctanti obstruitur, plagisque perempto
tunsa per integram soluuntur uiscera pellem.
sic positum in clauso linquunt et ramea costis
subiciunt fragmenta, thymum casiasque recentis.
hoc geritur Zephyris primum impellentibus undas,
ante nouis rubeant quam prata coloribus, ante
garrula quam tignis nidum suspendat hirundo.
interea teneris tepefactus in ossibus umor
aestuat, et uisenda modis animalia miris,
trunca pedum primo, mox et stridentia pennis,
miscentur, tenuemque magis magis aëra carpunt,
donec ut aestiuis effusus nubibus imber
erupere, aut ut neruo pulsante sagittae,
prima leues ineunt si quando proelia Parthi.
Quis deus hanc, Musae, quis nobis extudit artem?
unde noua ingressus hominum experientia cepit?
pastor Aristaeus fugiens […]

But it can happen that a man has lost
His whole new generation suddenly
And knows no means to renovate his stock.
Now therefore is the moment to reveal
The Arcadian master's memorable resource,
How often in the past the putrid blood

Of slaughtered cattle has engendered bees.
I will unfold the legend, tracing it
In every detail to its very source.
Where favoured Macedonian colonists
Dwell at Canopus by the wide expanses
Of the Nile's flood and sail about their fields
In painted skiffs, and where the neighbouring frontiers
Of quiver-bearing Parthians impinge,
And where the river in its long descent
Right from the swarthy Ethiopians
Splits, hastening to seven separate mouths,
And with black sand makes fertile Egypt green,
There all the land relies on this device.
First, for a site, a narrow spot is chosen
Confined for the very purpose. This they enclose
With a little tile-roof and constricting walls.
Four windows, opening to the four winds,
Admit a slanting light. Then next is sought
A bullock with two years' growth of curving horns.
Both nostrils and the life-breath of his mouth
Are plugged, for all his struggles. Finally
He is beaten to death, and with his hide unbroken
His flesh is pounded to pulp. In this condition
They abandon him shut up, with broken branches
Under his flanks and thyme and fresh-picked cassia.
All this occurs in the season when the Zephyrs
First ruffle the waves, before the fields begin
To redden with spring colours, and before
The chattering swallow hangs her nest from the rafters.
Meanwhile the moisture in those softened bones
Warms and ferments, and little animals,
An amazing sight, first limbless, then with wings
Whirring, begin to swarm, and gradually
Try the thin air, till suddenly, like rain
Shed from a cloud in summer, out they burst,
Or like a shower of arrows from the twang
Of bowstrings when swift Parthians start a battle.
Muses, what deity fashioned for us
This craft, or whence did this new human practice
Receive its impulse?
The shepherd Aristaeus, abandoning […] (transl. L. P. Wilkinson, 1982.)

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