SPRINGTIME FOR CAESAR: VERGIL'S *GEORGICS* AND THE DEFENCE OF OCTAVIAN

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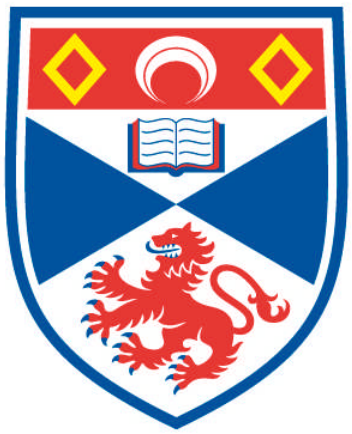

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Adam Bunni

Ph.D.

4th June 2009

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Abstract

Vergil's *Georgics* was published in 29BCE, at a critical point in the political life of Octavian-Augustus. Although his position at the head of state had been confirmed by victory at Actium in 31, his longevity was threatened by his reputation for causing bloodshed during the civil wars.

This thesis argues that Vergil, in the *Georgics*, presents a defence of Octavian against criticism of his past, in order to safeguard his future, and the future of Rome. Through a complex of metaphor and allusion, Vergil engages with the weaknesses in Octavian's public image in order to diminish their damaging impact. Chapter One examines the way in which the poet invokes and complements the literary tradition of portraying young men as destructive, amorous creatures, through his depiction of *iuvenes* in the *Georgics*, in order to emphasise the inevitability of youthful misbehaviour. Since Octavian is still explicitly a *iuvenis*, he cannot be held accountable for his actions up to this point, including his role in the civil wars.

The focus of Chapters Two and Three of this thesis is Vergil's presentation of the spring season in the *Georgics*. Vergil's preoccupation with spring is unorthodox in the context of agricultural didactic; under the influence of the Lucretian figure of Venus, Vergil moulds spring into a symbol of universal creation in nature, a metaphor for a projected revival of Roman affairs under Octavian's leadership which would subsequently dominate the visual art of the Augustan period. Vergil's spring is as concerned with the past as it is the future. Vergil stresses the fact that destructive activity can take place in spring, in the form of storms and animal violence; the farmer's spring *labor* is characterised as a war against nature, which culminates in the horrific slaughter of oxen demanded by *bugonia*. In each case destruction is revealed as a necessary prerequisite for some form of creation: animal reproduction, increased crop yield, a renewed population of bees. Thus, the spring creation of a new Rome under Octavian will come as a direct result of the bloodshed of the civil wars, a cataclysm whose horrors are not denied, but whose outcome will ultimately be positive. Octavian is assimilated to Jupiter in his Stoic guise: a providential figure who sends fire and flood to Earth in order to improve mankind.

Acknowledgments

This thesis would not exist without the support and influence of a great number of people. I should first of all like to thank the School of Classics at the University of St Andrews for supporting my research, both financially, through the generous grant of a Millar-Lyell award, and academically, through the assistance of many of its staff.

I cannot do justice here to the benefit which I have gained from the help of my supervisor, Roger Rees, over an association which has lasted more than five years, so I shall keep it mercifully brief for his sake. Roger has always known when to offer praise- warranted or otherwise, candour, learning, or Bob Dylan lyrics. Meetings with him have always solved my problems, or created new ones where further work was needed, but in either case have always been a joy. Most of all, I hope to inherit from Roger his unimpeachable sense of priorities.

I am also very grateful to Emma Buckley, whose scholarly eye I confess I did not submit my work to often enough, but who has always been extremely helpful when asked. I must also thank Yvan Nadeau and Anton Powell, both of whom have read and provided useful comments on drafts of much of this thesis, even in its early stages. I have not forgotten the man through whose erudition I was introduced to the *Georgics* as an undergraduate, Roy Pinkerton.

I should also like to thank the postgraduate community in the School of Classics at the University of St Andrews, which it has been a delight to be part of, though often *in absentia*. In particular, I am grateful to Hannah Swithinbank for her hospitality, Joe Howley, Gwynaeth McIntyre, and Jamie McIntyre.

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Contents

Introduction: ***haud facilem esse viam voluit***

Vergil's *Georgics* is an extraordinarily complex work; the more closely acquainted with the poem one becomes, the more complex it appears to be.[1] To attempt to provide a totalising interpretation of the *Georgics* is to attempt to cage sand. This has not stopped a growing cohort of scholars from trying to impose a unifying order on the poem's many themes, moods, registers. The *Georgics*' very difficulty allows it to sustain any number of different interpretations of its parts or whole, the majority of which are impossible to categorically refute by reference to the text.[2]

Until well into the twentieth century, the *Georgics* was still regarded as earnest in its ostensible aim to teach its readers about farming, the most common explanation for this being that Vergil was seeking to inspire a genuine revival in Roman agriculture. This view has long since gone out of fashion:[3] the vast majority of *Georgics* scholars now agree that the poem is either not truly didactic at all, or rather teaches something other than that to which it professes.[4] The realisation that the *Georgics* may, in fact, be more than it appears, led to the wealthy variety of scholarship in the last fifty years in particular. In her recent introduction to a volume of papers on the *Georgics*, Katharina Volk helpfully divided published research on the poem into two broad categories: the 'literary', and the 'ideological'.[5] The former consists of studies concerned chiefly with the poem *qua* literature, considering its intertextual affiliations, its status as "didactic" poetry, its position in literary history.[6] 'Ideological' readings of the poem, those which see the *Georgics* as intended to 'convey a message', and which are therefore necessarily concerned with the figure of the poet, the implied encoder of this message, have tended to exhibit trends in majority opinion, very often in response to prevailing movements in scholarship on

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[1] 'The *Georgics* is perhaps the most difficult, certainly the most controversial, poem in Roman literature'- Thomas (1988), 16. See also, Gale (1999), 15: 'the sheer difficulty of the poem is particularly striking in a genre which overtly claims to teach its reader'.

[2] Very often 'these interpretations respond to the enquirer's own intellectual and ideological concerns' (Volk, 2008: 1): for many, the poem itself seems to 'respond'.

In this thesis, 'the text' is that of Mynors (1990), with the one exception of line 4.455, where (with many others) I replace *ob* with *ad*: '*haudquaquam ad meritum poenas*'.

[3] With the notable exception of Spurr (1986).

[4] See, Effe (1977), 80-97, on the *Georgics* as this latter type of 'transparent' didactic.

[5] Volk (2008), 4-5.

[6] The outstanding candidates in this category are: Farrell (1991); Gale (2000); Perkell (1989).

the *Aeneid*.[7] This has led to a harmfully reductive division between those readings which regard the *Georgics* as generally "optimistic", or as "pessimistic", both in its overall worldview, and with regard to one of its most important addressees, Octavian, future emperor of Rome.[8] Historically, it has been the case that either the "optimists" or the "pessimists" held the dominant position in *Georgics* scholarship. The work of Klingner (1963), Otis (1964), and Buchheit (1972) helped to establish the orthodoxy of the "optimistic" reading: for them, Vergil was writing of the forthcoming revival of Roman affairs under Octavian-Augustus, a return to Golden Age plenty. The rise of the so-called "Harvard School" of Vergilian critics during the Vietnam War period of the 1960s and 1970s led to a shift towards a more "pessimistic" view of the *Georgics*, in line with a new, anti-imperial stance on the *Aeneid*: the sensitive Vergil had to be rescued from accusations that he was propagandising on behalf of a bloodthirsty imperialist, Octavian. This movement popularised the idea that there were 'two voices' in Vergil's work: one, on the surface, singing the praises of Octavian and Rome's imperial expansion, and another, "true" voice, lamenting the destruction of life and land caused by these two.[9] From this tradition there have emerged several prominent treatments of the *Georgics* as a whole, including Putnam (1979), and Boyle (1986), but the key figures latterly have been Ross (1987), and Thomas, whose 1988 commentary has proven highly influential, along with his several other works on Vergil. Thomas has preferred to classify Vergilian interpretations not as "optimistic" or "pessimistic", but rather as 'Augustan' or 'ambivalent'; he placed his own work, and that of the Harvard School, in the 'ambivalent' category.[10] This 'ambivalence' is essentially reducible to "pessimism" in most cases:[11] for example, in the introduction to his commentary on the *Georgics*, Thomas says: 'throughout, the complexity,

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[7] 'The methodologies and approaches critics bring to bear on the *Georgics* are often ones developed in the study of the *Aeneid*'- Volk (2008), 3. This continues to be the case, but, happily, more critics seem to be turning to the *Georgics* as a literary monument in its own right, rather than simply in order to further their understanding of the *Aeneid*. What once would have been a chapter on the *Georgics* in a book about Vergil's literary achievement in the *Aeneid* has more recently become a fully-fledged monograph on the poet's "middle" work itself.

[8] This dichotomy is regarded as 'facile' by Perkell (1989: 4). Her introduction (1989: 3-24) is excellent on the directions in scholarship on the *Georgics* in the twentieth century. For a more up-to-date roundup, see Volk (2008), 1-10.

[9] Parry (1963); Lyne (1987).

[10] Thomas (1990), 64-5. Thomas objects to the blanket title given to the "Harvard School", since its proponents come from many universities.

[11] Although Putnam (1979) is generally pessimistic, there is a strong sense of ambivalence in his reading of the poem.

ambivalence and ultimate darkness of the Virgilian world shine through'.[12] This 'ultimate darkness' cannot be reconciled with any genuine 'ambivalence' in the poem- the former negates the latter.[13]

In parallel to these "pessimistic" readings of the poem, there have appeared some works which attribute a more genuine ambivalence to the *Georgics*. Miles (1980: 62) argues that the poem offers several 'radically different visions of rustic life', without allowing any one to dominate. Perkell (1989: 7) suggests of the *Georgics* that 'there is no resolution of its conflicts', but this, she argues, is precisely the point: 'the ambiguities are not problems to be solved, but rather...the poem's deepest meaning'.[14] Gale, whose 1999 book is chiefly concerned with Vergil's intertextual relationship with Lucretius, takes a similar view: 'while the different "voices" which constitute Virgil's polyphonic text repeatedly contradict each other, none is allowed the last word'.[15]

For some, this idea of insoluble ambivalence has seemed like an admission of defeat in the endeavour to establish the *Georgics*' meaning, a submission to *aporia*. It was predictable that the "optimistic" camp, so long marginalised by the "pessimists", should launch a renewed assault on the *Georgics*' higher ground. In the late 1990s, several scholars in North America and, in particular, Germany, published new monographs on the *Georgics* which sought to return the poem to its former, "optimistic" status. Initially, however, this movement mostly reworked tried and tested material, and did not provide the novelty of approach which could rehabilitate the "Augustan" Vergil. Lee (1996) advanced a persuasive thesis which argued that Vergil's aim in the *Georgics* was to encourage Octavian to put aside the violence of his early years and to become a more benevolent ruler,[16] while recalling the work of Otis and Wilkinson from the 1960s. Meanwhile, Cramer (1998) not only ignored many disquieting passages in his reading of the *Georgics*, but actually emended the text of the poem to remove some 200 lines, including a section of 23 lines from the Noric plague scene.

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[12] Thomas (1988), 24.
[13] Cf. Ross (1987), 241: 'Virgil's pessimism is thorough, deep, and inescapable: there is no relief'.
[14] Perkell (1989), 17.
[15] Gale (1999), 272.
[16] This idea is addressed in Chapter One of my thesis, on Octavian as *iuvenis*. See especially pp. 64-77.

Clearly a greater subtlety of approach was required. This demand has resulted in the more recent trend towards what Volk has termed 'New Augustanism'.[17] The New Augustan movement would appear to be the inheritance of the traditions of "optimism", "pessimism", and of "ambivalence"; while New Augustans see the *Georgics* as ultimately positive in its view of Octavian, and of contemporary Rome, their approach is potentially more mature than that of their "optimistic" forebears, since they 'are attuned to the ambivalences and complexities of Vergil'.[18] Their stance is the polar opposite of Thomas' 'ambivalence', insofar as it accentuates the positives, retaining a cautious optimism in spite of the many negative images in the poem. Morgan's *Patterns of Redemption in Vergil's* Georgics (1999) is a dense, highly cumulative work, which regards the poem as 'a thorough-going exercise in Octavianic propaganda';[19] looking almost exclusively at the Aristaeus epyllion in *Georgics* 4, Morgan argues that Vergil makes detailed use of Stoic cosmology to present Octavian's political regime as a 'cosmic renewal', in order 'to place a positive gloss on the violent chaos which accompanied [its] establishment'.[20] Nappa (2005) applies a similarly Augustan agenda to a book-by-book analysis of the poem, but with the focus on Octavian, who, in the author's view, is the poem's chief addressee;[21] the *Georgics* is 'an attempt to engage in a constructive dialogue with Octavian on the potential courses available to him and on the potential interpretations of his character, achievements, and motives'.[22] The New Augustan grit in the face of the negative aspects of the *Georgics* is picked up by Powell in his *Virgil the Partisan* (2008). Powell provides a highly detailed historical basis for his theory that 'the nastiest aspects of Triumviral history and civil war are, in the *Georgics* and the *Aeneid*, painfully evoked and skilfully palliated';[23] disquiet thus becomes integral to the poem's Augustan ends.

This thesis would very likely be categorised as New Augustan, since it provides a reading of the *Georgics* which is fundamentally positive as regards Octavian, and is clearly indebted to the work of Morgan, Nappa, and Powell in particular. I should be resistant to such a reductive designation, though, because my

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[17] Volk (2008), 5.
[18] Volk (2008), 5.
[19] Morgan (1999), 1.
[20] Morgan (1999), 87. See Chapter Three, N35, for a more detailed account of Morgan's reading.
[21] Cf. Lee (1996).
[22] Nappa (2005), 2.
[23] Powell (2008), 272.

thematic reading of the *Georgics* unites material from all of the poem's four books, including passages traditionally considered incompatible with any "Augustan" reading of the poem, to suggest an endorsement for Octavian which not only pervades the text but is also *conditional*. In addition, this thesis draws upon a wide range of scholarship in order to advance its argument, even where that entails enlisting the help of "pessimists", such as Thomas and Ross. That the *Georgics* has positive things to say about Octavian has never been in question, but its "pessimistic" readers have implied that such praise is not genuinely felt by Vergil, and is not simply undercut, but actually reversed by the negative images of death and civil war which exist elsewhere in the poem. A statement from Ross (1987: 4) is representative of this approach to Vergil's politics:[24]

> 'In September of 31BC, when the battle of Actium left the world with a single leader, Virgil had been writing the *Georgics* for four years, and, though he had enjoyed the patronage of Maecenas during these years, we should not imagine that Octavian's victory filled him at the time with either hope or joy unconbounded'.

The presence of the (unusual) word 'unconbounded' is an important qualifier here, but Ross' overall reading of the poem imagines a Vergil who possessed neither hope nor joy in any respect. For Ross, this attitude in the poet comes in spite of his relationship with his patron, Maecenas, Octavian's right hand man. Maecenas figures in each of the four books of the poem; his name is something of a waypoint, appearing in the second line of Books 1 and 4, and the 41st line of Books 2 and 3 respectively. In the proem to Book 3, Vergil alludes to Maecenas' encouragement to finish the poem. Apparently postponing an epic treatment of Octavian's great deeds, he refers to his present, self-imposed confinement to the 'untouched woods and glades of Dryads' as conforming to the will of Maecenas (3.41-2):

> *interea Dryadum silvas saltusque sequamur*
> *intactos, tua, Maecenas, haud mollia iussa*

The *Georgics* was not a response to a direct commission, and, however 'ungentle' were Maecenas' prods,[25] Vergil was under no extreme duress to sing the praises of his

[24] Cf. Putnam (1979), 14: 'If we see the georgic experience...blending into the moment of contemporary Rome, the vision grows darker still'.
[25] Horsfall (1995: 97) suggests that *haud mollia* implies that the *iussa* were 'not so much insistent as difficult of fulfilment and different from the *mollitia* inherent to bucolic'.

master's master.[26] On the issue of Augustan literary patronage, Peter White has argued that 'the information we have about Augustus' relations with literary friends does not suggest that he intruded on their work any more than did other members of the elite';[27] 'Augustus dominated poetry by dominating public opinion, not by cultivating a literary policy'.[28] The evidence of Propertius, in particular, testifies to the fact that Maecenas, as Octavian's agent, was not an overbearing patron; the fact that he came under Maecenas' patronage even after writing bitterly about the Perusine war in 1.21 and 22, and later sang '*Pacis Amor deus est*', in 3.5, speaks of the lack of set rules laid down for the Augustan poets. Admittedly, Propertius was a special case, since his birthright meant that he was not financially dependent upon Maecenas' patronage. Horace, meanwhile, is an interesting counterpoint; his work is never critical of Octavian-Augustus, and tends to avoid touchy issues relating to the *princeps*.[29] This appears to be a result of his personal circumstances, rather than any Augustan stranglehold over him: as the son of a freedman, and someone who famously fought on the "wrong" side at the Battle of Philippi, in Brutus' army,[30] he must have felt beholden to Octavian for his generosity in sparing him.

Nevertheless, for all that he might not have 'cultivated a literary policy', the encouragement which Vergil received from Maecenas to finish his *Georgics* would suggest that Octavian did take a keen interest in the poets, and sought rather to cultivate a literary *heritage*. Vergil's relationship with Maecenas, and, by extension, with Octavian himself, is both cause and symptom of a generally positive outlook as regards the new Caesar in the *Georgics*. This relationship is said to have been close enough for poet and patron to have read the poem aloud to Octavian while he was ailing in the summer of 29 BCE.[31] For this reason, the reader should expect the poem to be positive, or at least even-handed, in its treatment of the future *princeps*. Those readers of the poem who regard Vergil as a "subversive" poet, expressing a subtle ambivalence about Octavian, face the task of explaining how Octavian and his

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[26] The *Georgics* is 'certainly not propaganda in the sense of a commission imperiously handed down to the poet by Octavian or Maecenas'- Morgan (1999), 6. If nothing else, it is hard to imagine what sort of commission should have resulted in so unusual a work as the *Georgics*.
[27] White (1993), 206.
[28] White (1993), 208.
[29] Cf. Gurval (1995), 137-65. Horace does express disquiet about the civil wars in his *Epodes*, especially 9, but, crucially, he 'never addressed in his poetry the former role of the *princeps* in civil war' (165).
[30] Hor. *Epist.* 2.2.
[31] *Vita Donati*, 25, 27. Even Thomas (1988: 1), whose Vergil is critical of Octavian, sees no cause to question this claim.

adherents, being as they were immersed in the political and literary climate of the 30s BCE can have failed to notice this subtle ambivalence which they, divorced from that setting, have managed to detect.[32] This would seem especially implausible when one considers the evidence that 'the *princeps* was an...astute reader, whose outspoken wit found literary targets';[33] for example, a letter to the poet Horace in the *Vita Horatii* (47), which survives within the Suetonian corpus, testifies to the emperor's breadth and depth of reading. One could make the argument that, by their very detachment from the setting contemporary to the *Georgics*, modern scholars may be able to view the politics of the work with greater objectivity, but this would overlook the fact that there existed a genuine and sizeable opposition to Octavian among the elite in Rome in the early 20s BCE: people who did not believe the hype surrounding the new Caesar, and would have an ear attuned to dissenting voices about him. The lack of surviving testimony regarding a "subversive" reading of the *Georgics* by its ancient audience does not, of course, preclude there having been one, but the evidence of Octavian's relatively benign treatment of his critics during this period would suggest that such a document would not necessarily have been suppressed. As Jasper Griffin has pointed out,[34] Octavian allowed Asinius Pollio, former aide to Antony and once Vergil's literary patron, to remain at Rome, and the historian Timagenes, who was accustomed to making jokes at the expense of the imperial family, is reported in Seneca's *De Ira* (3.23.4-8) to have been banned only from the *princeps*' palace.[35] If Vergil wished to censure Octavian, therefore, it was not necessary for him to do so covertly. Indeed, as someone with much to gain from Octavian's success, it was in Vergil's interest to make plain any criticism he had of the *princeps*' past, or future direction. The *Georgics* is genuinely critical of the civil wars,[36] and, by extension, Octavian, but is, insists Morgan, 'uncompromisingly so'.[37] Such a negative approach can serve a positive, didactic purpose: to make Octavian aware of his own responsibility for Rome's current situation, and the challenges facing him in his efforts to restore peace.[38]

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[32] Morgan (1999), 10-11.
[33] Goldberg (2005), 205.
[34] Griffin (2008=1979), 247-8.
[35] Since Seneca is elsewhere critical of Octavian-Augustus, there is no reason to believe that his testimony is tainted by bias. See the treatment of his *De Clementia* in Chapter One of this thesis, p. 25.
[36] The close to Book 1 is unflinching in its portrayal of Rome's descent into ruin during the civil wars: '*ubi fas versum atque nefas*' (1.505). See especially: 1.505-8, 510-11; also: 2.496, 510.
[37] Morgan (1999), 13.
[38] See Nappa (2005), on Octavian as 'student' of the *Georgics*.

As I have suggested, this thesis is in some ways the inheritance of its 'New Augustan' precursors. As do Morgan, Nappa, and Powell, I see the violence and destruction which occurs in the *Georgics* as integral to its political message- one which is nonetheless positive with regard to Octavian. Unlike Ross, I see a great hope for the future in the poem, but a contingent one: Vergil knows that Octavian is by no means perfect, nor the ideal candidate to lead Rome into a bright future, but believes that he is the *best available option*. It is his awareness of Octavian's flaws, and his bloodstained past, which motivates him to approach writing the *Georgics* in the way he does. For all that it was not directly commissioned, the *Georgics* **is** propaganda for Octavian;[39] Vergil is aiming to sell his choice for Rome's ruler to his readership.[40] Vergil stood to benefit personally if the horse he backed came in first: the *Georgics* could be expected to share in the reflected glory of a successful Octavian. The interdependence of Vergil's and Octavian's fame is expressed by the poet in the proem to Book 3:[41]

> *in medio mihi Caesar erit templumque tenebit:*
> *illi victor ego*
> 3.16-17.

Vergil[42] vows to build a monument with Caesar in the middle 'for me', while the poet will be *victor* 'for him'; the implication is that, for each, their position must be validated by the other.[43]

The service which Vergil could provide for Octavian was in making a convincing case for his defence. That such overtures were necessary is best expressed by Powell: 'the series of defeats, military and moral, inflicted upon Octavian by Sextus Pompeius in the years 42 to 36 enduringly damaged the future emperor's

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[39] Morgan (1999: 7-8) does an excellent job of dismissing the argument that poetry and propaganda are somehow mutually exclusive.
[40] In this I differ from Morgan (1999: 9), who believes that 'private ethical or political beliefs are of little or no relevance to the creative process'. If the *Georgics* is, as he says, propaganda, but was not a commission, from what source has come Vergil's inspiration to write it?
[41] See Powell (2008), 273.
[42] Throughout this thesis I shall refer to the narrator of the *Georgics* as "Vergil". While my reading of the poem is unashamedly intentionalist, the designation of its narrator as "Vergil" is in no way dependent upon such a reading, since he refers to himself as '*Vergilium me*' at 4.563. The fact that this Vergil might not be identical to the historical Vergil, the poet, is no impediment here. See pp. 15-18 for more on the issue of intentionality in reading the *Georgics*.
[43] The balance between Vergil and Octavian is reiterated in the *sphragis* which closes Book 4. There, Octavian is *victor* (4.561), but it is not he, but Vergil, who closes out the poem.

reputation *and his prospects*'.[44] Octavian's past was potentially so injurious to his future that it could not simply be ignored, but needed to be tackled directly. In the *Georgics*, therefore, Vergil deliberately engaged with the perceived weaknesses in Octavian's public image in order to diminish their impact,[45] and to promote confidence in him as Rome's best hope for reviving her fortunes. This thesis is concerned chiefly with the manner in which Vergil sought to address, and to alleviate, the gravest of Octavian's flaws: his responsibility for prolonging the destructive civil wars which Rome had endured for so much of the first century BCE. In the name of his adoptive father, Julius Caesar, Octavian had brought about the deaths of many Romans in battle, the executions of many proscribed senators,[46] and the confiscation of land from innocent Italian country folk to reward his veteran soldiers. This thesis identifies within the *Georgics* an engagement with the civil wars which is far more pervasive than has been suggested previously, especially in a reading which views the poem as displaying an essentially benign attitude towards Octavian.

Since this thesis focuses on what I perceive to be the political content of the *Georgics*, it is organised thematically, drawing upon each of the poem's four books wherever it is relevant to my argument. In this respect, it differs from the majority of book-length treatments of the poem, which usually adopt a book-by-book format, including that of the New Augustan, Nappa. He defends this approach by arguing that non-linear, topical analyses tend to privilege certain passages in the poem at the expense of others.[47] This is a valid point, but it could equally be said that linear studies are vulnerable to the same criticism, since they tend to afford more attention to those passages which seem subjectively more important than others.[48] In addition, they tend to restrict the author's ability to monitor the development of certain themes over the course of the poem as a whole; since Vergil's own sequence of topics in the *Georgics* can at times seem bewildering, strict adherence to it in studying the poem can mean that two paragraphs treating the same theme are separated by multiple pages covering disparate topics: each time any one theme recurs, dropped threads must be picked up and tied together. By contrast, the passages referred to in this thesis are necessarily and unashamedly "cherry-picked" in order to advance its argument; I see

[44] Powell (2008), 18.
[45] 'Vergil...is shaping his poem to reverse the weakest aspects of Octavian's reputation'- Powell (2008), 261.
[46] See Powell (2008: 56) on 'proscription' as a euphemism.
[47] Nappa (2005), 3.
[48] Putnam (1979) is arguably an exception to this rule.

no other way of concentrating on its chosen themes. However, those passages cited are just as likely to come from sections of the poem traditionally viewed as earnest agricultural didactic, as from the prominent set-pieces which complement this material; in this respect my thesis differs from the majority of readings of the *Georgics*, which tend to focus heavily upon the latter type,[49] generally held to be the key to the poem's meaning. At any rate, the complexity of the *Georgics* prevents holistic analysis of all of its verses, all of its themes. This thesis presents only one reading of the poem; it seeks to explain the poem's method in pursuing what, in my view, is the most important of its aims: diminishing the impact of the civil wars in the reception of Octavian.[50] It is, therefore, not necessary to infer from this reading that any other interpretations of the *Georgics*, which focus on its many other aspects, are to be considered somehow "incorrect", except for the fact that it obviously militates against the idea that the poem reflects a negative attitude towards Octavian. Many other scholarly readings of the *Georgics* can comfortably be taken, in whole or part, alongside my own reading, including even much of the work of so-called "pessimists", in order to form a more complete picture of the poem as a whole, its themes and methods.

This thesis argues that the *Georgics* aimed to teach its readers to accept Octavian as their best hope for the future: it therefore advances a view of the poem as effectively didactic. In this respect, the *Georgics* satisfies Bernd Effe's classification of the 'transparent' type of didactic poetry;[51] while it appears to teach its readers about agriculture, it actually teaches them about contemporary politics. In Volk's view, this kind of final didacticism is immaterial to a poem's classification as didactic poetry: her criteria for qualification of a work as didactic poetry consist entirely in its formal appearance, its self-consciousness of being at once didactic and poetic.[52] The *Georgics*, as Volk illustrates, meets these criteria, and is, therefore, formally *ordinary*;[53] I would argue, however, that the manner in which the poem imparts its political precepts is pertinent to its classification as didactic poetry, and constitutes a

[49] Sometimes this focus on the poem's set-pieces is nearly exclusive, as in the case of Morgan (1999), a New Augustan work.
[50] Cf. Nappa (2005), 2: 'I do not pretend that it is the only, or even the best way to read the poem'.
[51] Effe (1977), 80-97.
[52] Volk (2002), 36; 246-7. 'It is useful to regard the didactic nature of so-called didactic poems not as having anything to do with the historical author's actual intention of teaching his readers, but rather as a purely formal feature' (2002: 246).
[53] Volk (2002), 119-156.

development of the "genre". Didactic literature before and after Vergil, both poetry and prose, is heavily reliant upon simile and analogy as a means of communicating its teachings; nowhere is this technique more expertly used than by Lucretius, who manages to explain the finer points of Epicurean atomism through reference to everyday experience. It is implied of the 'transparent' type of didactic poetry, however, that since its true teachings are not those on the poem's surface, they are somehow more indirect in their dissemination. Appropriately, therefore, Vergil's primary method for broaching the issue of Octavian, and of the civil wars, was through the use of metaphor and symbolism. Such an oblique approach might appear counter-intuitive, given the poem's suggested didactic aim: surely the most effective lessons are those easiest to comprehend? Not so, in respect of the *Georgics*' political message: Vergil's indirect approach was precisely what was needed in the circumstances within which he composed his poem, for two principal reasons. First, Vergil was aware that his elite audience, many of whom were public citizens, would baulk at any brazen attempt to influence them politically; it was one thing to praise Octavian, but quite another to lecture others about him, especially when one intended to raise the topic of the civil wars and the proscriptions, in which many of their number had been killed. Second, the *Georgics* was written at a time when Octavian's position as Rome's sole ruler was far from certain; even after victory at Actium left him with no truly formidable opponents, his future was still unclear, not least because of his long history of health problems.[54] The more openly Vergil exhibited himself as Octavian's man, the more difficult it would be for him to survive the new Caesar's potential downfall. The *Georgics*' oblique teaching method thus allowed it to address sensitive political issues in a manner which formal didactic could not match.

This is not to mention the attraction to Vergil of literary artifice for its own sake; like his contemporary, Propertius, Vergil was not averse to making his work dense and difficult to read, following the Alexandrian tradition which had been revived in the Latin language by Catullus, and the neoterics.[55] Like his Jupiter, Vergil 'did not wish the way to be easy' (*G*1.121-2):

pater ipse colendi
haud facilem esse viam voluit

[54] Octavian's history of ill health is discussed in greater detail in Chapter One, pp. 71-2.
[55] Horsfall (1995: 79) sees in the *Georgics* 'an element of sporting challenge, of clues to unravel, even a sort of learned fun'.

Vergil is a difficult poet, but nowhere is he more so than in the *Georgics*. To a large extent, the elusiveness of the *Georgics* relative to Vergil's other works is the result of its genre. The *Eclogues* are necessarily limited in scope by their pastoral genre, while the *Aeneid*, for all its breadth and depth, must provide the reader with a narrative to follow. The speaker of the *Georgics* is troubled neither by the conflicting voices of Arcadia, nor the epic demand for a "story":[56] he is free to exert himself fully over his text, to make it as whimsical, as diverse as he wishes. In addition to this, the *Georgics* is, throughout, more minutely metaphorical than Vergil's other works. I have already suggested that the poem's political content is largely disseminated through the use of metaphor and symbolism on a macro level, but it is far less controversial to view the *Georgics* as highly metaphorical on micro level. For example, Vergil consistently refers to agriculture in terms appropriate to warfare,[57] as well as frequently applying human emotions both to animals and to the natural world in general. In doing so, Vergil seeks to validate his choice of agriculture as his ostensible topic for poetic discourse. Although there has been much recent work done on the undoubtedly widespread use of metaphor and imagery in the *Aeneid*,[58] the poem's anthropocentric subject matter means that this sort of "apologetic" use of metaphor is not needed. In the *Eclogues*, meanwhile, Vergil's adherence to his Theocritean model prevents the frequent use of metaphor due to its pretence of orality, and the affected rusticity of its diction.

The three chapters of this thesis argue that it is chiefly through the *Georgics*' presentation of young men, *iuvenes*, and the spring season, that Vergil attempts to rehabilitate Octavian, and, more remarkably, even the civil wars themselves; neither of these aspects has been treated- or even identified- as a theme in any previous reading of the poem. Since I regard the *Georgics* as propaganda on Octavian's behalf, my primary concern is with the effect of the poem's treatment of these themes on its audience's reception of their new ruler. In addition, this thesis explores the possibility that the *Georgics* holds advice for Octavian himself.[59]

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[56] Volk (2002), 156.
[57] See Chapter Three, '*Militia culturae*' (pp. 172-5), on agriculture as assimilated to warfare.
[58] Most of this work follows Pöschl (1962).
[59] This approach naturally takes in the work of Nappa (2005), and Lee (1996), on Octavian as the poem's didactic addressee, as well as that of Hardie (2004): 'Virgil also puts the young *princeps*

The first chapter considers the role of the *iuvenis* in the *Georgics*: Octavian is referred to, in 1.500, as '*hunc...iuvenem*', thus connecting him inextricably with the other characters depicted as *iuvenes* in the poem. Proceeding from initial discussion of the literary tradition of negative presentation of young men, the chapter examines how far Vergil's depiction of *iuvenes* is consistent with this inherited tradition. Over and above his literary source material, the poet engages with another form of intertext: the historical youth of Octavian.[60] The behaviour of the other juvenile characters in the *Georgics* is in some cases analogous to the behaviour of Octavian in his early years, or more accurately, to the public perception of Octavian's youth. This chapter attributes a more traditional, epideictic approach to Vergil's treatment of youth in the *Georgics* than the predominantly metaphorical discourse of the second and third chapters; the poet presents largely negative *exempla* of juvenile conduct in order to emphasise the inevitability of destructive behaviour among young men. Ultimately, the chapter seeks to discern Vergil's aims in his treatment of youth in the *Georgics*, to recover whatever messages might lie in store for the poem's Roman audience.

The second chapter treats Vergil's depiction of the spring season in the *Georgics*. Spring is given a monopoly over creative and generally pleasant aspects of country life which conflicts with the georgic reality to which the poem ought, ostensibly, to adhere. The novelty of this approach is considered in comparison with the depiction of the seasons in Vergil's literary predecessors. The role of the spring season as a symbol, rather than a literal truth, opens up a discourse with Lucretius, whose Venus, and *natura creatrix* are seen to be influential over Vergil. The *Georgics*' fertile spring is similarly painted in broad brushstrokes; its value as a symbol is, at a basic level, contingent upon its lack of specificity: like the imagery of abundance in Augustan art, the emphasis is on the generally positive, rather than the detail. Spring functions as a metaphor for the renewal of Roman affairs which Vergil foresees under the leadership of Octavian.

The third and final chapter assesses the impact of the presence of spring violence upon the *Georgics*' figurative discourse. Storms, sexual violence, and the

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himself in the role of pupil' (110). See also Braund (1998), on 'Praise and Protreptic in Early Imperial Panegyric'.

[60] *Pace* Fowler (1997), 120: 'texts cannot relate to historical events or institutions but only to stories about those events or institutions, whether told by ancients or moderns'. My thesis need not conflict with Fowler's statement, since my concern is with the public perception of Octavian's history, which would have been informed by such 'stories'. My approach to this issue is less minutely allegorical than that of Powell (2008), but can be considered complementary to his.

horrific *bugonia* are all spring events, which moderate the season's function as a symbol of unbridled creation. The complexity of Vergil's seemingly ambivalent depiction of the spring season is something that separates the *Georgics*, with its tendency towards nuance in its symbolism, from the immediacy required by such propagandist works of Augustan art as the Ara Pacis Augustae and the *Carmen Saeculare*. Ultimately, spring's negative aspects enhance its potential as a metaphor for Rome's recent past, its present, and near future.[61] The equivocal nature of Vergil's symbolic scheme highlights the pragmatism of his approach to political didactic: he is neither forgetful of past wrongs, nor does he guarantee smooth sailing in the short term.

The final chapter is complemented by an Appendix, which discusses the problems posed by the two different accounts of *bugonia* provided by Vergil in *Georgics* 4. The description of Aristaeus' actions in the first *bugonia* (4.538-47) is incompatible- both in timing and detail- with the account of the practice which he bequeathed to posterity, detailed earlier in Book 4, at 295-314. In some respects the two versions of *bugonia* can be reconciled, but it may be the case that they need not be, that Vergil is being deliberately incongruous.

Each chapter of the thesis closes with a discussion of Vergil's legacy in the literature and visual art of the Augustan period. Augustan art draws heavily upon the themes of spring, birth and sacrifice popularised by Vergil in the *Georgics*; the Ara Pacis Augustae, in particular, is testament to the currency of symbolism of this kind in Augustan Rome. The use of Vergil's poem as a source for the pictorial vocabulary of the new era implies nothing about the poet's intentions, propagandist or otherwise, but rather testifies to the poem's *effective* role as proto-Augustan propaganda. Vergil's reception of Augustan, and proto-Augustan Rome in his *Eclogues*, *Georgics*, and *Aeneid* had a profound influence over officially-sanctioned representations of the period, both in the visual arts and in other media, such as the *Carmen Saeculare*. The poet's role in popularising the Golden Age motif, from *Eclogue* 4 through to *Aeneid* 8, especially, has been much discussed in scholarship over the years. The high level of correspondence between Vergil's (and Horace's) depiction of the Golden Age, and its manifestations in Augustan visual art, have led some, such as Gilles Sauron, to

[61] While this chapter is indebted to Morgan (1999), its focus is less restricted to *Georgics* 4. In addition, his treatment of what I term 'creative destruction' is not allied to any discussion of spring.

propose a degree of direct involvement from the poets in the selection of themes and methods suitable for celebrating the new regime:

> 'Si les decors essentiels de la Rome augustéenne prétendent illustrer les thèmes d'un plan divin...c'est parce que le texte et les décors sont issus de la même source, les débats qui agitaient le premier cercle du pouvoir augustéen en 29..., à une époque où Mécène et Virgile y occupaient une place à part, décisive et solidaire'.[62]

The image of Vergil taking part in high-level policy debates on Augustan propaganda is incompatible with my conception of the *Georgics* as a work which, while it does have the purpose of endorsing Octavian as Rome's best hope for the future, was not a response to a commission, and does not, therefore, reflect any sort of externally-imposed official line. Vergil did not consult with the artists of such monuments as the Ara Pacis, nor their employers, on the finer points of their work; his influence over them consisted in his development of affecting motifs for promoting Octavian which could easily be transferred to visual art, and were, therefore, widely adopted in pictorial representations of the Augustan era.[63] This is not to suggest that Augustan art was produced in a vacuum; this thesis simply does not allow the scope to discuss the considerable impact of earlier visual traditions upon Augustan art.[64]

Insofar as it often proceeds from consideration of Vergil's literary precursors, this thesis contains a definite intertextual element. More importantly, though, since my reading of the *Georgics* is dependent upon the *development* of themes across the four books of the poem, it is one which is necessarily *intra*textual. What Vergil has to say about a particular theme at one point in the poem is often moderated, complemented, or even contradicted, by what he says at another point in the text. Although most readers of the *Georgics* will approach the poem in a linear fashion, at

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[62] Sauron (2000), 115.
Sauron suggests that the acanthus reliefs of the Ara Pacis Augustae present a precise allegory for the Battle of Actium and the Rome of the early Augustan period- 'l'histoire végétalisée'. His argument is ingenious, but vulnerable to criticism due to its intricacy: so recondite an allegory would surely have occurred to very few viewers of the Ara Pacis, and must therefore have been limited in its impact as propaganda.

[63] 'Since the artistic and the poetic expressions which grew out of certain key events, like the victory over the Parthians or the Secular Games, share to a great extent the same themes and slogans, we must assume that leading artists very quickly got wind of the new imagery formulated by the poets'- Zanker (1988), 107.

[64] On this issue, see Castriota (1995). Castriota has suggested that 'it is unwise to accord excessive authority to...poetry in attempting to recover the sense and intent of Augustan art' (1995: 9). While he does make use of literary evidence in his study of the Ara Pacis, its role in influencing the altar's visual style is unclear in his work.

least on their first reading, it is a work which invites the reader to revisit certain sections in light of others, to skip back and forth in search of meaning.[65] Identification of those points in the text where Vergil forms an intratextual connection back (or forward) to another passage is a necessarily subjective enterprise. In this respect, the concept of intratextuality raises the same questions of ideology as does *inter*textuality, but can equally benefit from much of the discourse on its more (in)famous sibling, since its mechanics are remarkably similar. Andrew Laird's comments on intertextuality and ideology are particularly instructive:

> 'An intertext is constituted by whoever sees it...the very detection of an intertext- no matter how palpable, demonstrable and well attested- is in the end ideologically determined'.[66]

I should readily concede that the points in this thesis at which I adduce a correspondence between two (or more) sections of the text of the *Georgics* (intratextuality), or between a passage in Vergil's text and one in a separate text (intertextuality), are the result of an interpretive process on my part: I have read these connections *into* the *Georgics* (sometimes following other scholars who have "seen" the same links). However, the extent of my observance of this particular aspect of intertextual theory is heavily moderated by another, key component of my ideological approach to the poem. It will be clear already that this thesis implies no small amount of authorial intention behind the composition of the *Georgics*, and would thus be met with the distaste of those critics with a Barthesian bent.[67] My position is thus closer to that of Hinds, who argues that the emphasis placed upon the "death of the author"[68] by proponents of such 'intertextual fundamentalism'[69] is 'an invitation to unconditional surrender' in the face of the irretrievability of the author's actual intentions- an invitation to be rejected.[70] If meaning is created at the point of reception, as Laird and others have suggested, then the very fact that the text's recipient, the reader, so often attempts to construct authorial intention makes it a

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[65] Sharrock (2000), 7: 'intratextuality is about how bits need to be read in the light of other bits, but it is also about the bittiness of literature'.
[66] Laird (1999), 37. See also: Fowler (1997), 24: 'what counts as an intertext and what one does with it depends on the reader'.
[67] For example, Conte (1986), 27: 'In the philological tradition the imbalance in the favour of the author is decidedly unfruitful'. Nappa (2005: 4) admits an intentionalist approach to the *Georgics*.
[68] Barthes (1989=1968).
[69] Hinds (1998), 48.
[70] Hinds (1998), 144. Likewise, Farrell (2005), 100: the fact that we cannot prove that our interpretation coheres with the author's intentions 'is certainly an obstacle, but it should not be the end of the story'.

worthwhile pursuit for philological enquiry.[71] Besides, as Farrell argues persuasively with regard to intertextuality, there are occasions, such as when whole lines of Homer feature in Vergil simply transliterated, when we can confidently intuit authorial intention-[72] at least as far as to suggest that the author was consciously referring to another author, if not to explain *why* he chose to do so at this point.[73] As soon as the author has extended the invitation to look for intertext (and likewise *intra*text), he can no longer control the reader's capacity to find it:

> 'Vergil...makes it clear that he invites intertextual reading, and he even specifies some of the rules that govern interpretation of this sort. But I do not see that we can grant him full control over the process.'[74]

The reader of this thesis can take for granted, therefore, that my references both to inter- and intra-textuality, however subjective, imply an attempt to recover the intentions of the *Georgics*' author. Since I have permitted discussion of the historical Vergil already in this introduction, it is necessary that, for the purposes of this thesis, the author in question is not so much the 'model author', as the 'empirical author'.[75] Hinds (1998: 50) can once again be of service in defending this position:

> 'Vocabularies of reader-oriented intertextuality, even when modified to include "textual intentions" associated with "model authors"... can never be truly hospitable to the possibilities of tendentiousness, quirkiness, or sheer surprise which add spice to the allusive practices of real authors'.

Essentially, the 'model author' lacks the personality inherent to the production of a literary text,[76] especially one as undeniably 'quirky' and idiosyncratic as the *Georgics*. In much the same way as he alludes[77] to other texts in order to fashion meaning within his text, Vergil alludes to other passages within his own text for

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[71] Hinds (1998), 49.
[72] Some would suggest that this confidence remains misguided, but, at the very least, Vergil's statement of his own intent to sing an '*Ascraeum...carmen*' (2.176) insists upon an intertextual aspect to the *Georgics*.
[73] Farrell (2005), 100-1.
[74] Farrell (2005), 107.
[75] See Eco (1990), on the 'model author' as that constructed by the reader.
[76] Hinds (1998), 144: 'if we are to dramatize the immediacy of the interests at stake in the dynamics of appropriation, we must be prepared to personalize them'.
[77] Thomas' (1986) objection to the use of 'allusion', whose Latin root suggests a certain playful frivolity, is valid, but, as in so many cases, the English word can comfortably accommodate a more general meaning, so I see no reason not to use it. In the present context, the implication that allusion creates meaning militates against any notion that it is somehow 'frivolous'.

precisely the same purpose. For this reason, meaning in the *Georgics* is created only cumulatively, by the poet's visiting and revisiting of its themes, major and minor.[78]

[78] Which themes are 'major', and which 'minor' is an equally subjective issue.

Chapter One: Wayward Youth

A. Youth in Ancient Rome

i) Life in the margins

In the late Republic, the Roman political sphere was dominated by middle-aged and elderly men. While a man as young as 30, who had reached the status of quaestor, could enter the senate, it was the older members who would carry greater sway; these would mostly be men of consular rank, who would generally be over 42. The fact that the name of the body derives from *senex* highlights the senate's purpose as a means of drawing upon the wisdom of the state's senior citizens, much as the Spartan *gerousia*.[1] Under the Republic there was no retirement age for senators, and even when one was instituted under the Empire, it merely relieved an aged senator from his obligation to attend sessions, but it did not prevent him from attending if he wished to do so.[2] The senate's enduring respect for age is testified to by the fact that, under the Empire, 'whenever it was free to choose an emperor, its candidates were all men over retirement age- Galba, Nerva, Pertinax, Balbinus, and Pupienus'.[3]

In the individual household, *patria potestas* formalised the same hierarchy; the *paterfamilias* held power, legally even of life and death, over his descendants until he died, or chose to relinquish his authority.[4] This meant that, in some cases, a man could be an extremely powerful public citizen, even a consul, but, so long as his father survived, he could have no legal right to a say in the running of his own home, or, more correctly, *his father's* home, since the son could *own* nothing outright.[5] The son

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[1] *Gerousia* was, in fact, one of the terms used in Greek texts to refer to the senate- Talbert (1984), 495.
[2] Talbert (1984), 153.
[3] Talbert (1984), 153.
[4] *Patria potestas* granted the *pater* 'lifelong power over even adult sons'- Crook (1967), 119. Cf. Eyben (1993), 21: 'the young man's freedom was more often than not strictly limited as long as his father lived'.
[5] Even certain men 'who had held the highest offices in the state, who clearly had their separate domicile and conjugal family, could yet own not a penny and could acquire only for their *pater*'- Crook (1967), 119. Aulus Gellius, in his *Noctes Atticae* (2.2), demonstrates in two short stories the problems which could arise when a son outranked his surviving father. In the first of these, he tells the story of a certain governor of the province of Crete who, with his father, makes a visit to the philosopher Taurus. When they arrive at Taurus' house, there is only one available chair, which Taurus naturally offers to the senior gentleman. The governor's father, however, suggests that it would be more appropriate for his son to sit, since he is a magistrate (2.2.7). After some discussion, it is agreed that, while the magistrate takes precedence over his father in public, the father retains the rights of *pater* in private, and, since this is adjudged to be a private occasion, the father takes the seat (2.2.10).

was merely allowed to administer his own *peculium*, if the *paterfamilias* consented. In practice, of course, custom dictated that few *patresfamilias* actually exerted such a tight grip on their children, especially if their sons became prominent public figures, but the fact remains that the law allowed them to do so if they wished.[6]

In earlier times in the Republic, a young man would don the *toga virilis* at around the age of 17, and would immediately assume effective adult responsibility as a consequence. He would begin to take an active role in the day-to-day running of his father's household. However, even at this early stage, the decision as to whether or not the youth was ready to put on the *toga virilis* was one made by his parents, who considered their son's mental and physical condition before granting him this responsibility. As Roman social and political structures grew more complex, and the public duties of adult males became more significant, the responsibilities granted to the youth became fewer, and his position was more marginalised.[7] The law sought not only to restrict the political and commercial opportunities open to the youth, but to "protect" him from them. The *tutela impuberum*, which had ensured the continued education of youths beyond their childhood years, was gradually complemented by the *cura minorum*, leaving the young man with little freedom until the age of 25.[8] According to legislation pertaining to the *cura minorum*, until he was 25, a young man could not administer any business or legal matter without the consent of his *curator*.[9] Having provided the youth with sufficient protection from himself, the state sought to protect itself from his unwanted attentions. Critically, the *Lex Villia annalis* of 180BCE dictated that no man could enter public office until he reached the age of 27; once he reached this age he could hold the role of quaestor, the first rung on the *cursus honorum*, and enter the senate.[10] This age was raised to 30 by Sulla in the early first century BCE, and lowered again to 25 by Augustus, who, by way of exception, had himself been not quaestor, but consul, at the age of 19 or 20.[11] Dio, putting words

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[6] Crook (1967), 122: 'a powerful public opinion set limits to the conduct of the *paterfamilias* both in earlier and in later times'. Cf. Eyben (1993), 207.

[7] Eyben (1993), 8: 'throughout antiquity the capacity to act...had in practice more and more strings attached to it'.

[8] A man was a *minor* until he reached the age of 25, when the *maior aetas* began. See *Digest*, 4.1 (reproduced on p. 35).

[9] Eyben (1981), 330. The *Lex Plaetoria*, of 200BCE, made it possible for a *minor*, or his *curator*, on his behalf, to cancel any business contract he had made with an older man.

[10] The fact that the senate could contain men as young as 27 does render its name slightly paradoxical, but such men would be treated as junior senators by their older colleagues.

[11] There is evidence that, in the imperial period, a man could become quaestor as young as 24, i.e. in his twenty-fifth year, since he was allowed to count the years of his age inclusively- see Talbert (1984),

into Maecenas' mouth, suggests that it was considered ridiculous that a young man could have held public office any earlier than 25 or 30, at a time when he was not even able to administer his own goods.[12] In the late Republic, youths began to put on the *toga virilis*, by now merely symbolic, at the younger age of about 14 or 15. Since the young man was 'considered unfit to bear real responsibility', it follows that 'he was not seen as an adult'.[13] Thus, by the late Republic, youth, particularly between the ages of 14-17, and 25-30, had developed into a kind of "limbo", 'an ambiguous period of life...between the dependence of childhood and the total independence of adulthood'.[14]

The *iuvenis* was not, however, completely lacking in political influence of a more unofficial sort. In *Restless Youth in Ancient Rome*, Emiel Eyben tracks the role of the youth over the course of republican politics, concluding that, despite 'the resistance of the older generation...the influence exercised by youth on political life in the last decades of the Republic can hardly be overestimated'.[15] By way of example, Eyben cites the manner in which Catiline used the many young men who were captivated by his personality to carry out a great deal of unsavoury business on his behalf.[16] The service these young men provided was private; it would appear that, in general, young men did not hold public office, but for a few exceptions, since they were subject to the *Lex Villia Annalis*, and were therefore unable to be truly politically influential.[17]

ii) Literary Studies of Youth

The depiction of young men in ancient literature at once reflects and explains their marginal position in Roman public life. There are numerous studies of the characteristics of men at different stages of their lives extant in ancient literature, most of which provide a fairly consistent picture of how young men were perceived. A heavily influential precursor for surveys in the Latin language of the stages of a man's

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18. It is likely that this rationale applied in the republican period also, although the minimum age for entry to the senate was higher.
[12] Dio Cass. 52.20.1.
[13] Eyben (1981), 338.
[14] Kleijwegt (1994), 93.
[15] Eyben (1993), 64-5.
[16] Cf. Sall. *Cat.* 14.1; 14.5-6.
[17] *Pace* Kleijwegt (1991), 273.

life, and specifically the juvenile stage, is found in Greek, in Aristotle's *Rhetoric* (2.12). Although the roles of young men in Athenian and Roman society were different, the absence of fundamental deviation from the Aristotelian model would suggest that their natures were regarded as essentially identical.[18] Aristotle gives a comprehensive account of men at three different points in their lifetime: the young (νέοι), those in the prime of their life (ἀκμάζοντες), and the old (πρεσβύτεροι). The young and the old are presented first, as extremes, with the ἀκμάζοντες ultimately described as the mean between the two, a perfect balance between confidence and caution, high-mindedness and cynical utilitarianism (2.14).

Aristotle's treatment casts both youth and old age in a predominantly negative light. Cicero, in his *de Senectute*, would seek to enhance the image of old age, since its negative depiction was not coherent within the Roman Republic's gerontocratic society. By contrast, youth would continue to carry its stigma for the duration of Republican and Imperial Rome. Beneath the shell of the *iuvenis* of Latin literature there lies the core of the Aristotelian νέος; most Roman accounts of youth are much shorter than Aristotle's, but seem to pick from the most prominent features of his version to form their own.

> [3] οἱ μὲν οὖν νέοι τὰ ἤθη εἰσὶν ἐπιθυμητικοί, καὶ οἷοι ποιεῖν ὧν ἂν ἐπιθυμήσωσι. καὶ τῶν περὶ τὸ σῶμα ἐπιθυμιῶν μάλιστα ἀκολουθητικοί εἰσι τῇ περὶ τὰ ἀφροδίσια καὶ ἀκρατεῖς ταύτης, [4] εὐμετάβολοι δὲ καὶ ἀψίκοροι πρὸς τὰς ἐπιθυμίας, καὶ σφόδρα μὲν ἐπιθυμοῦσι ταχέως δὲ παύονται· ὀξεῖαι γὰρ αἱ βουλήσεις καὶ οὐ μεγάλαι, ὥσπερ αἱ τῶν καμνόντων δίψαι καὶ πεῖναί, [5] καὶ θυμικοὶ καὶ ὀξύθυμοι καὶ οἷοι ἀκολουθεῖν τῇ ὀργῇ. καὶ ἥττους εἰσὶ τοῦ θυμοῦ: διὰ γὰρ φιλοτιμίαν οὐκ ἀνέχονται ὀλιγωρούμενοι, ἀλλ' ἀγανακτοῦσιν ἂν οἴωνται ἀδικεῖσθαι. [6] καὶ φιλότιμοι μέν εἰσιν, μᾶλλον δὲ φιλόνικοι· ὑπεροχῆς γὰρ ἐπιθυμεῖ ἡ νεότης, ἡ δὲ νίκη ὑπεροχή τις·
> *Rhetoric*, 2.12.3-6.

> '[3] The young, as to character, are ready to desire and to carry out what they desire. Of the bodily desires they chiefly obey those of sensual pleasure and these they are unable to control. [4] Changeable in their desires and soon tiring of them, they desire with extreme ardour, but soon cool; for their will, like the hunger and thirst of the sick, is keen rather than strong. [5] They are passionate, hot-tempered, and carried away by impulse, and unable to control their passion; for owing to their ambition they cannot endure to be slighted, and become indignant when they think they are being wronged. [6] They are ambitious of honour, but more so of victory; for youth desires superiority, and victory is a kind of superiority.'[19]

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[18] Roman authors can sometimes be accused of slavishly aping their Greek precursors. Roman depictions of youth are often highly reminiscent of Aristotle, but they are so remarkably consistent with one another that it seems unlikely that they should all simply be copying Aristotle.

[19] Translation: J.H. Freese.

Aristotle's young men display several chief characteristics, many of which are interconnected. They are unable to control their sexual desires (2.12.3), being generally passionate and hot-tempered (ὀξύθυμοι) in all things (2.12.5, 2.12.8); this drives them frequently to excess (2.12.14). Though passionate, they have a tendency to change their desires frequently, burning hot and cold in quick succession (2.12.4). They possess supreme confidence and ambition (2.12.9), which tends to make them neglect what is useful in favour of what is noble (2.12.12). They live for the present, and are unable to remember what has happened in the past (2.12.8). In addition, they are inclined towards self-pity (2.12.15). However, Aristotle's young men are not completely devoid of positive aspects, since their confidence and hopefulness can make them much more courageous than other men (2.12.9).

The features which Aristotle ascribes to youth recur regularly in treatments of the subject in Latin literature. One of the earliest of these accounts comes in Lucretius' *De Rerum Natura*, where the poet presents an Epicurean-inspired view of the aging process:

> *praeterea gigni pariter cum corpore et una*
> *crescere sentimus pariterque senescere mentem.*
> *nam vel ut infirmo pueri teneroque vagantur*
> *corpore, sic animi sequitur sententia tenuis.*
> *inde ubi robustis adolevit viribus aetas,*
> *consilium quoque maius et auctior est animi vis.*
> *post ubi iam validis quassatum est viribus aevi*
> *corpus et obtusis ceciderunt viribus artus,*
> *claudicat ingenium, delirat lingua <labat> mens,*
> *omnia deficiunt atque uno tempore desunt.*
> 3.445-454.

Lucretius shares Aristotle's focus upon manhood as life's ἀκμὴ; in both authors youth is an ascent towards it, and old age a descent into closed-mindedness. This passage comes in a section in which Lucretius presents a series of proofs to demonstrate that the human soul is mortal (3.417-829). This is a result of the "community of life", the *sympatheia* between the soul and the body, which causes the soul to grow in tandem with the body, and, consequently, to die with the body.[20] In the present context, this passage must be approached with caution, since Lucretius clearly has an ulterior motive in striving to form a connection between physical and mental age, one

[20] Bailey (1947), 1073.

indirectly bound to his atomic theory. However, there is still much of interest in his description of the process of man's development during his lifetime. In his account, it is only as man grows stronger physically ('*robustis adolevit*[21] *viribus aetas*') that his strength of mind increases and his judgment improves ('*consilium…maius et auctior est animi vis*'). This connection between the development of body and mind is incontrovertible, the spirit of a man is never granted to a mere boy, '*nec prudens sit puer ullus*' (3.762).[22]

Cicero also discussed the stages of a man's life in his *de Senectute*, which dates to around 44 BCE. Although Cicero is speaking through the persona of Cato the Elder,[23] the context here is less problematic than in Lucretius. The stages of a man's life, which he suggests are four in number, are each characterised by one particular trait: childhood is a time of *infirmitas*, youth *ferocitas*, middle age *gravitas*, and old age *maturitas*.[24] Although *ferocitas*, 'hot-headedness', could be applied positively in relation to the driving ambition of young men, its connotations are generally negative, denoting a violent rashness, and a lack of consideration for the consequences of one's actions.[25] Cicero appears to have distilled the characteristics of the Aristotelian νέος into one; the *iuvenis* is *ferox*, just as the νέος was ὀξύθυμος (*Rh.* 2.12.5). Cicero sympathises with the young man to an extent by suggesting, like Lucretius, that youthful waywardness is the fault of nature, which presents *iuvenes* with an abundance of 'slippery paths' to follow: '*multas vias adulescentiae lubricas*'.[26] He is, however, less categorical when it comes to the notion that a youth could achieve wisdom beyond his years, in that he admits the possibility of an "ideal" youth, possessing the maturity of an old man: '*adulescentem in quo est senile aliquid*'.[27] However, the fact that his very existence would be worthy of praise suggests that such a creature was extremely rare.

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[21] In English, the Latinate "adolescent" is synonymous with "youth" (which is the most precise translation of *iuvenis* one can reach), presumably since it is physical (and mental) "growth" which most clearly characterises the period of youth. It is notable, therefore, that Lucretius suggests that a man only reaches mental maturity when his body *has* grown- '*adolevit*' providing a pointedly perfect idea. The *adulescens*, generally identifiable with the *iuvenis*, is still growing, and cannot therefore have achieved such a mental state.

[22] The idea that the body and soul grow in tandem was also voiced earlier by Empedocles (Diels B. 106) and Herodotus (3.134). See Bailey (1947), 1073.

[23] Ostensibly in order to give his essay more weight- '*quo maiorem auctoritatem haberet oratio*' (1.3).

[24] Cic. *Sen.* 10.33.

[25] Cicero, in his defence of Caelius, argues that the same urges that make Caelius liable to commit libidinous acts, also drive him to hard work and military excellence (*Cael.* 12).

[26] Cic. *Cael.* 31.75.

[27] Cic. *Sen.* 11.38.

The idea that young men were rash and lacking in judgement endured into the imperial period. In his *De Clementia*, Seneca seeks to advise his pupil, the eighteen-year-old emperor Nero, on the subject of mercy. Although he flatters the young emperor, and talks of the *princeps*' clemency as if it were already perfect, Seneca obviously feels that lengthy, written guidance is needed to ensure that Nero will be a truly merciful ruler.[28] Seneca is motivated to offer advice to Nero because he feels that young men are incapable of such self-reflection as could recognise their own flaws. Accordingly, he wishes to act as a mirror through which Nero can see himself more clearly: '*modo speculi vice fungerer et te tibi ostenderem*' (1.1.1). The subject of clemency is of particular importance because, Seneca suggests, the very rashness of the youth, his '*iuvenilis impetus*' (1.1.3), which Cicero regarded as the *iuvenis*' defining characteristic, usually causes him to reject mercy in favour of the immediate satisfaction of punishment or vengeance. Young men are apparently wont to rage in anger in a manner befitting only women (1.5.6). When young men plot against their fathers they should be excused from the harshest penalties, if it is their first offence, on the grounds that such misdeeds are the inevitable result of the '*adulescentulus impulsus*' (1.15.7). Seneca provides Nero with examples of Augustus' *clementia* to which he should aspire, but concedes that he cannot fairly compare Nero with Augustus, since the Augustus of the episodes which he recounts was a '*senex*'(1.11.1); Nero, a *iuvenis*, is too young to have achieved the same level of virtue as any *senex*.[29] After all, says Seneca, Augustus too had been a hot-headed[30] youth, and had committed many despicable acts in his early years: '*in adulescentia caluit, arsit ira, multa fecit, ad quae invitus oculos retorquebat*' (1.11.1).

iii) The comic *adulescens*

It seems apparent, then, that to be called a *iuvenis* was not always simply to be called a 'young man'; it could conjure up a far more complex network of

[28] Braund (1998), 66: 'Panegyric produced so early in the reign can serve another function besides praise: it can reflect or even prescribe a programme of behaviour to the new emperor'. In this respect, *De Clementia* draws upon Cicero's *Pro Marcello* as a model; Cicero praises Julius Caesar for his clemency, but insists upon its endurance if Caesar is to continue to be glorified. Moreover, Cicero makes several more practical demands of Caesar, necessary for the restoration of order after the civil war with Pompey: Cic. *Marcell.* 23, 27-9; Braund (1998), 68-71.

[29] He later questions whether Augustus was ever truly 'merciful', suggesting instead that he simply got tired of being cruel and ruthless (1.11.2).

[30] The verbs '*caluit*' and '*arsit*' evoke this fiery temperament.

connotations. Horace, in his *Ars Poetica* (246-7), instructs playwrights on the characterisation of Fauns and Satyrs in their plays, warning that such characters should not behave too much like city folk, nor act too much like youths with their obscene verses, and bawdy and shameless jokes:

> *aut nimium teneris* ***iuvenentur*** *versibus umquam,*
> *aut immunda crepent ignominiosaque dicta...*

The verb *iuvenor*, cognate with *iuvenis*, is an *hapax legomenon*, and its meaning is therefore difficult to pinpoint. However, the context implies that to behave like a youth entails a certain irreverence, an inappropriate playfulness which can give the verb *iuvenor* a pejorative sense.[31] If Horace was bold enough to introduce such a word to poetry, it would suggest that he expected his audience to understand its meaning; it is implied, therefore, that this meaning would be coherent with common, even conventional views about the behaviour of young men.[32] Indeed, the shameful behaviour to which Horace refers would be consistent with that of the Aristotelian νέος, who, for example, can appear drunk even when sober.[33]

A little earlier in the *Ars Poetica*, Horace is more explicit in expressing his views on the behaviour of young men. On the subject of characterisation in writing for the theatre, Horace urges his audience to 'follow tradition' ('*famam sequere*'- 119),[34] giving examples of stock characters, such as Achilles, Medea, and Ixion, and the qualities which they must always possess in order to be identified. He follows this up by describing the manner in which male characters in general should be depicted, depending upon their ages. This section is again introduced by the command to adhere to tradition: '*tu quid ego et populus mecum desideret audi*' (153)- 'now hear what I and the people **expect**'. What follows, therefore, is a series of caricatures; stereotypes of men at certain ages which Horace and the *populus* expect to encounter in theatre:

> *reddere qui voces iam scit puer et pede certo*
> *signat humum, gestit paribus conludere et iram*
> *colligit ac ponit temere et mutatur in horas.* 160

[31] Brink (1971, *ad* 246) draws attention to two apposite verbs in Greek, *neanieuesthai* and *meirakieuesthai*, which Horace may have taken for inspiration. Cf. '*iuveniliter*'- Ov. *Ars Am*. 3.733. 'The adverb implies behaviour to be expected in a young man'- Gibson (2003), *ad* 3.733.
[32] To give a more modern example of this, in the present day, when one encounters the word "youth" in the media, one usually expects it to be accompanied by the phrase "antisocial behaviour".
[33] *Rh.* 2.12.7.
[34] For the translation of *famam* as 'tradition', see Brink (1976, *ad* 119).

inberbis iuvenis, tandem custode remoto,
gaudet equis canibusque et aprici gramine campi,
cereus in vitium flecti, monitoribus asper,
utilium tardus provisor, prodigus aeris,
sublimis cupidusque et amata relinquere pernix.
conversis studiis aetas animusque virilis
quaerit opes et amicitias, inservit honori,
conmisisse cavet quod mox mutare laboret.
multa senem circumveniunt incommoda, vel quod
quaerit et inventis miser abstinet ac timet uti, 170
vel quod res omnis timide gelideque ministrat,
dilator, spe longus, iners avidusque futuri,
difficilis, querulus, laudator temporis acti
se puero, castigator censorque minorum.
multa ferunt anni venientes commoda secum,
multa recedentes adimunt: ne forte seniles
mandentur iuveni partes pueroque viriles:
semper in adiunctis aevoque morabitur aptis.

Horace's description of young men is remarkably similar to those of Aristotle and his Roman successors, even though their ostensible concern is with "real" males, rather than theatrical caricatures. According to these stereotypes, the *iuvenis* is as pliant as wax when it comes to vice ('*cereus in vitium flecti*'), possibly too spirited, and quick to take up and abandon the objects of his desire ('*sublimis cupidusque et amata relinquere pernix*'). This last characteristic is specifically reminiscent of Aristotle's statement that youths are 'changeable in their desires and soon tiring of them'.[35] In addition, Brink, in his commentary, remarks upon the 'double entendre' of *sublimis*, which implies that the youth is both 'high-minded' and well meaning, but also possesses a (possibly unwarranted) feeling of superiority to others;[36] this 'high-mindedness' is compatible with the μεγαλοψυχία of the νέος, and his delusions of superiority.[37] Horace's youth also cares little for the utility of his actions ('*utilium tardus provisor*'), and is wasteful when it comes to money ('*prodigus aeris*'), his mind being firmly rooted in the present.[38] While the stages of a man's life which follow his *iuventa* are not without their own flaws, it is notably not until after his youth that a man turns his attentions to more worthwhile pursuits ('*conversis studiis...animusque...quaerit opes et amicitias*), and gains the caution which curtails his earlier recklessness ('*comisisse cavet quod mox mutare laboret*'). Horace urges his audience not to break these rules of characterisation; those features belonging to old

[35] Arist. *Rh.* 2.12.3 (above).
[36] Brink (1971), *ad* 165.
[37] Arist. *Rh.* 2.12.11; 2.12.6
[38] The Aristotelian νέος did not share the *iuvenis*' concern for money (*Rh.* 2.12.6), but was similarly neglectful of the useful (2.12.12).

age should not be given to youth, or vice versa (176-8): these are sentiments with which Lucretius could identify.[39]

Although Horace's topic at this point of the *Ars Poetica* is characterisation in drama, it is clear that his depiction of youth is heavily indebted to analyses of the same subject which would purport to be rooted in reality. Horace's description of young men in particular is more specifically relevant to Roman comedy, rather than tragedy; the youthful lover, or *adulescens*, is a stock character in Roman comedy, appearing in fourteen of Plautus' comedies, and all six of Terence's.[40] Brink, in his commentary on this section of the *Ars Poetica*, recognises the precedent for Horace's "ages of man" in Aristotle's *Rhetoric* and *Poetics*, but, with regard to the poet's description of youths, he reports that 'the passion for horses, hunting, and athletics is notably absent from Aristotle's account, although comedy offers such features'.[41] According to Richard Hunter, Roman comedy is principally 'interested in young men in the period just before marriage, which marks the cooling-off of youth and the adoption of the responsibilities of adulthood'.[42] As Horace's description suggests, however, it is more concerned with the youth's lack of responsibility, as he heedlessly pursues his paramour, who is usually a *meretrix* (prostitute) in need of release from an exacting *leno* (brothel-keeper). In Plautus' *Mercator* (24-31), the character Charinus lists the many weaknesses of the young lover, which include 'stupidity..., thoughtlessness, immoderation' ('*stultitia...incogitantia...immodestia*', 26-7).[43] These characteristics are certainly evident among such comic youths as Chaerea, in Terence's *Eunuchus*, who dresses as a eunuch in order to gain access to and to rape Pamphila, and both Ctesipho and his brother Aeschinus, another rapist, who abducts Ctesipho's beloved on his behalf in the *Adelphoë*; most are rash and pathetic creatures, driven to distraction by a lust which pervades their characterisation.[44] Their flaws may serve to make these young men sympathetic, even likeable characters, but they are rarely worthy of respect, or trust.

The correspondence between these theatrical stereotypes and the earnest accounts of youth in Aristotle and elsewhere might suggest that characters in Roman

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[39] Cf. *De Rerum Natura*, 3.762: '*nec prudens sit puer ullus*'.
[40] Duckworth (1994), 237.
[41] Brink (1971), *ad* 162. Brink provides reference to Terence's *Andria* (56-7), and *Phormio* (6-7).
[42] Hunter (1985), 97.
[43] Duckworth (1994), 238.
[44] Hunter (1985), 97.

comedy are 'far more than stock types'.[45] By way of comparison specifically with the stereotypes of Greek and Roman New Comedy, Richard Hunter cites the section on the education of young men in a Greek treatise whose title translates as 'On the Upbringing of Children', which reaches us with the work of Plutarch.[46] There are many points of correspondence between the youths of New Comedy and those described in this treatise as being prone to 'gluttony, stealing their father's money, gambling, revels, drinking-bouts and affairs with both maidens and married women'[47]. While the author of the prose treatise is limited to making generalisations about juvenile behaviour, comedy has the advantage of being able to focus upon individual cases, and at considerable length.[48] However, one could question how far comedy, or a discussion of its characterisation, can be relevant to its contemporary reality. The considerable attention which Horace devotes to drama belies the fact that comedy and tragedy no longer had the great popular appeal in his Rome as they had in earlier times; comedy in particular had been effectively usurped by mime and pantomime.[49] It is for this reason that Horace, in the *Ars Poetica*, and in his "Letter to Augustus" (*Epist.* 2.1), talks about comedy 'as a phenomenon of literary history, not as contemporary art'.[50] The fact that comedy was effectively literature by the time the *Ars Poetica* was composed highlights the artificial, literary nature of Horace's poem, since it would suggest that he was not genuinely offering advice to budding playwrights.[51] Therefore, while Horace may not be referring to conventions of comic characterisation which are strictly "contemporary", his descriptions of the ages of man, including that of youth, are rooted in literary preconceptions, rather than reality.

Crucially, however, comedy, even in the late Republic, did possess a currency when it came to describing real people. Although it was no longer fashionable to regard comedy as an *imago vitae*, a "mirror of life", prominent Romans, including Octavian, would often be compared to comic characters, even in court; 'Roman comedy's predilection for character types offered helpful models, implicit and explicit, for the orator's delineations of character'.[52] These comparisons were often

[45] Duckworth (1994), 270.
[46] Hunter (1985), 98.
[47] Hunter (1985), 98.
[48] Hunter (1985), 98-9.
[49] Goldberg (2005), 180: 'drama did not dominate the theatres of first century Rome to anything like the extent they dominate Horace's thoughts'.
[50] Goldberg (2005), 60.
[51] Much as Vergil, in his *Georgics*, was not really looking to instruct keen new farmers.
[52] Goldberg (2005), 91; 149.

based merely upon physical likenesses with actors, or on certain common mannerisms, but this did not limit their effect. Cicero, in his *Pro Caecina* (27), makes fun of the banker Sextus Clodius Phormio by comparing him with the eponymous protagonist of Terence's *Phormio*, a "parasite".[53] More significant is the idea that Cicero, in his *Pro Caelio* attempts to create an analogy between the circumstances of the case against Caelius and the plot of a comedy, in order to trivialise the whole affair.[54] Caelius is cast as the comic *adulescens*, while Clodia, witness for the prosecution with whom Caelius had had an affair, is explicitly referred to as *meretrix*- a prostitute, another stock type from comedy.[55] Comedy appeals to Cicero because, says Matthew Leigh, it 'is the dramatic form par excellence...where the damage done through youthful exuberance is accommodated without any lasting harm to the family or to society at large'.[56] Leigh suggests that Caelius is compared favourably with the *adulescentes* of the comedies of Terence and Plautus, since his romantic entanglements cause little harm to others.

Not only were comic stereotypes largely compatible with depictions of youth in "serious" literature, but they could also have an application in the real, human sphere. Although such caricatures might not share exactly the same characteristics as their genuine counterparts, the irresistible urge to form a comparison between the two, whether or not there is any valid basis for analogy, can have a profound effect upon how real human beings are perceived. The critical issue is one of *perception*; literary stereotypes had the power to influence their audience's perception of individuals or groups, regardless of whether they had any basis in fact. In politics, ancient and modern, public relations, or "spin" are of paramount importance because popularity is dictated by how one is *perceived*, rather than how one *is*; public image is something which can be shaped, and nurtured. Comedy was considered "lower" culture than most literature, insofar as "literature", as it is understood today, could be said to have existed in the ancient world, since so many works were intended to be delivered orally. Theatre in general was frowned upon by many, and it was not uncommon for actors and performers to be expelled from Rome by senatorial or later imperial edict. However, in a largely non-literate Roman society, theatre, though it may have suffered a decline in the late Republican era, had a broader reach than most

[53] Goldberg (2005), 149.
[54] Leigh (2004).
[55] Leigh (2004), 302.
[56] Leigh (2004), 302.

literature.[57] What comedy had to say about youth could, therefore, potentially have had a greater influence over a wider audience's perception of youth than could, for example, Lucretius' *De Rerum Natura*.

iv) *Militia Amoris*- The *iuvenis* in his own words

Their vulnerability to *amor* was the defining characteristic of comic *adulescentes*; in the literature of the late Roman Republic and early Empire, the depiction of *iuvenes* is similarly dominated by their passionate disposition. Romantic pursuits command most of their attention, often preventing them from achieving anything more worthwhile. A passing comment in one of Horace's *Odes* seems to support the idea that *amor* is the preserve of the young man exclusively; in 2.4.22-4, Horace tells his friend Xanthias that he need not fear that any 40 year old might rival him for the affections of his young lover: '*fuge suspicari, / cuius octavum trepidavit aetas / claudere lustrum*'.[58] Although Horace is clearly joking, since he did not seriously believe that a man's sexual life ended before the age of 40, one cannot miss the implication that *amor* is predominantly the concern of the youth.[59] Besides, it is the *iuvenis* who is essentially the voice of the love poetry of the likes of Catullus, Tibullus, Propertius, and Ovid.[60] Catullus, and the later love elegists, represented something of a counter-culture among *iuvenes*. They rejected those pursuits, such as warfare and *negotium*, which Roman men considered to be the only true avenues through which one could seek honour.[61] These were young men unafraid to make controversial political statements, and even to trivialise the "noble" deeds of their more publicly active counterparts. In his elegy 3.4, Propertius wishes Octavian the best of luck for his campaign against Parthia, praying that he should return laden with spoils; 3.5, however, begins with the bold '*Pacis Amor deus est*', implying, therefore, that *Amor* would not approve of Octavian's warmongering. The love elegists' personae are young men of thoughts, rather than deeds; their concerns are usually

[57] Relative to that of epic, the audience for Roman comedy was huge and varied- see Goldberg (2005), 152-3; also, 103: familiarity with comedy in the late Republic was still considered 'common, rather than erudite knowledge'.
[58] The lack of threat posed by the older man may in part be due to the fact that he may no longer be attractive to younger men and women.
[59] Griffin (1984), 199.
[60] Eyben (1993), 190: 'for the majority of young poets, love is their muse, the source of their inspiration, "their" domain'.
[61] Eyben (1993), 196, 258. Catullus and the elegists 'radically broke with the *mos maiorum*' (196).

frivolous and selfish, their chosen wars fought under Venus' standards. These *iuvenes* scorn virile interests in favour of their more idle pursuits; those who go to war are driven by greed:

> *si fas est, omnes pariter pereatis avari,*
> *et quisquis fido praetulit arma toro!*
> Prop. 3.12.5-6.

There was a paradox inherent to the elegists' treatment of war, particularly visible in Propertius. For all that the elegists denigrate war and those who engage in it, they are clearly subject to the same set of intensely Roman ideals which regard war as the noblest of human endeavours, since they strive to describe love in martial terms, the *militia amoris*, in order to validate their elegiac lifestyle, otherwise viewed as frivolous.[62]

The Roman youth doubtless found comfort in the love elegists' accounts of the trials which they endured at the hands of *Amor*, and identified with their contemporaries' concerns about the dubious merits and certain dangers of warfare.[63] The youthful Ovid, himself only 17 or 18 when he composed his *Amores*, was of the opinion that his appeal among young men was due to a shared lovesickness; he wrote what other youths were thinking.[64] Love and sex occupied a prominent place in the lives of most *iuvenes*; since, as has been discussed, even aristocratic youths were barred from providing any realistic use to the state unless they were serving as soldiers, they often lived lives of *otium*, in which many hours could be spent in brothels and love-nests without attracting criticism.[65] However, their patriotic zeal and the demands of the *respublica* will ultimately have pulled the vast majority of youths into the mainstream of public responsibility. The love poets were hugely popular, but can hardly have been considered role models even by other *iuvenes*; their tendency towards melodrama would make them appear rather more like caricatures than real men. They were, however, the most conspicuous of youths, and their voices were the loudest, so it is possible that their love poetry informed the manner in which Roman *iuvenes* were perceived by their elders, if the *seniores* cared to listen.

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[62] Gale (1997), 85: '[the elegist] poses as an anti-establishment figure, but is only able to express himself in the language of the society he claims to distance himself from'. Cf. Murgatroyd (1975).
[63] Love elegy appealed to *iuvenes* directly, not only because its authors were young men, but also because it explicitly featured youths. In the first book of Tibullus' elegies alone, the word *iuvenis* is used eleven times.
[64] Ov. *Am.* 2.1.7-10.
[65] Eyben (1993), 231-50.

v) The call to arms

The distaste which the *iuvenis* showed for war could not free him from its grasp. The *iuventus*, Rome's warriors, were drawn from her young male citizens; the call to join their ranks could interrupt even the reveries of the elegist: '*nunc ad bella trahor*' (Tib. 1.10.13). The military role of the *iuvenis* was seen as his primary function; this could be the reason why there are 81 references to *iuvenes* in Vergil's martial *Aeneid*, even though it is less than five times the length of the "agricultural" *Georgics*, with its 10. Their involvement in warfare necessarily makes tragic figures of many *iuvenes*; the extreme pathos of Vergil's accounts of the deaths of such youths as Pallas, Lausus, and Euryalus in the *Aeneid* highlight this fact. The part played by the youth in Roman warfare would appear to undermine the view, implied in Horace's *Ars Poetica*, that he was not a man of action. However, it is crucial to remember that in the eyes of the Roman literati- the aristocratic elite-, the "real" business of warfare was carried out by the generals. The *iuventus* was generally viewed as a collective body of faceless youngsters, whose individual tragedies were absorbed and overlooked.[66] In the sympathetic eyes of the likes of Vergil, the youth's inability to master his own destiny makes him all the more tragic a figure; the *iuvenis* is commanded in war by other, older men, and in his romantic life by passions beyond his control.[67]

The extraordinary courage which Aristotle attributes to young men in his *Rhetoric* (2.12.9) was manifest in their acts of martial heroism, which are frequently recounted in literature.[68] The deeds of the young Scipio, later Africanus, who rescued his father, and the sickly son of Cato the Elder, who, though disarmed, launched an attack upon the enemy and regained his weapon, are recorded for posterity in historiography.[69] In the late Republic, this noble tradition was continued by young men such as Marcus Cicero, son of the orator, who excelled in fighting with Pompey

[66] Cf. Kleijwegt (1994), 83: 'the *iuvenes* were not an emanation of the elite, but…they may occasionally have been used as its instrument'.
[67] Cf. Eyben, (1993), 47: 'many youths were far from happy with the fact that they were forced to stand aside for the older generation in what they considered their speciality'. For youths, this created a frustrating 'tension between physical force and lack of social power'- Eyben (1972), 45.
[68] Eyben (1993), 45.
[69] Livy, 21.46.7; Plut. *Aem.*, 21.1-2. Scipio Africanus was still only 25 when, in 211BCE, he put himself forward for the task of freeing Italy from the grip of Hannibal- Livy, 26.18.

and, later, Brutus.[70] In Livy's *Ab Urbe Condita* there are numerous celebrated *iuvenes* to whom the historian grants the epithet *impiger*, 'tireless', among them Appius Claudius, who is charged to defend the city of Rome against a Volscian invasion (4.36.5), and Pontius Cominus, who crosses enemy lines to deliver a message recalling Camillus from exile (5.46.8).[71] However, examples in literature of youthful recklessness at war are, at the very least, equal in number to those of adolescent heroism; Livy's story of Hostus, whose '*adulescentia ferox*' caused the deaths of many Sardinians as he led them into a hopeless battle, is by no means uncharacteristic (23.40).

vi) A "real" youth?

The resemblance between the *iuvenis* of late Republican and early Imperial Latin literature, and the Aristotelian νέος helps to militate against the notion that the former was merely a literary construct, which did not correspond with the reality of youth in the ancient world.[72] In any case, the question of whether or not the literary youth bears any resemblance to a generic, "real" young man is of only secondary importance; the capacity for literature to affect perception is vital, and is witnessed in the evidence of comic stereotypes being applied to real people. Nonetheless, just as the theatrical stereotypes presented by Horace in his *Ars Poetica* found their basis in reality, the literary *iuvenis* can similarly be regarded as a caricature, exaggerating those features which the older generation perceived as defining young men. Although these features may gain an unrealistic monopoly in the depiction of literary youth at the expense of other, perhaps more positive characteristics, the consistency with which the *iuvenis* is presented as, for example, hot-headed, makes it difficult to refute the idea that the youth was at least *perceived* in this way, whether that was the truth or not.[73] Further evidence for this can be found in an extract from Ulpian in the legal setting of the *Digest*. Although the *Digest* was compiled in the early 6th century CE,

[70] Cic. *Off.* 2.45.
[71] See L'Hoir (1990: 223), on the *iuvenis impiger* in Livy. For other examples of *iuvenes impigres* in Livy, see: 3.46.5; 22.55.6; 30.18.5.
[72]The reality of Athenian and Roman youth might very well not have been nearly so similar.
[73] Eyben (1993), 39: 'evaluations of youth in ancient literature are more often than not negative...since most authors were older people, and middle and- especially- old age tend to be critical and pessimistic about youth'.

the extract must date to the early part of the 3rd century, when Ulpian wrote his legal works. In a section devoted to the affairs of persons under the age of 25 ('*de minoribus*'), Ulpian gives his reasons for having undertaken the protection of minors ('*quo tutelam minorum suscepit*'):

> *hoc edictum praetor naturalem aequitatem secutus proposuit, quo tutelam minorum suscepit.* ***nam cum inter omnes constet fragile esse et infirmum huiusmodi aetatium consilium et multis captionibus suppositum, multorum insidiis expositum****: auxilium eis praetor hoc edicto pollicitus est et adversus captiones opitulationem. Praetor edicit: 'Quod cum minore quam viginti quinque annis natu gestum esse dicetur, uti quaeque res erit, animadvertam'. Apparet minoribus annis viginti quinque eum opem polliceri: nam post hoc tempus compleri virilem vigorem constat. Et ideo hodie in hanc usque aetatem adulescentes curatorum auxilio reguntur, nec ante rei suae administratio eis committi debebit, quamvis bene rem suam gerentibus.*
> 4.1.
> 'The praetor following natural equity has issued this edict in which he has undertaken the protection of minors. For since all agree that persons of this age are weak and deficient in sense and subject to many kinds of disadvantage: the praetor has promised them relief in this edict and help against imposition. The praetor says in the edict: 'With respect to what is alleged to have been done by a person under twenty-five, I shall treat the case as circumstances demand'. It is evident that he offers help to those under twenty-five. For it is agreed that after this age the strength of a full-grown man is reached. And, therefore, today, up to this age, young men are governed by curators and under this age the administration of their own property should not be entrusted to them, even though they might be able to look after their own affairs well'.[74]

This is the reasoning behind such laws protecting young men and society from each other as the *Lex Villia Annalis* (180BCE) and the *Lex Plaetoria* (200BCE).[75] What is most striking about this statement is the suggestion that 'all persons' ('*omnes*') are in agreement on the issue of youth; while this seems rather too categorical to be credible, it does at least imply that the balance of public opinion weighed heavily in this direction. The text continues in a familiar manner, further asserting that 'it is agreed that after this age the strength of a full-grown man is reached'. It is for this reason that young men have their affairs handled by curators, and that their own property is not entrusted to them, even though (as Cicero had suggested) 'they might be able to look after their own affairs well'- '*quamvis bene rem suam gerentibus*'. Although the style of the text is unusual, seeming at times almost conversational, the presence of such ideas regarding youth in a legal context suggests that the manner in which the "real" Roman youth was viewed by his elders bore striking resemblance to the "literary" youth. Beyond this, the existence of such laws as Ulpian alludes to, which dictated the role of youths in the Roman world and their treatment by others, provides more

[74] Translation: A. Watson.
[75] See p. 20, above, for these laws.

compelling evidence of correspondence. It is unlikely that Rome's most prominent jurists relied upon literary depictions of youth when making laws related to the subject.

vii) Initial Conclusions

This tour of Roman *iuvenes* began with reference to their treatment at the hands of the jurists, the *Lex Plaetoria* and the *cura minorum* offering them protection from themselves and others in the business world, and the *Lex Villia Annalis* protecting the political sphere from their influence by denying them access. The route back to the law, in the *Digest*, has created an impression of Roman youth which might explain how it could have come to be viewed as such a legal pariah. Although there are dangers inherent to identifying the images of youth encountered in literature with any notion of a "real" Roman youth, the picture which the literature has offered is nothing if not consistent. In most cases, Roman accounts of youth closely follow the model of the Aristotelian νέος, whose passionate nature and lack of restraint, especially in his sexual conduct, led him to excess. Though inward-looking to a fault, the νέος is rarely aware of his own failings, but tends towards self pity.

Cicero was able to condense the features of the Aristotelian youth into one defining characteristic: his hot-headed *ferocitas*, which governs his every action and makes him liable to tread slippery, dangerous paths ('*multas vias adulescentiae lubricas*'). Seneca's '*iuvenilis impetus*' would appear synonymous with the active manifestation of this *ferocitas*, and is what makes Horace's comic youth so ready to turn to vice ('*cereus in vitium flecti*'), and so quick to take up and abandon the objects of his desire ('*sublimis cupidusque et amata relinquere pernix*'). The youth has a conception of time which is exclusively primary sequence; he lives in the present and, though he may possess hopes for the future, he is incapable of foresight, and cannot anticipate the consequences of his actions ('*utilium tardus provisor, prodigus aeris*'). Like the νέος, the *iuvenis*' lack of perspective appears to extend into a failure of self-awareness; for all his egotism, he does not appear capable of reflexive thought about himself or his behaviour: he is in need of another, older "mirror", such as Seneca, who can reveal him to himself ('*modo speculi vice fungerer et te tibi ostenderem*'). Such attempts to guide the youth are, nonetheless, futile, since he is too headstrong to listen

to reason, and scorns his advisers ('*monitoribus asper*'). The elegiac youth's lack of respect for his elders leads him to reject their traditional Roman values, spurning warfare in favour of relatively frivolous pursuits, such as lust and love, to which he is uniquely vulnerable. His rebellious attitude cannot, however, save him from the pull of war, to which ultimately he will be expected to surrender his life if necessary. On arriving at the *Digest*, a text which is concerned with genuine Roman affairs and people, we find that Ulpian presents a similar picture of Roman youth, as 'weak and deficient in sense' ('*fragile...et infirmum...consilium*') . Although there are scattered references to young men behaving admirably and heroically in historiography, in keeping with the Aristotelian notion of their courage and high-mindedness, the picture with which we are presented is overwhelmingly negative, and remarkably consistent.

viii) Postscript: Life after youth

However negative was the literary depiction of young men in ancient Rome, it was not to be forgotten that youth was a phase, which every man had to pass through on his way to manhood. Just as the sexual indiscretions of young men would often be overlooked by their elders, in some cases more extreme juvenile misbehaviour could ultimately be forgiven if the guilty *iuvenis* grew into a remarkable *vir*. In the sixth of his nine books of 'Memorable Deeds and Sayings', the early imperial writer, Valerius Maximus, provides evidence of monumental change in the character and fortune of men (6.9). Among his *exempla* are those of several famous Republican figures who managed to shake off the poor conduct and shame of their youth to become successful, celebrated men (6.9.1-6).[76] Scipio Africanus, for example, was noted for the 'loose' morality of his adolescence ('*solutioris vitae primos adulescentiae annos egisse fertur*'), but went on to defeat Carthage (6.9.2). C. Valerius Flaccus, later made Flamen, also led a life of ruinous luxury in his youth: '*luxu perditam adulescentiam incohavit*' (6.9.3).[77] Even L. Sulla, Jugurtha's conqueror, began his public life steeped in lust, wine, and theatre: '*L. vero Sulla usque ad quaesturae suae comitia vitam libidine, vino, ludicrae artis amore inquinatam perduxit*' (6.9.6). For each of these men, their reprehensible conduct as youths did not bar their path to future success, nor

[76] First among them is Manlius Torquatus, who was thought dull-witted as a young man: '*Manlius Torquatus...hebetis atque obtusi cordis inter initia iuventae existimatus*' (6.9.1).
[77] So too Q. Fabius Maximus (6.9.4), victor over Gaul, and Q. Catulus who, significantly, later led Rome out of a rising civil war (6.9.5).

dictate that they be perceived by others as ruined beyond retrieval; it was possible, if difficult, to repair a reputation damaged by juvenile misbehaviour.

B. Octavian: A Very Special Young Man

i) The problem of youth

While Octavian was perhaps lucky that his adoptive father, Julius Caesar, was in no position to hold *patria potestas* over him when he came to dominate Roman affairs, he did have another handicap; in a society where old age commanded respect, he was too young to rule in the opinion of many. Roman politics was the realm of the *vir* and the *senex*; when the Vergilian reader meets Octavian in *Eclogue* 1, he is '*illum...iuvenem*' (1.42).[78] By the time the *Georgics* was published in 29BCE, Octavian was 34 years old, and had firmly established himself as Rome's first citizen; in spite of this, however, he is still referred to as '*hunc...iuvenem*' (1.500).[79] For a young man seeking to position himself at the head of a society which had created a climate of negativity and caution around the role of the *iuvenis*, Octavian's age posed a serious problem; 'if he was to seize power, it was essential for him to overcome the prejudice against his tender years'.[80] Although his supporters found precedents for Octavian's extraordinary rise to power in the likes of Scipio Africanus, many powerful men were far from convinced that he was ready to rule, and relentlessly abused him, chiefly, if not exclusively, on account of his age, calling him '*puer*', '*adulescentulus*', '*meirakion*', '*pais*'.[81] Suetonius suggests that Octavian was enraged by the frequency with which his elders referred to him as '*puer*': he was apparently motivated to leave the aristocratic party because he said that '*alii se puerum...iactassent*'.[82] Even Cicero, who supported Octavian, regularly refers to him as a 'boy': '*C. Caesar adulescens, paene potius puer*'. These words were uttered when Octavian was considerably younger, at about twenty, than he was in 29BCE, but, even then, he had long since put on the *toga virilis*; to refer to him as '*puer*',

[78] It is worth pointing out that this is the only occasion in which the word *iuvenis* is used in the *Eclogues*.
[79] Following the defeat of Antony at Actium, in 31BCE, Octavian's position became virtually unassailable.
[80] Eyben (1993), 66; 69: '[Octavian] certainly did not accede to power because his youthful age was admired and respected; on the contrary, he succeeded *in spite of* his youthful age'.
[81] App. *BCiv.* 3.12.88. Also, Eyben (1993), 66.
[82] Suet. *Aug.* 12.

therefore, was inaccurate and, consequently, derogatory. Elsewhere, however, Cicero defends Octavian against suggestions that he was too young to receive certain honours and offices:[83]

> *an vero quisquam dubitabit appellare Caesarem imperatorem? Aetas eius certe ab hac sententia neminem deterrebit, quandoquidem virtute superavit aetatem.*
> *Phil.* 14.28

While, publicly, Cicero appeared to hold absolute confidence in the young Caesar, privately he expressed his doubts about Octavian's youth. In his letters to Atticus, Cicero mentions that Octavian has asked for a private audience with him, lamenting the naivety of the youth for thinking that any such meeting could be kept secret: '*puerile hoc quidem, si id putat clam fieri posse*'.[84] In his next letter, Cicero is much more explicit, stating that he does not trust in Octavian's youth, since he does not know what the boy is thinking: '*non confido aetati, ignoro quo animo*'.[85]

Later historiography of the period also records the opposition to Octavian on account of his youth. Appian supplies a description of Octavian voiced by Antony, some time before the complete breakdown in their relationship:

> τοῦ νεανίσκου ἕνεκεν μετατίθεσθαι, ἐπηρμένου τε ἐπαχθῶς ἔτι τηλικοῦδε ὄντος καὶ οὐδὲν ἔχοντος αἰδέσιμον ἢ τίμιον ἐς πρεσβυτέρους τε καὶ ἐς ἄρχοντας
> *BCiv* 3.4.29.
> 'The young man was inordinately puffed up, being still a youth and showing no respect for his elders and no honour for those in authority'.

Appian suggests that Antony's judgement of Octavian at this stage was met with general agreement. These sentiments are shared by Cassius Dio, who says that Octavian, in his early career at least, was 'a stripling and inexperienced in business'- Ὀκταουίου ἅτε καὶ μειρακίου καὶ πραγμάτων ἀπείρου.[86]

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[83] Cic. *Phil.* 3.2; 5.28.
[84] Cic. *Att.* 16.8.
[85] Cic. *Att.* 16.9.
[86] Dio Cass. 44.53.5.

ii) Public missteps

Even in the face of such widespread criticism, Octavian was defiant on the issue of his age. In his early portraiture he actively promoted an image of himself as a particularly young man. The most prominent portrait type before his assumption of the title of "Augustus" is regarded to be that of a teenaged, 'emotional' Octavian, whose gaze is distracted by something troubling.[87] The youth of the subject, says Zanker, is emphasised by his 'arrogance' and his 'bony and irregular features'.[88] This particular portrait type seems to betray the lack of focus with which the *iuvenis* is associated in Horace's *Ars Poetica* and elsewhere; the young Octavian does not look straight ahead, or even at any fixed point, his attentions appear mobile, flighty. This portrait was apparently also designed to remind the viewer of the young Alexander the Great: 'the model of the youthful Alexander is ever-present, lending an aura of the miraculous to the young Caesar'.[89] This was a gamble; for Octavian to seek to form a connection between himself and Alexander was not without its potential dangers, especially once he had established himself as Rome's sole ruler. The evocation of Alexander, whilst it carried the desired connotations of youth, bravery and unparalleled imperial dominance, to the keen observer could also conjure up ideas of unhealthy dependence upon a single figure, and a lack of longevity for the ruler himself.[90] Few could forget the enduring chaos which the untimely death of Alexander bequeathed to the Hellenistic world, as a motley array of successor kings fought for control of Alexander's vast and incoherent empire; this was an affliction from which the Hellenistic world arguably never recovered. Vergil was perhaps one of those who perceived the danger of an association with Alexander. In Book 4 of the *Georgics* he describes the unhealthy reliance of the bees' affairs upon the safety of their kings (4.210-18); should the king die, their society would be utterly destroyed:[91]

> *rege incolumi mens omnibus una est;*
> *amisso rupere fidem, constructaque mella*

[87] See Appendix I, Fig. 1.
[88] Zanker (1988), 98.
[89] Zanker (1988), 36.
[90] Powell (1992), 161: 'as Romans cast around for historical analogues [for Octavian-Augustus] the prospect was not good. The case of Julius Caesar was the obvious thing; that of Alexander, which Augustus himself appealed to, was similarly depressing'.
[91] Powell (2008: 268) suggests that Vergil's presentation of the bees' destructive behaviour at the loss of their king is an attempt to exculpate Octavian for his angry reprisals after the death of Julius Caesar.

diripuere ipsae et cratis solvere favorum.
4.212-14.

Whether or not Vergil is thinking of Alexander here, the warning this carries for Octavian and the Roman people does not escape notice.

iii) Rehabilitation

Octavian was seemingly aware that he was regarded as "juvenile" by many of Rome's elder statesmen, to whom this was certainly not intended as a compliment. There is evidence to suggest that Octavian sought to rehabilitate the image of *iuvenes* by enhancing their role in Roman public life.[92] This was conceivably one of the motives behind his reorganisation of the *iuventus* when he became emperor; according to Dio, Octavian sought to 'turn their minds to horses and arms' by subjecting the youth to a stricter regime of military and civil education.[93] As part of this programme, he resurrected the honorary title of *princeps iuventutis* (or *princeps iuvenum*), which had existed under the Republic but with no constitutional significance. In around 5 and 2 BCE respectively, the equestrian order gave silver shields and spears to Augustus' grandsons, C. Iulius Caesar and L. Iulius Caesar, and hailed them as *principes iuventutis*.[94] Later, the title was given to Tiberius' sons, Germanicus and Drusus, and came to carry a definition similar to that of "crown prince", since it was often retained when the holder was no longer technically a *iuvenis*.

In addition to the reorganisation of the *iuventus*, Octavian cemented the position of the *iuvenis* in Roman life by relaxing the age restrictions which had been placed upon those wishing to scale the *cursus honorum* since the reforms of Sulla. In the early first century BCE, a man had to be 30 to be a quaestor, 39 a praetor, and 42 a consul; Augustus changed all of this. Under the principate, one could conceivably become quaestor at 25, praetor at 30, and possibly even consul at 33, if the candidate was a patrician, or 38 if he was a *novus homo*. Naturally, however, this privilege was not extended to all aspiring magistrates, but only those who held the favour of the

[92] See Yavetz (1984), 16-18: 'realizing that the older generation would not be amenable to change, [Octavian-Augustus] took a strong personal interest in the education of the *iuventus*, caring not only for their physical fitness, but also for what he saw as their moral and spiritual well-being' (18).
[93] Dio Cass. 52.26.
[94] Tac. *Ann.* 1.3.

emperor. Admittedly, Augustus' motives for relaxing these age restrictions would be chiefly to allow him to elevate those useful to him into positions of power, or to reward his favourites for their loyal service, but the effect of this reform, in filling all manner of important magistracies with many more *iuvenes*, would be important nonetheless.

C. Vergil on Youth

Regardless of whether or not it was Octavian's intention to alter the perception of young men in Roman society, it is clear that his own youthfulness was considered by some influential men to be a hindrance to his attempts to position himself as Rome's sole ruler. This negative attitude towards youth was both fostered and cultivated by the literature of the late Republic, witnessed in the conventional depiction of the literary *iuvenis*. In view of this, Vergil's decision to refer to Octavian specifically as a *iuvenis* even as late as the *Georgics* demands attention. Although Vergil's treatment of Octavian-Augustus within his works is always considered at the very least *calculated*, the poet's reference to the new Caesar as a *iuvenis* has attracted minimal scholarly interest. While Octavian's 34 years at the time of the publication of the *Georgics*, in 29BCE, did not technically prevent him from being considered a 'young man', the connotations attached to youth should have made it a controversial designation, one way or another. An "Augustan" Vergil might have wished to avoid so tricky an issue, making do with the equally acceptable *vir*, or *homo*, while a "subversive" Vergil could have seized upon the dangers of youth as a means of furthering his devious designs of besmirching Octavian's reputation.[95]

i) Octavian in the *Georgics*

The remainder of this chapter will focus more sharply upon the manner in which youth is presented within the *Georgics*, primarily through discussion of the incidences of the word *iuvenis* and its cognates in the poem, with particular attention being paid to their contexts and referents. The purpose of this survey will be to investigate how far Vergil's depiction of his poem's youthful characters is consistent

[95] "Augustan" is, of course, an anachronism, but one which hopefully may be excused as an alternative to the clumsy "Octavianist".

with the trends witnessed in the literature of the late Republic and early Empire, which associated young men with hot-headedness, lust, and a lack of perspicacity. Vergil's portrayal of youth has implications for the audience's perception of Octavian, since he is inextricably connected with the other young men of the *Georgics*, his fellow *iuvenes*.

There are, in the *Georgics*, ten occurrences of the word *iuvenis*;[96] this number is sufficient to suggest a definite trend in the manner of its use, while being small enough to guard against suggestions that it could be considered as an item of stock vocabulary. It is not necessarily the word *iuvenis* itself which is of paramount importance to this study, but rather the characters to whom it is applied, and the manner in which each is depicted. Octavian himself is one of those young men referred to as *iuvenis* in the poem. It seems appropriate that he is in fact the first to be described as such, at the end of Book 1, being, as ever, *first among equals*. Bemoaning the outrage that was the slaughter of Julius Caesar, Octavian's adoptive father, and the protracted and destructive series of civil wars which followed, Vergil calls upon a very Italo-Roman set of deities to 'at least not prevent this youth from bringing aid to an age turned upside-down':[97]

> *di patrii Indigetes et Romule Vestaque mater,*
> *quae Tuscum Tiberim et Romana Palatia servas,*
> *hunc saltem everso iuvenem succurrere saeclo*
> *ne prohibete.*
> 1.498-501.

Vergil's plea is without any trace of naive optimism, coming mired in a wretched gloom which will endure to the end of the Book. The word '*saltem*' appears crucial- 'at the very least'; Mynors offers four alternative interpretations for the word in context, favouring an implication of 'what is obviously a second-best, when one cannot have what one really wants', even if the preferred option was simply never to have endured such destructive civil wars.[98] In context, the dominant meaning is that the gods should 'at least' spare Octavian, having already taken Julius Caesar too

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[96] 1.500, 3.105, 3.118, 3.165, 3.258, 4.360, 4.423, 4.445, 4.477, 4.522.
[97] These are more visibly "home" deities, when viewed in comparison with the distinctly Greek character of the majority of the gods invoked in the proem to Book 1 (1.5-20).
[98] Mynors, (1990), *ad* 1.500. Mynors' other possible interpretations are as follows: that the gods should spare Octavian, although they did not spare Julius Caesar; that the gods should allow Octavian to save Rome, since they will not do so themselves; 'fond as you are of cutting short promising *iuvenes*..., let this one at least survive and save us'. The last of these will be given further consideration below.

early. However, *saltem* could even permit a translation to the effect of 'do not prevent this youth from at least bringing aid to an age turned upside-down'; the implication being that Octavian is, in part, responsible for the '*everso...saeclo*', and that to repair some of the damage done is the least he can do to atone. Whether causal or not, the relationship between the youthful Octavian and the civil wars attributes to him an attendant destructiveness. However one interprets Vergil's plea, what is of singular importance at present is that Octavian is not referred to by name, but simply as '*hunc...iuvenem*', 'this youth', although he is addressed as '*Caesar*' a few lines later (1.503). This serves to classify Octavian with the other *iuvenes* whom the reader will encounter elsewhere in the poem, in a manner which does not afford him any especial privilege; he is simply 'this youth', as opposed to 'that', or 'the other' one. In addition to this, Octavian, in his youthful guise, is subject to the same restraints which dictate the actions of other youths: he appears here in the accusative, in need of divine assent if he is to become Rome's saviour.

Vergil thus makes it clear early on that Octavian is to be regarded as a young man. Since he is the first of the poem's *iuvenes*, Octavian is only immediately subject to comparison with the tradition relating to young men which existed beyond the *Georgics*. The introduction of other juvenile characters as the poem develops serves to complement this tradition, and to provide more direct *comparanda* for this first youth. The poet's depiction of these other youths, Octavian's contemporaries, impacts heavily upon the *Georgics* reader's reception of their Caesar.

ii) Aristaeus and Orpheus

The fourth book of the *Georgics* is dominated by the epyllion which forms its second half, and, apart from the intervention of a closing *sphragis*, concludes the poem as a whole. In the two major protagonists of this epyllion- Aristaeus, in the "frame", and Orpheus, in its "inset"- the reader encounters the most vividly realised, comprehensively characterised young men in the poem. This pair, therefore, force their way into the foreground of an examination of the portrayal of youth in the *Georgics*. Both Aristaeus and Orpheus are explicitly referred to as *iuvenes*; indeed, Aristaeus is three-times described as a *iuvenis*, making him the most pointedly

juvenile character in the *Georgics*.[99] This Aristaeus suffers the loss of his bees to a mystery illness, whose cause is revealed to him by his mother, the nymph, Cyrene, via the seer, Proteus, to be the wrath of the divine Orpheus. Orpheus' wife, Eurydice, was chased by Aristaeus into the path of a snake, causing her death; Aristaeus subsequently expurgates this crime by sacrifice, thereby restoring, or, more accurately, renewing his bee stock.[100]

Although Aristaeus appears as one of the *Georgics*' ultimate victors, since he manages to free himself from the curse placed upon him by a malevolent Orpheus and gain a new stock of bees, his character, and the means by which he achieves "success" are far from admirable. When we first meet Aristaeus, he appears a pathetic creature, his entrance being comparable in many ways to that of a broken Aeneas, at the beginning of *Aeneid* I, and, perhaps, similarly likely to polarise opinion regarding its protagonist. Aristaeus, mourning the loss of his bees, arrives at the threshold to his mother's aquatic home, loudly lamenting his fate.

> *'mater, Cyrene mater, quae gurgitis huius*
> *ima tenes, quid me praeclara stirpe deorum*
> *(si modo, quem perhibes, pater est Thymbraeus Apollo)*
> *invisum fatis genuisti? aut quo tibi nostri*
> *pulsus amor? quid me caelum sperare iubebas?'*
> 4.321-325.

Aristaeus cannot conceive of his misfortune being the result of some fault of his own, thus he comes effectively to abuse his mother, whom he accuses of not loving him any longer ('*aut quo tibi nostri / pulsus amor?*'). His initial complaints seem to suggest that he expects to receive greater privileges, and immunity to such calamity by virtue of his divine parentage, as son of Apollo by a nymph. Aristaeus' outbursts seem to betray the lack of respect for his elders, and especially his parents, of which the youth is accused by Horace, as well as the tendency towards self-pity of the Aristotelian νέος.[101]

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[99] Aristaeus: 4.360, 4.423, 4.445; Orpheus: 4.522.

[100] Due mainly to the role of Aristaeus in effecting a renewal of bees, which are described earlier in Book 4 as sharing similar characteristics with the Roman people, to the extent that they are described as 'little Romans' ('*parvosque Quirites*'- 4.201), his character has been viewed by some scholars as an analogue for Octavian, who, in Vergil's scheme, is to bring about a revival of the Roman people, the bees' full-sized counterparts. See Chapter Three (pp. 164-6) for discussion of this issue, also: Nadeau (1984).

[101] Cf. '*monitoribus asper*'- Hor. *Ars P.* 163. For the self-pitying youth: Arist. *Rh.* 2.12.15.

Aristaeus' lack of respect for his elders is reprised by his treatment of the aged seer, Proteus, albeit under the direction of his mother. Cyrene tells her son that, in order to discover the cause of his loss, he must forcibly capture and interrogate Proteus. He carries out this task without regard for Proteus' superior status, being, in the seer's words, the 'most confident of young men' ('*iuvenum confidentissime*'- 4.445); this is certainly not intended as a compliment- Proteus is appalled at the arrogance of Aristaeus, who clearly trusts too much in his noble descent.[102] Under duress, Proteus discloses the true reason behind Aristaeus' misfortune, which, along with his response to this revelation, is extremely damaging to the young man's reputation. Proteus narrates the story of the young man's crime, and its tragic consequences; how Aristaeus, presumably with a view to raping Eurydice (although this is not made explicit), Orpheus' wife, chased her across a river, where a lurking snake bit and killed her (4.453-459). Wounded by this tragedy, Orpheus travelled to the Underworld in order to retrieve his wife; he was granted the opportunity to do so, as long as he did not look back at her until they returned to the upper world. Orpheus broke this pact, and Eurydice was lost for a second time; his grief caused him to spurn the attentions of Thracian women who, in a jealous rage, tore him to pieces (4.485-527).

Orpheus is, to some extent, certainly responsible for his own death, and the "second death" of Eurydice, but this does not diminish Aristaeus' guilt in causing Eurydice's death, and, indirectly, the demise of his bee stock, having endangered them by his transgression. Aristaeus' chief fault can essentially be reduced to *amor caecus*, 'lust', which Vergil rails against in his passage on the subject in *Georgics* 3 (242-68).[103] Lust, as the elegists testify, is a young man's game, and it is, therefore, highly conventional that Aristaeus should fall victim to it. One is to assume that an older, wiser man, in the unlikely event that he were to feel the same piercing desire at the sight of Eurydice, would not have taken the drastic step of physically chasing her, especially not into potential danger. Aristaeus, however, is unable to control his response, which is the manifestation of what Seneca calls '*iuvenilis impetus*', 'youthful impulse'.[104] What is most remarkable about Aristaeus' involvement in Eurydice's death is that he appears to have no recollection of it whatsoever; when he

[102] The adjective *confidens* here appears to be used in a very literal sense, i.e. 'trusting in'.
[103] This passage is discussed in detail in Chapter Three, pp. 146-59.
[104] *Clem.* 1.1.3.

confronts his mother over the loss of his bees, he clearly cannot think of any reason why he could have deserved such misfortune, or, instead, he is in complete denial about the whole affair. Aristaeus' failure of memory is a key characteristic of Aristotle's νέος, whose focus on the present is total, at the expense of his recollection of the past.[105] A similarly Aristotelian trait is the tendency to think only in the very short term, to be driven to satisfy wants without consideration for the consequences, and to abandon objects of desire as quickly as they were taken up, something Horace distilled into: '*sublimis cupidusque et amata relinquere pernix*'.[106]

Proteus' revelation of Aristaeus' guilt is intended to elicit a degree of remorse from the youth, the aged seer taking on the role of "mirror", as filled by Seneca in his *De Clementia*, allowing the youngster to see his own image.[107] However, even when Aristaeus has been informed of his wrongdoing, Vergil does not allow him to show any such regret; he appears incapable of retrospection or self-appraisal, and rejects any overtures towards reflection. The knowledge of the cause of his bees' demise is merely a tool by which the youth looks to replenish his stock, being capable only of looking forward towards personal gain. This selfish utilitarianism is again illustrated in the manner of Aristaeus' performance of the sacrifice necessary for the restoration of his bee stock.[108] Aristaeus, although a model student, is willing to do precisely what is asked of him, but no more.[109] When Cyrene prescribes a course of action to him, Aristaeus responds immediately according to her commands: '*haud mora: continuo matris praecepta facessit*' (4.548). The son follows his mother's directions *precisely*, a fact Vergil emphasises by replicating verbatim in the actions of Aristaeus several of the lines and phrases contained within Cyrene's speech: '*quattuor eximios praestanti corpore tauros…et intacta totidem cervice iuvencas*' (4.538-40, 550-1), '*post, ubi nona suos Aurora ostenderit [induxerat] ortus*' (4.544[552]). As the commentators point out, such repetition is strongly reminiscent of Homeric epic, in which lines and even longer set pieces are often reiterated.[110] Since Homeric epic was conceived as oral poetry, one of the motives behind such repetition would be to simplify, albeit only slightly, the task of recitation. In the (considerably shorter) work

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[105] *Rh.* 2.12.8.
[106] *Ars P.* 165. Cf. Arist. *Rh.* 2.12.4.
[107] Cf. Perkell (1989), 73; 185.
[108] Miles (1980), 270: 'Aristaeus seems to be completely self-centred: he thinks only of what he wants for himself and is indifferent to the consequences for others'.
[109] Conte (1986), 135.
[110] e.g. *Od.* 10.157-25; 11.25-33.

of a poet such as Vergil this is an unsatisfactory explanation, as would be the notion that Vergil is simply being 'Homeric'. There is emphasis placed upon the slavish dedication which Aristaeus displays, being, as Mynors suggests, 'completely absorbed in his instructions',[111] but, critically, there is a further, more negative dimension. Aristaeus appears to be willing to do only the bare minimum of what is asked of him in order to achieve his own ends. He performs the sacrifice in a mechanical, mindless fashion, as if he were simply preparing a recipe; he fails to invest the rite with the genuine remorse which would render it a meaningful ritual seeking forgiveness for the crime he had committed.

The sacrifice consists chiefly of the slaughter of eight cattle, from whose carcasses a new swarm of bees are ultimately, and miraculously, created. This *bugonia* is in essence almost identical to the practice of creating bees from dead cattle described a little earlier in *Georgics* 4 (295-314), except that the earlier practice appears more "scientific", albeit erroneous. Aristaeus' actions are more consistent with Roman ritual practice; this is indicated by Cyrene, who, at 531-47, tells her son to offer '*munera*' (534) with '*votis*' (536) to the slighted nymphs, both of which are technical terms denoting sacrifice.[112] However, Aristaeus' workmanlike approach to sacrifice not only betrays his apparent callousness when it comes to causing death, to which Orpheus and Eurydice would testify, but also makes it seem less like a religious rite, and more like the pseudo-scientific practice of 4.295-314. Moreover, while Aristaeus may be a scientist, he is certainly not an economist; so single-minded is he in pursuit of a new stock of bees that he is willing to make an exchange which makes no practical sense.[113] No sensible farmer would destroy eight of his finest cattle in order to gain a new stock of bees, and Aristaeus' lack of remorse belies the suggestion that he is simply desperate to atone for his part in Eurydice's demise, at any cost.[114] Such blinkered pursuit of a goal, in this case a new swarm of bees, without any kind of perspective, is commonplace among literary *iuvenes*, driven by the *adulescentulus impulsus*, and is what got Aristaeus into trouble in the first place.[115] Aristaeus' behaviour towards Eurydice and Proteus, in particular, is a fine

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[111] Mynors (1990), *ad* 4.548.
[112] For a fuller analysis of the two descriptions of *bugonia*, see Appendix II of this thesis; also, Miles (1980), 284; Nappa (2005), 212.
[113] For sacrifice as 'exchange', see Perkell (1989), 76; also, Chapter Three, pp. 170-83.
[114] Cf. Miles (1980), 284.
[115] Sen. *Clem.* 1.15.7. Cf. Arist. *Rh.* 2.12.12: the young man rejects the useful in favour of the noble.

example of the youthful *ferocitas* which Cicero held to be the defining characteristic of young men.

Meanwhile, Orpheus, one of the victims of Aristaeus' misdeeds, is himself certainly not above reproach. While Orpheus' juvenility manifests itself in a different way from his antagonist's, it provides a similarly negative example of youthful behaviour. Orpheus' and Aristaeus' stories start in a similar vein, as each is faced with loss, and, in despair, looks to regain what has been taken from him. From this point, however, their paths deviate towards opposite poles.[116] Aristaeus seeks to regain his bees by employing force against Proteus, and, following the instructions given to him by Cyrene, destroys life for the purpose of sacrifice; in this way, his loss is cancelled out, and he retains his own life. By contrast, Orpheus looks to achieve his aims by creation, his musical blandishments soothing the dwellers of the Underworld. However, he ignores the orders given to him by Proserpina in looking back at his wife on the return to the upper world, and, as a result, his lost Eurydice remains just so. Also, unlike Aristaeus, Orpheus does not survive the end of the story, as he is torn to pieces by Bacchantes, enraged by the eligible widower's devotion to his late wife.

Vergil's version of the Orpheus and Eurydice narrative is the earliest of those surviving from antiquity to end in failure; all of the previous accounts which have been transmitted to the present day involve Orpheus' successful retrieval of his wife from the Underworld.[117] Although it cannot be ruled out that there was a precedent for Vergil's Orpheus story which has since been lost, his account would appear at the very least to be a deviation from the orthodox version.[118] This novel approach has a significant effect upon the reading of the Aristaeus epyllion. Orpheus' failure serves to form a contrast with Aristaeus' success, highlighting their different approaches to crisis management: Orpheus ignores instruction, while Aristaeus follows it studiously. In the present context, Orpheus' failure contributes a further negative element to Vergil's depiction of youth, since it provides evidence of youthful recklessness and its potentially fatal consequences.

Eurydice's death was effectively caused by *amor caecus*, the blind lust to which Aristaeus responded in chasing her. While Orpheus' own death and the

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[116] Batstone (1997), 127. Of Orpheus and Aristaeus: 'these figures merge as they separate: both are passionate, self-absorbed, and destructive of others, both destroy Eurydice but remain indifferent to guilt...both seek to dominate nature and death'.
[117] Wilkinson (1969), 116.
[118] 'Literary sources for [Vergil's] account are hard to find'- Mynors (1990), 314. Also Perkell (1989), 80-1.

"second death" of his wife are caused by a more respectable form of *amor*, what must be considered "true love", the result of a lack of perspective in its pursuit is identical. Orpheus should be commended for his efforts in travelling to the Underworld in order to retrieve Eurydice, but the fact that he comes so close to achieving success in his endeavour places the folly of his eventual failure in sharp focus. All he had to do was return to the world above without looking back at his wife, according to the will of Proserpina ('*namque hanc dederat Proserpina legem*'- 4.487), but his love got the better of him, '*subita incautum dementia cepit amantem*' (4.488), and he could not resist the urge to check that Eurydice was still behind him.[119] Orpheus' vulnerability to *amor*, at the expense of any sort of perspective, is something to which Catullus and the later love elegists would testify as a profound weakness of young men.[120] The '*subita...dementia*' which love thrusts upon him is synonymous with youthful *ferocitas*, a rashness which need not be manifested in violence, but which causes reckless behaviour- Seneca's *adulescentulus impulsus*.

Orpheus' love for Eurydice consumes him completely, and utterly dominates his depiction in the epyllion. When we first meet him, his lovesickness holds a monopoly over his life:

> *ipse cava solans aegrum testudine amorem*
> *te, dulcis coniunx, te solo in litore secum,*
> *te veniente die, te decedente canebat.*
> 4.464-6.

When Orpheus returns from the Underworld, he reprises this role of constant mourning, and will entertain no thoughts but those of Eurydice, spurning the notion of love or marriage to another: '*nulla Venus, non ulli animum flexere hymenaei*' (4.516). Orpheus displays the self-absorption typical of the insular elegiac poet, obsessed by his love at the expense of all else. It is his self-imposed emotional exile which causes his death, at the hands of Thracian women, offended by their inability to arouse his attention:

> *spretae Ciconum quo munere matres*
> *inter sacra deum nocturnique orgia Bacchi*

[119] The fact that Orpheus is referred to only as '*incautum...amantem*' here suggests that it is his *amor* which is responsible for his *dementia*.
[120] Latin love elegy is principally concerned with '*iuvenum miseros...amores*' (Tib. 1.2.91).

> *discerptum latos iuvenem sparsere per agros.*
> 4.520-2.

It is only on the occasion of Orpheus' death that Vergil chooses to refer to him as '*iuvenem*'. This serves chiefly to highlight the tragedy of his untimely demise, but, moreover, associates with the word connotations of wretchedness and doom, which seem to pursue the ill-fated *iuvenes* of Vergil's *Aeneid*, such as Pallas and Lausus.

iii) The unnamed lover

There is another youth in the *Georgics* whose fate bears certain similarities to that of Orpheus. In the middle of Book 3 (242-83), Vergil embarks upon a sustained attack upon *amor*, what must, in context, be considered closer to 'lust', than 'love'. Here, the poet catalogues the destructive effects *amor* has upon the temperaments of many creatures. Thrown in among these numerous species is a human being, referred to only as '*iuvenis*', who has been identified in commentaries as the mythical Leander.

> *quid iuvenis, magnum cui versat in ossibus ignem*
> *durus amor? nempe abruptis turbata procellis*
> *nocte natat caeca serus freta, quem super ingens*
> *porta tonat caeli, et scopulis inlisa reclamant*
> *aequora; nec miseri possunt revocare parentes,*
> *nec moritura super crudeli funere virgo.*
> 3.258-63.

Myth provides a pool of *exempla* of specific patterns of human behaviour; as such, allusion to mythical characters is an invaluable shorthand, which poets like Vergil can exploit to make generic statements about human beings. By evoking the mythical Leander without even mentioning his name, Vergil makes the young man's actions appear so generic as to be universal. In referring to Leander simply as *iuvenis*, Vergil is, says Williams, 'generalising his exploits as being the typical action of the young man compelled by *durus amor*'.[121] In addition, the poet seeks to collapse the distinction between the human youth, and those of other species, since human beings are just as responsive to primal urges as other animals; if Leander were named, he would immediately stand in relief from the other, nameless victims of *amor*.

[121] Williams (1979), *ad* 3.260f.

The myth of Hero and Leander, which Ovid dealt with in his *Heroides* 18 and 19, tells of the love between a young priestess of Aphrodite, Hero, who lived in a tower at Sestos on the Hellespont, and her lover, Leander, who lived across the strait at Abydos.[122] Every night, Leander would swim across the strait to visit his lover, guided by the lamp which Hero would light at the top of her tower. One night, however, Leander attempted to swim across the Hellespont in stormy weather; the lamp in Hero's tower was blown out by the storm and Leander was drowned. Hero subsequently threw herself from the tower to her death. Thus Leander's tale is, as Orpheus', one of tragic folly, driven by *durus amor*; unable to think of anything besides his beloved, he recklessly embarks upon a bold mission which will ultimately kill both of them. Hot-headed youth does not listen to reason: he ignores the warnings offered to him by the sky, which thunders above him ('*quem super ingens / porta tonat caeli*'), and the waves, which cry out in 'protest against his folly' ('*scopulis inlisa reclamant / aequora*').[123] Likewise, neither his wretched parents, nor his lover, doomed to die along with him ('*moritura super crudeli funere virgo*'), are able to call him back. The manner in which Vergil refers to the desolation of Leander's parents, and the impending death of Hero, highlights the young man's failure to appreciate his responsibility for the well-being of others: his life is not simply his to throw away. Leander does not display the malice of Aristaeus, since his chief fault is merely thoughtlessness; like Orpheus, he makes an unwise decision, whose impact is catastrophic both for himself and his loved ones. His motives and his lack of consideration for others are ultimately evidence of self-absorption, which connects him with those other *iuvenes* who always put their own needs first.[124]

iv) Hubris

There is a further similarity between the stories of Leander and Orpheus in the presence of thunder in both narratives, which, for Mynors, is 'not merely a loud noise,

[122] The origin of the myth is uncertain, but is thought to have been a lost Hellenistic poem. See Mynors (1990), *ad* 3.258-63.
[123] Mynors (1990), *ad* 3.261. Cf. 1.456-7. Here, the older, wiser Vergil points out that he would not even choose to set sail on a stormy night, let alone go swimming.
[124] There is a verbal connection between Leander and Aristaeus in Vergil's description of their female victims as '*moritura...virgo*' (Hero- 3.263), and '*moritura puella*' (Eurydice- 4.458). Both of these women are doomed by the actions of amorous young men.

but a divine warning'.[125] When Orpheus breaks the pact made with Proserpina to return to the upper world without looking back at Eurydice, a fatal contravention both of '*legem*' (4.487) and '*foedera*' (4.492), his error is acknowledged by three claps of thunder: '*terque fragor stagnis auditus Avernis*' (4.493).[126] Leander's failed crossing of the Hellespont is marked by seemingly constant thunder: '*quem super ingens / porta tonat caeli*' (3.260-1). Just as Orpheus has offended a deity, so too Leander; his actions bear comparison with the hubris of Xerxes, who attempted to whip into submission the selfsame stretch of water which Leander tried to cross.[127] The thunder in the stories of Leander and Orpheus seems to be a signal of warranted divine hostility towards these characters, on account of actions by which they presumed to test their status as mortals. Similarly, Aristaeus could be accused of acting hubristically, especially in his violent treatment of Proteus. Unlike Leander and Orpheus, though, Aristaeus is not punished for any further wrongdoing after the loss of his bees; this may be attributed to the impunity offered to him by his divine parentage, something in which he holds supreme, and apparently justified confidence ('*iuvenum confidentissime*'- 4.445). It is Aristaeus' privileged position which shapes his entire fate, and ensures that he is successful; Proteus believes that the youth ought to have been more heavily punished for his part in Eurydice's death, the loss of his bees being too small a penalty: '*haudquaquam ad meritum poenas*' (4.455).[128] Aristaeus' inherited status also allows him to enter realms which ought not to be accessible to mortals, such as the home of his nymph mother, Cyrene: '*fas illi limina divum / tangere*' (4.358-9).

The lack of respect which these three youths show for the divine appears symptomatic of the kind of juvenile irreverence witnessed in the early part of this chapter. Literary youths appear reluctant to defer to their elders, their superiors, or to traditions and customs. There was evidence of this in the poetry of the love elegists, who reacted against Roman martial (and, indeed, marital) traditions and displayed a counter-cultural, revolutionary instinct. Among the "real" Roman youth, vigorous young men in the army baulked to allow their older co-combatants to hold the

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[125] Mynors (1990), *ad* 3.261.
[126] Miles (1980), 278.
[127] Hdt. 7.34.
[128] On the preference of *ad* over *ob* in this line, see Mynors (1990), *ad* 4.455. See also, Miles (1980), 271; 283: Aristaeus' success is 'a gift of the gods. We cannot match [his] achievements by knowing more or trying harder'.

limelight in a field in which they considered themselves more capable.[129] In the *Georgics*, youthful irreverence appears more as a result of egocentricity: the young man cannot perceive of the needs of anyone other than himself, or at least cannot act purely for the benefit of another, whether divine or mortal. Where others stand to profit from the actions of the *Georgics*' youths it is purely coincidental, a by-product of juvenile self-seeking; thus, Orpheus attempts to restore Eurydice to the upper world with the principal purpose of remedying his own lovesickness at her death, and with little concern for her well-being.

v) A precarious existence

As in Orpheus' case, Leander's single-minded pursuit of his desires results in his own, premature death. The tragic aspect of the portrayal of youth in the *Georgics*, found in the depictions of Orpheus and Leander, is reiterated briefly in a reference to the Underworld in the "Orphic" section of Book 4's epyllion. When Orpheus descends into Hades, he is greeted by the shades of the dead:

> *matres atque viri defunctaque corpora vita*
> *magnanimum heroum, pueri innuptaeque puellae,*
> *impositique rogis iuvenes ante ora parentum*
> 4.475-7.

Vergil, showing great concern for pathos, does not refer to the old, or the sick, or those who might, in the eyes of many Romans, "deserve" to be in Hades, but reserves mention for those whose presence there is wretchedly unjust. Among the mothers and fathers, presumably of young children, the great-hearted heroes, and discrete from the boys and girls too young to have married, there are the *iuvenes*, lain on pyres before the eyes of their surviving parents in a perversion of the natural order. As with Leander, whose parents were unable to call him back from his doomed journey (3.262), Vergil evokes greater sadness at the death of youngsters by allusion to those who survive them, especially their parents.[130] These young men, unlike those around them, get a whole line to themselves in Vergil's description; this amplification

[129] Eyben (1993), 47-8.
[130] Mynors (1990) offers the interesting fact that '*ora parentum*' is used to end a line a total of seven times in Vergil's oeuvre, generally with *ante*: *ad* 4.475-7. This is an example of the poet's predilection for extreme pathos: no greater tragedy than that witnessed by loved ones.

sustains their peculiar sense of pathos. This may be due to the fact that their lives were ended just as they were reaching their full potential, having passed the fragility of the early years which made the deaths of '*pueri innuptaeque puellae*' terribly common. Meanwhile, the '*matres atque viri*' had at least left some sort of legacy in the children who, presumably, outlive them. In his article 'Vergil on Killing Virgins', Don Fowler highlights 'how closely related the imagery of defloration and marriage can be to the literal description of wounding and death', in Vergil's *Aeneid* in particular.[131] Fowler argues that virginal young characters in the poem, such as Pallas, Euryalus, and Camilla 'are deflowered in death':[132] Vergil describes their killings in terms deliberately similar to those related to defloration, so that 'the pathos is intensified by our sense of horror'.[133] The deaths of these young people, like those in the *Georgics*, are therefore condemned as 'a reproach to the universe, or at least to mankind in general, rather than a sign of individual error'.[134] Their passive objectivity makes blameless victims of the deflowered; the metaphorical defloration of male *iuvenes* likewise suggests that they are not responsible for their fates.

vi) Youthful vigour and pedagogy

Through the depictions in the *Georgics* of Orpheus, Leander, and the youths of the Underworld, Vergil gives the impression that there is an extraordinary mortality to *iuvenes*; young men appear to be pursued by tragedy. This tendency, however, seems to be a result of the devastating vigour which characterises the youths themselves, and which, in the absence of perspective, can cause their self-destruction, as well as harm to others. Their youthful vitality is what makes *iuvenes* at once frightening and attractive. *Iuvenes* possess the same physical and mental force as *viri*, but they tend to err and cause destruction, as they do in the *Georgics*, because they have yet to develop the necessary powers of judgement to control their responses to their drives and wants, the grown man's '*consilium...maius*'.[135] In *Georgics* 3, Vergil discusses the selection of horses for the purposes of chariot racing or military training in highly anthropomorphic terms.

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[131] Fowler (1987), 191.
[132] Fowler (1987), 189.
[133] Fowler (1987), 197.
[134] Fowler (1987), 196.
[135] Lucr. 3.450.

nonne vides, cum praecipiti certamine campum
corripuere, ruuntque effusi carcere currus,
cum spes adrectae ***iuvenum****, exsultantiaque haurit*
corda pavor pulsans? illi instant verbere torto
et proni dant lora, volat vi fervidus axis;
iamque humiles iamque elati sublime videntur
aera per vacuum ferri atque adsurgere in auras.
nec mora nec requies; at fulvae nimbus harenae
tollitur, umescunt spumis flatuque sequentum:
tantus amor laudum, tantae est victoria curae.
primus Ericthonius currus et quattuor ausus
iungere equos rapidusque rotis insistere victor.
frena Pelethronii Lapithae gyrosque dedere
impositi dorso, atque equitem docuere sub armis
insultare solo et gressus glomerare superbos.
aequus uterque labor, aeque ***iuvenem****que magistri*
exquirunt calidumque animis et cursibus acrem,
quamvis saepe fuga versos ille egerit hostis
et patriam Epirum referat fortisque Mycenas,
Neptunique ipsa deducat origine gentem.
3.103-22.

Throughout this section, Vergil conflates horse and rider to a remarkable extent. Only once does he use the word *equus* (114), elsewhere describing the horses in profoundly human terms.[136] Having just referred to young, excited chariot drivers as *iuvenes* (105), Vergil uses the word again at 118 in reference to horses ('*iuvenemque*'). In the intervening lines, the convergence between horse and rider is total: at 116-7, the rider is described as performing the actions of his horse, 'galloping fully armed and proudly rounding paces': '*equitem docuere sub armis / insultare solo et gressus glomerare superbos*'.[137] Vergil prevents distinction between young man and young horse to such an extent that he appears to suggest that the two are identical, and that, consequently, his advice regarding colts can easily be applied to their human contemporaries. The inclusion of horses in the *Georgics* has itself been a matter of scholarly interest, since they were not farm animals and would have been beyond the financial reach of most Roman farmers; certainly, the discussion of chariot racing which is found here would be of little or no import to any farmer. Wilkinson has suggested that the presence of horses in the *Georgics* was motivated by their strong relationship with humans, regarding them as the only other creature capable of possessing 'honour'.[138] In a poem concerned with Rome and Romans, rather than simply farming, the presence of the

[136] See Thomas (1988), *ad* 3.95-122; 118.
[137] Translation- Wilkinson. Cf. Thomas (1988), *ad* 3.116-7.
[138] Wilkinson (1969), 92. Wilkinson's argument appears to have been largely accepted in subsequent scholarship, albeit complemented by discussion of the relationship between horse and man.

horse is entirely appropriate, even vital.[139] To an extent, it was the horse's exemption from agricultural labour which made it so important to the Romans: its principal function was as comrade at arms.[140] In the third century BCE the Roman cavalry, the *equites*, had developed into a distinct class with a property minimum for entry.[141] To be provided with a public horse, to become one of the *equites equo publico*, was considered an especial privilege; its 1800 members were allowed to vote in one of the prestigious 18 centuries of the *comitia centuriata*, and could take part in the *transvectio equarum*, an annual cavalry parade which was always very well attended by the populace.[142] Possession of a horse was therefore symbolically important, since so much personal prestige was dependent upon it; in the third and second centuries, many senators kept their public horses even when they were well beyond the age for military service.[143] A law, passed in 129BCE, to take the public horse away from senators (*plebiscitum equorum reddendorum*), forming a distinction between equestrians and senators for the first time, was bitterly opposed by many senators, who regarded it as a denigration of the senate.[144] For an elite Roman citizen, his horse was an extension of his public profile; to compare man and horse was, therefore, uniquely appropriate to the Roman people.

In this light, Vergil's advice on the selection of horses for chariot racing or cavalry service can provide an insight into human juvenile behaviour. Were it not for the context, it would be difficult to determine that lines 118-22 refer to horses, and not to humans;[145] trainers are told only to seek '*iuvenemque*', and the last two lines, which discuss noble lineage, are 'heroic' in a manner usually applicable only to humans.[146] What is particularly interesting about these lines is that they suggest that the raw energy possessed by youths, human as well as equine, is a desirable characteristic when it comes to certain endeavours. Ahead of an older horse, however many enemies it may have routed, or however noble its heritage, the trainer should choose the young colt, '*calidumque animis*'- the nearest thing to a Latin equivalent of "hot-

[139] See Putnam (1979: 178-9) on horses in poetry and myth.
[140] McCall (2002), 115: 'because war was so fundamentally important to the continued existence and prosperity of the Republic, the Romans particularly valued those who contributed to the war effort'.
[141] McCall (2002), 3-4; 138: 'cavalry service was a uniquely elite form of military service and an important means for acquiring prestige and confirming status'.
[142] McDonnell (2006), 255.
[143] McDonnell (2006), 254. See, Livy 29.37.8-10.
[144] McDonnell (2006), 253-4.
[145] So Nappa (2005), 130.
[146] Thomas (1988), *ad* 3.121-2.

headed" one could wish to find. There are dangers inherent in the untamed nature of such a horse, but its keen vigour can be extremely useful. The idea that examples of animal behaviour, and specifically that of horses, might be extended to human beings was clearly not unknown to the ancients, since Plutarch, in his *Life of Themistocles*, suggests that the Athenian leader was rather wild as a youth, but that he later made the excuse that 'the wildest colts make the best horses, as long as they get properly trained and broken in' (2.5).[147]

Youthful wildness is therefore a potentially desirable characteristic, but, for Vergil as for Plutarch's Themistocles, this is dependent upon the exertion of external control and influence in the training of the youth. When he returns to the subject of horses at 3.179, after an interlude on cattle, Vergil gives details of the early training which is required to make a good horse of the wild colt. He emphasises the importance of this education at the close of the passage:

> *tum demum crassa magnum farragine corpus*
> *crescere iam domitis sinito; namque ante domandum*
> *ingentis tollent animos, prensique negabunt*
> *verbera lenta pati et duris parere lupatis.*
> 3.205-8.

It is only after the horse is fully broken that it should be fattened up; if the horse is fattened before its preparation is complete, its retained wildness, coupled with the confidence in its new bulk and strength will make it recalcitrant, and resistant to vain human efforts to control it. There is further explanation of why discipline should be imposed upon the animal as a youth in the intervening discussion of cattle, if it may be permitted to compare ox with horse and human. Although the end is more mundane than heroic, in the preparation of cattle for agricultural labour, rather than horses for war or racing, the means are similar: intensive training at a young age. The reason which Vergil gives for working with juvenile animals is a positive one:

> *iam vitulos hortare viamque insiste domandi,*
> *dum faciles animi iuvenum, dum mobilis aetas.*
> 3.164-5.

Youthful cattle are easier to work with because they are more docile; they are at an age which is characterised as '*mobilis*'- 'pliable'. This changeable nature was seen as

[147] Eyben (1993), 18, N75.

a negative in Horace's description of a caricatured youth- easily turned to vice, and quick to take up and abandon the objects of his desire-[148] but here it can be seen as a positive; the youth is highly suggestible, and can therefore be manipulated by an external force to suit one's purposes. The word *mobilis* also evokes the activity and vitality with which youth is frequently associated.

The need for training in order to make the young animal a valuable and willing servant does not negate the desirability of its youthful vigour, for which it was chosen in the first place. If their individual tragedies are momentarily overlooked, the *Georgics*' higher profile, human *iuvenes* can be discovered to be uniquely powerful and effective beings. To begin with the briefest of examples; the final picture of the swimmer, Leander, is one of failure, as he is drowned in a storm before he can reach the island of Sestos. However, this is merely the conclusion to a much longer story, since the reader is to understand that Leander had successfully made the trip on numerous occasions in the past. The combination of youthful vigour and *durus amor* (3.259) had both compelled and enabled him to undertake this clearly perilous journey. Similarly, Orpheus' story is one of ultimate failure, and it is his tragic death which lingers longest in the reader's memory at the end of the poem, but he must be credited for his earlier, remarkable achievements. Like Leander, Orpheus is driven by *amor* to attempt a hazardous course to reach his lover, Eurydice; the fact that Eurydice is in the Underworld makes Orpheus' challenge considerably more difficult. Lines 470-84 of Book 4 witness the powerful effect which Orpheus' song has upon the inhabitants of the Underworld, charming even the Furies and Cerberus (4.482-3), much as it would the creatures of the earth on his return (4.508-13), and presumably persuading Persephone and Pluto to allow him to retrieve Eurydice. However, Orpheus' marvellous power as poet and musician must be considered in isolation from whatever dynamism his status as *iuvenis* grants him; it is not Orpheus' youth which makes him so great a minstrel: that is a separate gift. Even with this concession, those of Orpheus' achievements which can be detached from his power of song are themselves no small feats. He approaches the high gates of Hades, a place of darkness and terror, but is not swayed from his purpose: '*alta ostia Ditis / et caligantem nigra formidine lucum / ingressus*' (4.467-9). [149] In Vergil's elliptical

[148] Horace was following Aristotle's description of young men as εὐμετάβολοι (*Rh.* 2.12.4).
[149] The enjambment of '*ingressus*' allows the reader to pause with Orpheus at the entrance to the Underworld, before seeing him decide to enter.

account, the audience is left to imagine many of the terrors with which Orpheus is faced on his way to meet Pluto, '*regemque tremendum*' (4.469) of the Underworld, but it has already been alerted to the presence of the Furies, and of Cerberus. The fact that this youth manages to enter Hades and return with his own life, having almost resurrected his wife, must be regarded as a significant accomplishment.

Whatever one may think of Aristaeus' lack of remorse for his part in the death of Eurydice, or his childish appeals to his mother, Cyrene, onto whom he tries to divert the blame for the loss of his bees, the fact remains that he is an effective character in the *Georgics*. On his first appearance, Aristaeus is faced with the problem of his lost bees, which he solves by the means available to him. In doing so, Aristaeus provides a perfect example of the double-edged nature of the power of the *iuvenis*. He receives warranted censure from Proteus for his part in Eurydice's death, his passion having roused his youthful spirits into her pursuit. This is part of another story, confined to the past, to which the audience is granted only subjective access by Proteus' account. The actual present of the Aristaeus epyllion bears witness to a different youth, one who lacks the insight to formulate a solution to his problem on his own, or is perhaps wary of his own destructive potential. Aristaeus, in need of guidance, looks to the wisdom of his mother; it is in this wise that the value and power of his youthful energy becomes apparent, when it is allied to the control that Cyrene provides. By employing his force according to the principles which his mother lays down, and exclusively so, Aristaeus prevails.[150] He exerts his strength as directed in the capture of Proteus, refusing to yield as the aged deity squirms into one form or another; the information Aristaeus extracts from the seer allows his mother to prescribe a further course of action. Ultimately, through the slaughter of his livestock, the fruits of his earlier labour, he gains a new stock of bees. While Aristaeus is guided at every turn by his divine mother, he is the true agent of his eventual success.

vii) Destruction and success

It is the application of Cyrene's training to the raw material of Aristaeus which sets him apart from the other youths, whose fates are altogether more tragic. This

[150] Aristaeus ought not, however, to be considered to have been a complete "failure" before this episode. The allusion, albeit in his own words, to the wealth and breadth of his agricultural enterprises at 4.326-32, testifies to his capacity for success.

external influence does not, however, come early enough to prevent Aristaeus from causing Eurydice's death, and does not preclude, but in fact prescribes, his carrying out a brutal and rather imbalanced sacrifice in order to regain his bees. In this respect then, Aristaeus remains a destructive creature, much like Leander and Orpheus. There is, however, a crucial distinction between Aristaeus' involvement in Eurydice's demise, and his use of violence against Proteus and in sacrifice; Eurydice's death is an accident, while there is a purpose to the young man's later, deliberate use of force. The youth can cause destruction by carelessness, but it also appears inherent to the manner in which he achieves success. This is an idea supported by the image of a snake in Book 3 of the *Georgics*:

> *ne mihi tum mollis sub divo carpere somnos*
> *neu dorso nemoris libeat iacuisse per herbas,*
> *cum positis novus exuviis nitidusque iuventa*
> *volvitur, aut catulos tectis aut ova relinquens,*
> *arduus ad solem et linguis micat ore trisulcis.*
> 3.435-9.

Vergil advises against taking a nap in the grasses of a wooded hillside, for fear of being bitten by a snake. This snake, which is explicitly youthful, '*nitidusque iuventa*', appears to be at the height of its powers, towering towards the sun in a menacing display which justifies Vergil's note of caution. Should the snake bite and kill an unwary human, or any other creature for that matter, there would be no mistake, no injustice; it is by this "destructive" act that the snake lives, feeds, defends itself. Indeed, such an event is forthcoming in the *Georgics*, since the agent of Eurydice's death in Book 4 is a snake, lurking similarly in the grass:

> *illa quidem, dum te fugeret per flumina praeceps,*
> *immanem ante pedes hydrum moritura puella*
> *servantem ripas alta non vidit in herba.*
> 4.457-9.

There is no suggestion that the snake is *responsible* for Eurydice's death- it is simply doing what is expected of it, exerting its force in the only way it knows. It is Aristaeus who distracts Eurydice, preventing her from taking the necessary care, and is therefore culpable. If this snake may be identified with its predecessor in Book 3, it is a youth which causes a death, but does not possess the perspective to see anything wrong with its actions. In *Aeneid* 2 (471-5), Vergil reuses lines 437 and 439 of

Georgics 3 in a simile describing the young Neoptolemus, exulting in his assault on Priam's palace, as posing a similar threat to a snake in the grass. This simile, although it comes later than the *Georgics*, serves to form a connection between youth in the animal kingdom and in human beings. The snake testifies to the destructiveness inherent to the vigour of youth, which can be imperceptible to the youth himself. This combination of force and short-sightedness in the pursuit of irresistible urges seems to offer an approach towards a definition of what Cicero referred to as *ferocitas*, the defining trait of Roman youths.[151]

Where youth is explicitly alluded to within the *Georgics*, there are generally connotations of potential destruction or tragedy, whether for the youngster himself, or another by association. Even in the case of the chariot driver and his young horse in Book 3 (103-22), there is a possible connection with calamity. In their narrow context, no misfortune appears to come either to the driver or the young horse, but it is difficult to resist the urge to connect these characters with the one other, spectacular image of chariot racing in the poem. At the end of Book 1, Vergil sets up a runaway chariot as a metaphor for the terrible condition of contemporary Roman affairs:

> *ut cum carceribus sese effudere quadrigae,*
> *addunt in spatia, et frustra retinacula tendens*
> *fertur equis auriga neque audit currus habenas.*
> 1.512-14

In this image, a role reversal has taken place: the chariot driver may carry the whip, but it is the horses which are in control; he cannot check their progress. The chariot driver may very likely be heading to his death because of the excitement of his horses, which spurs them to go faster and faster and pay him no heed. This could be the fate of the young drivers from Book 3, should they ignore Vergil's later warning (3.205-8) and fail to break their horses in early enough.

viii) A sketch of the *Georgics*' youth

In the literary tradition of the late Roman Republic and early Empire it was commonplace to depict young men in a predominantly negative light. In view of this conventional stance, it is significant that Vergil should choose to refer to the 34 year-

[151] *Sen.* 10.33.

old Octavian as a *iuvenis* in the first book of his *Georgics*. An examination of the behaviour and circumstances of the other *iuvenes* who appear in the poem betrays a high level of correspondence between these young men and the conventional, literary depiction of youth. The *Georgics*' youths are all cast from the mould of the Aristotelian νέος, reluctant monuments to Cicero's *ferocitas* and Seneca's *iuvenilis impetus*. As a result, they behave rashly and without consideration for the consequences of their actions: Aristaeus causes Eurydice's death by attempting to rape her; Orpheus condemns his wife to a second death by looking back at her, breaking his pact with Pluto; Leander ventures out to sea in a storm, at the cost of his own life and that of his beloved Hero. These three are all, like their comic and elegiac contemporaries, victims of *servitium amoris*, love's slavery; in each case, the youth's fate is sealed by his inability to resist the pangs of love, or, in the case of Aristaeus' pursuit of Eurydice, lust. Orpheus, who is most clearly defined as lover and bard, displays the blinkered self-absorption of the elegiac poet. Aristaeus appears incapable of self-evaluation, blaming his mother for the loss of his bees and, even when he finds out the true cause of his misfortune, failing to reflect upon it. The conventional lack of respect which youths show for their elders and for the *mos maiorum* is also clearly witnessed in the *Georgics*: Aristaeus' insolent treatment of his mother, Cyrene, is indicative of this, and the hubristic aspects of his behaviour, as well as that of Orpheus and Leander, testify to the extent of the youths' irreverence.

While these features are inherent to the traditional characterisation of youths in literature, Vergil's treatment of the subject does not remain confined to them. In the *Georgics*, Vergil complements and extends the range of the literary youth and its connotations, without departing from the core of what defines young men in literature. The poet's depiction of the *iuvenis* is at once more pessimistic than the conventional picture, and yet permissive of a glimmer of optimism. The often rash behaviour of Vergil's youths is not simply destructive; it is, more often than not, literally *fatal*: each of Aristaeus, Orpheus, and Leander cause the death of another, albeit that in Orpheus' case Eurydice was already, or rather *still*, dead. In addition, Vergil attributes to the youth an extraordinary mortality, which would not be fully realised until his composition of the *Aeneid*, whose latter books are dominated by the pathos of murdered *iuvenes*. Orpheus' death is singularly tragic, but he is joined in his fate by Leander, and the many other youths who inhabit the Underworld in 4.477. Crucially, however, there is a fragile but recurrent intimation of the power innate to youths,

which, through their lack of composure, is often manifest in their destructive and self-destructive actions, but can be harnessed to achieve positive ends. Aristaeus' gain in acquiring a new stock of bees is heavily moderated by Vergil's treatment of his methods and his past, but it is, nonetheless, a success.[152] The potential for such a positive outcome is dependent upon the kind of guidance and training which Aristaeus, like his equine and bovine counterparts in Book 3 (3.164-5; 205-8), receives from his elders.

D. The Reception of Octavian

i) Constructive criticism

To a large extent, therefore, Vergil is faithful to his literary forbears in his predominantly negative portrayal of youth. If the *Georgics* does not seek to harm Octavian's public image, nor to pander to his opponents, the task of finding meaning or purpose in its depiction of youth becomes necessarily more complicated. Vergil wrote the *Georgics* as an adherent of Octavian, with encouragement, but not under duress, from his patron, Maecenas, Octavian's right hand man. It was due to his concern for Octavian's future that Vergil deliberately engaged with the perceived weaknesses in the young man's character and position in the foreground of his work.[153] His reasons for doing so might be numerous, but two of these motivations present themselves as being of principal significance. The first, albeit not necessarily in terms of importance, was to raise the young Caesar's awareness of his public image, and to motivate him to address any "flaws" inherent in it via some sort of campaign of public relations, or "spin".[154] In this endeavour, Vergil can be compared with Seneca, whose professed aim in his *De Clementia* is to act as a 'mirror' for

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[152] The fact that Aristaeus needs actually to *kill* to achieve success is a theme which is explored in Chapter Three, especially pp. 170-2.

[153] 'Vergil...is shaping his poem to reverse the weakest aspects of Octavian's reputation'- Powell (2008), 261; also, 5, 18. See also the Introduction to this thesis, especially pp. 5-7.

[154] Cf. Nappa (2005), 2. In Nappa's view, the *Georgics* 'speaks to and about one particular reader, Octavian', and is 'an attempt to engage in a constructive dialogue with Octavian on the potential courses available to him and on the potential interpretations of his character, achievements, and motives'. Although the notion that Octavian is the *Georgics*' chief target audience does not truly convince, the idea of a 'constructive dialogue...on the potential interpretations of his character' has strong appeal, and this thesis is, therefore, indebted to Nappa for his approach.

Nero.[155] The second, more critical reason was to discuss these weaknesses with the poem's wider audience, Octavian's elite "subjects", either to acknowledge and concede them, to diminish their influence, or both. This public relations "fire-fighting" sought to provide a more stable platform for a general and concerted campaign to sell the image of a bright future under Octavian to the Roman people.

As evidenced by Cicero, Octavian's youth was regarded as a weakness in his early public image, hindering his rise to prominence; Vergil sought to address this problem in the *Georgics*. It is possible to situate Vergil's unflattering depiction of youth within a broadly "Augustan" schema by viewing it in the context of the poet's efforts to speak to and about Octavian. Within the depictions of the other *iuvenes* in the poem there are certain features which correspond to varying degrees with aspects of Octavian's own circumstances and history. The new Caesar's subjects are invited to consider this correspondence in forming an opinion of him; the ruler himself is permitted the same insight, but his response will be naturally more reflexive. In order to discern these points of comparison between Octavian and his contemporaries, it is necessary to revisit the *Georgics*' youths. A number of these features can function simultaneously as part of an appeal both to the wider audience and to Octavian.

ii) Common fates and analogues- Civil War

It requires no leap of logic to connect the first reference to a *iuvenis* in the *Georgics* with the figure of Octavian, since it refers to him directly (1.500). The most significant feature of this reference to the young Octavian is that it comes in a passage describing the horrors of the civil wars, which have left the Roman world in an '*everso...saeclo*' (1.500). Octavian's connection with and responsibility for these civil wars, whose destructiveness is exemplified by a mournful Vergil, was the most dangerous of the flaws in the new ruler's public image which the poet felt motivated to address in his *Georgics*, a veritable millstone around Octavian's neck.[156] It is this weakness which drives Vergil's exposition throughout the poem, there being no easy fix for so great a problem. In tackling the other, less menacing issue of Octavian's age, Vergil was seeking not simply to diminish its own threat, but to turn it to his

[155] '*modo speculi vice fungerer et te tibi ostenderem*': Sen. *Clem.* 1.1.1. See Braund (1998) on the protreptic aspect of the *De Clementia*.
[156] 'The memory of his lethal youth would glue to Octavian's skin, in a way which he could be sure the public also was unlikely to forget'- Powell (2008), 75.

advantage by utilising it as one of several arguments against condemning Octavian for his involvement in the civil wars; the effect being rather like the presentation of series of proofs, such as one finds in Lucretius, or earlier philosophical treatises.

To return to the reference to Octavian as '*hunc...iuvenem*' at 1.500, it was suggested that there is the possible intimation that the young Caesar is, at least in part responsible for the '*everso...saeclo*' into which Rome has plummeted. The word '*saltem*'- 'at least'- could imply that for Octavian to bring aid to the chaotic state of affairs would be the bare minimum of what ought to be expected of him, since he is culpable for its presence in the first place.[157] Octavian's role in the civil wars was a fact which, far from denying, Vergil highlights throughout the *Georgics*. Such a bold admission would have implications for the text's proposed function as a delineation of Octavian's image, both for the benefit of the man himself, and for the wider audience. From the former perspective, it would serve to draw Octavian's attention early in the poem to this, his greatest weakness, which the *Georgics* will treat in greater detail as it develops. It would not be an offence to Octavian for one of his adherents to confront him with this so publicly, especially since Vergil's motives would not be malicious, but rather to remind Rome's "saviour" of his duty to her.[158] In this context, however, the text's function as an apology on Octavian's behalf to a wider Roman audience is of far greater importance. That the civil wars were terrible and that Octavian was heavily involved in them were two self-evident facts which even a partisan Vergil could concede without surrendering his purpose. Vergil's appeal to a very Roman set of gods ('*di patrii Indigetes et Romule Vestaque mater*'- 1.498) to allow Octavian the chance to atone ('*ne prohibete*'- 1.501) may be extended to his Roman subjects; Vergil calls upon them not to reject this Caesar for his earlier mistakes, but to give him the chance to make amends. The temptation to scorn Octavian's overtures to rule would be strong, but, paradoxically, Rome had descended into such chaos that the only man powerful enough to reverse her decline was one who had expedited it.

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[157] Cf. Cic. *Marcell.* 24: '*multaque uterque dux faceret armatus, quae idem togatus fieri prohibuisset*'. Cicero, though praising Caesar, does seem to imply the dictator's shared responsibility for the terrible state which Rome was in after his civil war with Pompey.

[158] Vergil was certainly in a position to provide such a reminder, even to the future *princeps*- see Nappa (2005), 6-8.

iii) Aristaeus and Octavian

The connection between Octavian and the civil wars is pressed further by his strong correspondence with the character of Aristaeus. Comparison between the characters of Octavian and Aristaeus has been prevalent in scholarship;[159] while such Vergilian analogies are never total, there are numerous levels of association between the two figures. First and foremost, Aristaeus appears as a violent character; his every action, past and present, appears to involve the application of force: his pursuit of Eurydice, which entails the threat of rape; his declamation against his mother, Cyrene, at the entrance to her home; his attack on the elderly Proteus; his slaughter of cattle for the purpose of sacrifice. There is little doubt that, even to his supporters, Octavian's early career as civil war leader was marked by repeated and unmitigated violence. More specifically, comparison between Aristaeus and Octavian is invited with respect to the fact that each is guilty, or at least accused of, a past crime; as we have seen, Aristaeus is accused by Proteus of having caused the death of Eurydice, Orpheus' wife, by chasing her into the path of a snake- a charge he does not deny. Octavian, meanwhile, was (at least in part) responsible for the destruction caused by the civil wars, in all its forms, from the loss of the lives of many in battle, and those executed in the proscriptions in the years following 43BCE, to the seizure of the homes and livelihoods of Italians during the confiscations. Perhaps the greatest of Octavian's crimes was the siege of Perusia, in 41-40BCE, when the landowners of Italy, who had been stripped of their land by Octavian's confiscations, banded together in protest, but were eventually starved into submission. Ultimately, the city was burned, albeit in controversial circumstances, and the leaders of the insurgency were slaughtered.[160] This campaign would live on in infamy, immortalised in the bitter complaints of the final two poems of Propertius' first book of elegies (21 and 22). Propertius is thought to have been from Umbria, the region within which Perusia (modern Perugia) lay, and claims to have lost a relative in the siege of a city which became a tomb '*Perusina...patriae...sepulcra*' (1.22.3).[161] Crucially, Octavian himself seems to have been ashamed of the Perusine war; as Osgood points out, 'when at the end of his life [he] looked back to his early career, he could find ways to represent

[159] See, for example: Morgan (1999), 94, 98; Miles (1980), 291; Nadeau (1984).
[160] See, Osgood (2006), 172. Also, Vell. Pat. 2.74.4.
[161] Osgood (2006), 155-8.

every campaign of the civil war in a positive light except Perusia. He simply omits it from the *Res Gestae*'.[162]

The comparison between Aristaeus and Octavian on this count has many implications, initially in the context of an address to the ruler himself. Due to his failure to acknowledge his offence, or to show any remorse, and the resultant mechanical nature of the performance of his sacrificial rites, Aristaeus does not gain the sympathy of the *Georgics*' audience. Octavian must learn from this if he is to garner support; he must acknowledge his past misdeeds, as the *Georgics* seeks to, and show the kind of remorse and capacity for self-reflection of which Aristaeus is incapable. Aristaeus' crime loses him his bee stock, which he renovates by performing a costly sacrifice. Octavian too must be expected to sacrifice in order to atone for his own misdeeds, especially if he wishes to gain the support of a reinvigorated Rome, complete with her own, not so "little" Romans.[163] On the one hand, it is the Republic itself which must be finally sacrificed by a humble Octavian in order to secure the future safety of the Roman people; on the other, it was Octavian's personal ambition and self-interest which had to be surrendered. The notion of the sacrifice of the Republic would have been of considerable interest to the poem's wider audience: while few would deny that the Republic had been in a state of irreversible decline for many years, and that the recent triumvirate and subsequent dictatorship of Octavian had effectively brought its end, the idea that its termination would become official, and that there would not, in fact, be a return to republican government, even when the present crisis was over, would be a shocking revelation to some. In this regard, then, the analogy between Aristaeus and Octavian also has an apologetic function, in explaining the necessity of such a move, and attempting to prepare the poem's wider audience for this eventuality.[164]

In the violent, destructive behaviour which Aristaeus exhibits, there is a further conciliatory message for the Roman people. Ciceronian *ferocitas* is clearly manifest in the depictions of *iuvenes* in the *Georgics* in general, especially those of Aristaeus, Orpheus, and Leander. In each of these cases, the youths' wild behaviour ended in destruction or, more specifically, the death of another, and possibly themselves, as an unforeseen consequence. The recurrence of this feature invites the

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[162] Osgood (2006), 182.
[163] Cf. 4.201, where bees are presented as '*parvosque Quirites*'.
[164] The notion of the sacrifice of the Republic is considered in greater detail in Chapter Three, especially pp. 161-4.

conclusion that the tendency to cause accidental death is a stock characteristic of youth, which young men cannot escape. The fact that Octavian must have been a *iuvenis* at the time of his involvement in the civil wars, including the Perusine affair, since he is still considered one in 29BCE, could serve to diminish his responsibility for his own bloody past. If causing death is a danger inherent to being a young man, then Octavian cannot be considered completely to blame for bringing about the demise of many human beings as a triumvir. In their accounts of the proscriptions of 43BCE, when the triumvirs, Octavian, Antony, and Lepidus, had ordered the murders of hundreds of their political opponents, Dio and Appian are similarly forgiving of Octavian on account of his age at the time. Both historians suggest that the majority of the proscriptions were committed by Antony and Lepidus.[165] Dio emphasises the fact that Octavian, as a young man, had yet to make as many enemies as Lepidus and Antony, both of whom had lived at least twice his twenty years, and that he was simply keen to please;[166] he took part in the slaughter only to shoulder his share of the triumviral workload.

The fact that in the *Georgics* youthful killing is not premeditated, but merely the result of a lack of perspective, a failure to predict the consequences of one's actions, further implies that, even as a young man, Octavian had never intended to be a bringer of death. Vergil looks to defend the young Caesar against accusations of heartlessness and cruelty in the pursuit of his own ends, which would linger, even in fairly positive accounts of his rule, beyond his lifetime. Seneca, in his *De Clementia*, praises the emperor Augustus' acts of mercy in his later life, but criticises his bloodthirsty conduct as a young man, suggesting that he found clemency only once he became tired of cruelty ('*ego vero clementiam non voco lassam crudelitatem*'- 11.2). Likewise, in Suetonius' *Divus Augustus* (27.1), it was Octavian who was the most merciless of the triumvirs in his pursuit of the proscriptions. In evaluating Octavian's personal history, his youth at the time of the civil wars could just as easily be used against him as in his defence; for many, the fact that he could be so bloodthirsty at such an early age was 'especially chilling', not least because he was responsible for the deaths of men much older than himself.[167] It was these sorts of persistent image

[165] See especially Dio Cass. 47.7.1; App. *BCiv.* 4.51. See also, Powell (2008), 64.
[166] Dio Cass. 47.7.2-5.
[167] Powell (2008), 65.

problems for Octavian which necessitated Vergil's apologetic approach in the *Georgics*.

iv) Teaching respect

In Vergil's depiction of Aristaeus, Orpheus, and Leander, each is accused of acting hubristically; all three of these youths appear to challenge the gods in a manner which does not befit their position. The gods thunder at both Orpheus and Leander for their transgressions: breaking a pact with Pluto, and attempting to swim across the Hellespont in a violent storm (4.493; 3.261), respectively. Although Aristaeus is considered worthy of entry to the watery abode of his nymph mother, Cyrene, as the son of Apollo ('*fas illi limina divum / tangere*'- 4.358-9), his attack on Proteus is, in the opinion of his victim, too bold a step: '*nam quis te, iuvenum confidentissime, nostras / iussit adire domos*' (4.445-6).

There is a firm basis for comparison between these arrogant youths and Octavian. First, Leander's attempt to master the stormy seas is given a Caesarean parallel in Book 2's *laudes Italiae* passage:

> *an memorem portus Lucrinoque addita claustra*
> *atque indignatum magnis stridoribus aequor,*
> *Iulia qua ponto longe sonat unda refuso*
> *Tyrrhenusque fretis immittitur aestus Avernis?*
> 2.161-4.

These lines refer to the Portus Iulius, built by Agrippa under the auspices of Octavian in 37/36BCE, to create a giant artificial pool out of the lakes Lucrinus and Avernus for naval training in the campaign against Sextus Pompeius. Octavian's attempts to gain mastery over the waters are greeted with the same unequivocal response from a loudly 'indignant' sea ('*indignatum magnis stridoribus aequor*') as that issued to Leander ('*scopulis inlisa reclamant / aequora*'- 3.261-2).[168]

Once again, however, it is with the figure of Aristaeus that Octavian is most comparable. The superlative '*confidentissime*', applied by Proteus to Aristaeus, is not complimentary, and literally suggests that the youth has too much faith in his divine

[168] Ross (1987: 118) regards 2.161-2 as 'suggestive of the old exemplar of Xerxes' hubris'. See above, p. 53, on the connection between Leander and Xerxes.

descent, feeling that it grants him impunity to do whatever he pleases.[169] Octavian, adopted son of the deified Julius Caesar, was equally vulnerable to the accusation of over-confidence in his position; this point of correspondence with Aristaeus is expected to receive his attention. The effect for Octavian should be twofold: to promote respect from the new ruler both for the gods, who remain his superiors, and for his elders at Rome. The idea that Octavian could be compared with the gods was clearly not alien even in 29BCE, when the *Georgics* was published; he is the last figure invoked in the proem to the first book, and, although his divine status is considered to belong to the future, he is already asked to receive prayer by Vergil: '*votis iam nunc adsuesce vocari*' (1.42).[170] By the end of the poem, in the *sphragis*, Octavian seems to be a god, whose ability to 'thunder' ('*fulminat*'- 4.561) elevates him to a position comparable with that of the king of the gods, Jupiter.[171] On a mortal level, there would have existed at Rome many Protean elder statesmen who had witnessed much in the years which preceded Octavian's rise to power, and would, in their wisdom, have chosen to have him cut down to size for his pretensions to reign. Vergil, therefore, urges him to resist the temptation to trust too much in his own hype, in case he should seem disrespectful to gods or men.

v) Long live the king?

Octavian's tendency to associate himself via portraiture with the figure of Alexander the Great was fraught with potentially negative connotations, in that it could imply a lack of longevity and too heavy reliance upon a sole ruler. Vergil's treatment of bee "kings" in Book 4 of the *Georgics* serves as a pointed reference to Alexander, or perhaps more generally to the successor kings who ruled the Hellenistic world after his death. Octavian is warned against aligning himself too closely with the Macedonian king, or seeking to follow the Hellenistic model of kingship. In addition to this, Vergil tries to advise Octavian not only against portraying himself as

[169] Page (1898), *ad* 445: 'while *fidens* has a good sense, *confidens* in classical Latin has a bad one= 'impudent'.
[170] Nappa (2005, 30) draws attention to the Hellenistic literary convention of invoking 12 gods, followed by the ruler- a "living god". This will certainly have influenced Vergil, but his use of it is more than simply emulation, instead having much to offer about the way in which Octavian is perceived, as is generally the opinion of Nappa.
[171] On Octavian as a god, see also pp. 142-6.

Alexander specifically, but as any sort of youth. He does so by emphasising the extraordinary mortality of the *iuvenes* in his *Georgics*, through the tragic pathos of the deaths of Orpheus and Leander, and the depiction of young men in the Underworld; death seems to stalk the poem's youths, to define them. Octavian could be of no use to Rome if he were dead, so it could be of no benefit to his public image for him to be closely associated with premature death. Such a warning was especially pertinent to Octavian, who was notoriously prone to bouts of debilitating illness; even at the scene of what he would later claim to be one of his greatest victories (although it was really Antony's success), the battle of Philippi, in 42BCE, Octavian was well-known to have taken ill and had to hide ignominiously in the marshes;[172] Appian suggests that there were even widespread reports that the young Caesar had in fact died.[173] He was seriously ill again in 40BCE, as he would be later in 25 and 23;[174] if all youths were especially mortal, 'the sick young man',[175] Octavian, must have been considered uniquely fragile.

vi) Amor, Roma

Beyond the unfortunate, tragic characteristic of young men, there lay an even greater minefield in the direct causal connection between *amor*- whether it be 'love' or 'lust'- and the fates of the *Georgics*' youths; not only their own deaths but, more worryingly, the deaths they cause. Aristaeus, Orpheus, and Leander are all seen to condemn others to an early demise on account of *amor*, whose goads they were unable to resist, and the latter two meet their own deaths as an ultimate result of their love. The *iuvenis*' inherent vulnerability to sexual desire, a bane which is resoundingly condemned in Vergil's tirade on the subject of lustful *amor* in Book 3 (242-83), is a further reason to avoid being regarded publicly as a youth. This would be especially important to Octavian, given his efforts to polarise his own image from that of Antony, whose public perception was dominated by his life of love and luxury with Cleopatra in Egypt.[176] In addition, a key component of Octavian's attempts to legitimise his rule was his tracing of his ancestry back along the Julian line to the

[172] See, Osgood (2006), 105; Pliny *HN*, 7.148.
[173] *BCiv.* 5.12.
[174] App. *BCiv.* 5.57; Dio Cass. 53.25.7, 28.1, 30.1-3.
[175] Osgood (2006), 106. See also, Powell (2008), 76.
[176] Zanker (1988), 61: 'for Propertius, Antony was the model of a heroic life in love'.

goddess of love, Venus. The Pantheon, Ara Pacis Augustae, and the Forum Augustum were all suffused with images of *Venus Genetrix*, mother of the Julian line;[177] Octavian's personal association with her is noted very early in the *Georgics*: '*cingens materna tempora myrto*' (1.28)- myrtle was sacred to Venus, and it is called 'maternal' because of Octavian's Julian descent.[178] This kinship with the goddess of love necessarily carried with it more unsavoury (at least to one as morally conservative as Octavian) connotations of amorousness, which further association with passionate young men would increase the risk of activating.

As an individual, Octavian was not immune to charges on matters of *amor*; his marriage to Livia Drusilla, in 38BCE, says Osgood, was regarded 'so hasty (and irregular), it could be considered adultery';[179] in addition, Suetonius' account of the wedding banquet (*Aug.* 70.1), exaggerated though it may be, suggests a debauched affair, at which the drunken guests were dressed as the gods, with Octavian as Apollo. In a letter to Octavian in 33BCE, Antony, defending himself against his antagonist's accusations of licentiousness, accuses him of having had sexual relations with a number of named women;[180] although Antony's hostile slurs cannot comfortably be believed, it is unlikely that he would have made allegations so wild as to be completely incredible, even in an open letter.[181] Critically, Octavian, the new Caesar, was also painfully aware of the amatory activities of his adoptive father. The vehemence of Octavian's attacks upon Antony for his relationship with Cleopatra betrayed his insecurity regarding Julius Caesar's own affair with the Egyptian queen in her younger days. It was Julius Caesar who had involved Cleopatra in Roman affairs in the first place, and his tryst with her, she claimed, had yielded a son, the aptly named Caesarion.[182] After the battle of Actium, Octavian had Caesarion killed; whether he was truly the son of Julius Caesar or not, his continued existence was an unnecessary risk to Caesar's *adopted* son.[183] In addition to this, both Octavian and Julius Caesar were plagued by accusations of having played the passive role in homoerotic intercourse;[184] to be penetrated was to be unmanned.[185]

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[177] Lacey (1996), 201; Osgood (2006), 37.
[178] Mynors (1990), *ad* 1.28.
[179] Osgood (2006), 238.
[180] The letter is reproduced in Suetonius: *Aug* 69.2.
[181] Osgood (2006, 345) appears not to consider Antony's innuendoes to be completely false.
[182] See Osgood (2006), 39. Cleopatra's motives for such a claim would be obvious even to the least cynical observer, but this does not deny its possibility.
[183] Osgood (2006), 388.
[184] Powell (2008), 165-6.

With all this in mind, it was unwise for Octavian to continue to be associated with youthful passion. For this reason, and on account of the special mortality attributed to *iuvenes*, Vergil urged Octavian to retire his youthful image, since it was no longer of service. More importantly, however, there is a strong apologetic aspect to Vergil's portrayal of young men as being led astray by the force of *amor*. As Cicero had in his defence of the youthful Caelius, Vergil seeks to excuse Octavian for his youthful dalliances with *amor*, since it is to be expected that young men should engage in such things, and it comes at no cost to their future potential.[186] In his *Pro Caelio*, Cicero employed the *locus de indulgentia*, a rhetorical set-piece used to plead for lenience on his client's behalf.[187] Vergil's defence of Octavian would appear to employ similar techniques, although Octavian's youthful misdemeanours should be considered rather more serious than Caelius'. For all that Octavian may have been guilty of conventional youthful lasciviousness, as he was charged by a defensive Antony, his weakness was for a rather different *amor*, the *amor habendi* with which bees ('little Romans') are associated in *Georgics* 4 (177).[188] In Octavian's case, this was manifested in his desire for power, which was culpable for his part in the civil wars. The civil wars can therefore potentially be classified with youthful sexual misbehaviour, something which was to be expected and tolerated among Roman *iuvenes*.

vii) *Monitores*: Harnessing youthful vigour

Although Vergil's depiction of youth is predominantly negative, there is, in addition, a positive aspect, whose presence has implications for Octavian. The *Georgics* bears witness to the fact that *iuvenes* could possess a great power, which, if harnessed positively, could make them uniquely effective beings: Aristaeus uses force

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[185] Powell (2008), 164.
[186] *Cael.* 42; Leigh (2004), 314: 'Cicero will argue that a given period of time...should be given to young men for pleasure and play'.
[187] Leigh (2004), 326, following Austin (1960), 102. On rhetorical *loci*, see Cic. *De Or.* 2.130. Since 'it is impossible at each instance to evolve arguments specific to one's case...the orator must possess a deep resource of preformulated contentions, or ways of addressing commonly recurring issues, which he can then adapt to the circumstances at hand'- Leigh (2004), 327.
[188] This phrase notably comes a single line after Vergil seeks permission to compare small things with large: '*si parva licet componere magnis*' (4.176). See Chapter Three, '*Amor* and civil war' (especially pp. 153-4) for more on *amor habendi*.

to gain a new bee stock; Orpheus enters the Underworld, strikes a deal with Pluto, and leaves with his own life, even though he breaks this pact. It is for this power and purpose that, in the animal kingdom, horse trainers choose spirited young horses: '*iuuenemque magistri / exquirunt calidumque animis et cursibus acrem*' (3.118-19). This positive facet of youth, though heavily moderated by its negative context, has an important function in Vergil's efforts to promote the flawed Octavian. Although the suggestion that rashness and destruction were inherent to juvenile behaviour might have served partially to diminish Octavian's responsibility for the slaughter of the civil wars, it was vital that the youth, and by extension Octavian, could also be seen to be a force for good, at least in the future, i.e. beyond his juvenile years.[189] The fact that Aristaeus gains his new stock of bees specifically by destruction- of eight of his finest cattle and a sheep- allows the implication that a youth's destructive behaviour can be of ultimate benefit.[190] By the same token, it might become possible to view the civil wars as part of a larger process with a positive end. In Aristaeus' case, his motives for attempting to gain a new stock of bees were selfish and far from noble, since his concern from the outset was with his 'honour' alone ('*meae...laudis*'- 4.332), but this does not devalue the positive end as far as his bees are concerned. Therefore, even to those Romans sceptical of Octavian's motives, there is the potential for his actions to prove beneficial.[191]

However, this success is not achieved without outside influence. Vergil stresses the importance of training in the rearing of young cattle and horses (3.164-5); an external force is needed to harness their power and guide their progress, only allowing them freedom when they are properly broken (3.205-8). The human Aristaeus, meanwhile, is successful because of the advice and training he receives from his elders, Proteus and Cyrene; this in spite of his blameworthy past. The raw material of youth, crude and liable to err though it is, can be improved by the application of external guidance. This detail, and the specific example of Aristaeus, can have a resonance from the perspectives both of the poem's wider audience, and of Octavian himself. From Octavian's point of view, Vergil is passing reflexive comment upon the purpose of the *Georgics* itself, encouraging Octavian to heed the

[189] Valerius Maximus' Republican examples of wild youths made good (6.9.1-6, discussed on pp. 37-8, above) would suggest that this was still possible, even for Octavian.
[190] This principle of "creative destruction" is the major focus of Chapter Three of this thesis, especially pp. 172-83.
[191] For more on the question of Octavian's motivation in the civil wars, see Chapter Three, '*Caesar Tonans*', pp. 142-6.

advice contained within it, and also, as was the case for the "hubris" aspect, to listen to his elders, who have witnessed much and have wisdom to offer. Meanwhile, the audience is reassured that the guidance provided by Vergil in the poem, and indeed by themselves should they choose to offer it, can impress upon Octavian to leave behind his violent history and provide a meaningful service to Rome and her inhabitants.

E. Retrospective- A Changed Man?

For the purposes of this inquiry, it is by no means necessary to attempt to determine whether Octavian responded in any way to the training which Vergil offered him in the *Georgics*. Indeed, barring the discovery of a text in Octavian's hand, thanking Vergil for his advice and admitting to having followed it in one respect or another, it would be impossible to connect any of Augustus' (as he would become in 27BCE) policy with the *Georgics*' "lessons". However, Vergil's protreptic did not need to reach Octavian directly in order to have an effect upon his public image; it had only to influence those others close to the future emperor whose prerogative was, as was Vergil's, to "sell" the monarch to his subjects. The public figure, "Augustus", was a construct which was as much the property and responsibility of these men as it was for the man who sought to live up to it. What information was disseminated about this figure, which forms the bulk of that transmitted throughout posterity, was usually vetted and deemed appropriate for universal consumption. In view of this, there are certain aspects of Augustus' behaviour in the period after the *Georgics* was published which are coherent with some of the "lessons" which Vergil taught on the subject of youth within the poem.

In the context of the "hubris" aspect of *iuvenes* in the *Georgics*, Octavian, like Aristaeus, could be seen as *confidentissimus*: trusting in his claimed divine descent to the point of arrogance, and appearing to challenge his elders and even the gods as a result. However, even before the creation of the principate, but particularly as emperor, Octavian set about reassuring the populace of his position as humble servant of the gods, rather than their equal, at least as far as appearances were concerned; this was an endeavour in which Vergil would encourage the young Caesar's continued efforts. Octavian embarked upon a massive campaign of temple repairs and renovations, and also the building of new temples. In later life, in his *Res Gestae* (19-21), he would boast about the vast scale of this project, which saw some 82 temples

restored in 28BCE alone;[192] he defined himself by this immense, pious mission. In addition, some time after his victory over Antony at Actium, Octavian set about removing many of the silver statues of himself which there were at Rome.[193] By comparison with the godlike nudes which dominated his earlier statuary, portraits of Augustus during his principate were generally more modest, often depicting the emperor veiled as if in the performance of sacrifice- an act which defined his status as inferior to the gods.[194] With regard to his relationship with his fellow Romans, the emperor Augustus would style himself as '*primus inter pares*'- 'first among equals', and, in his *Res Gestae* (34), would comment that he held precedence over others only in *auctoritas*, even though he surpassed none in *potestas*: '*auctoritate omnibus praestiti, potestatis autem nihilo amplius habui*'. Although this did not necessarily reflect the reality of his autocratic rule, the humble tone of Augustus' rhetoric was important, and marked a shift in his attitude towards his "subjects": 'the crucial step in Octavian's rise to power was his decision to act not merely out of self-interest but to consider the needs of men and women in Rome, Italy, and the provinces. Popular opinion did count'.[195] What mattered was not that Octavian listened to his subjects, but rather that he was seen to do so; the figure of Octavian which aired in public was infinitely more important than the "real" Octavian.

By highlighting the many negative characteristics of the youths in the *Georgics*, among them *ferocitas*, lack of perspective, vulnerability to *amor*, and an extraordinary mortality, Vergil encouraged Octavian to retire the youthful image which he nurtured in his early portraiture. On assuming the principate in 27BCE, Augustus replaced what Zanker refers to as the 'emotional youthful portrait type', which was notable for its 'arrogance' and distracted, 'spontaneous turn of the head'.[196] In its place, he commissioned a portrait with a 'calm, elevated expression', possessed of a 'timeless and remote dignity'; instead of youthfulness, the image exuded 'an ageless "classical" beauty'.[197] Rome could hope that her new monarch, in

[192] Zanker (1988), 108. Also, Osgood (2006), 330: 'the sense of renewal...was religious, since so many temples were being rebuilt'.
[193] Zanker (1988), 86.
[194] Zanker (1988), 127. The notion of Octavian-Augustus as performing symbolic sacrifice is something touched upon above, in analogy with the figure of Aristaeus. See the end of Chapter Three for more on sacrifice as defining the hierarchy between gods and men, especially pp. 180-1.
[195] Osgood (2006), 2.
[196] Zanker (1988), 98-9. See Appendix I, Fig. 1.
[197] Zanker (1988), 98-9. Appendix I, Fig. 2. See also Yavetz (1984), 7: 'as soon as he was securely holding the reins of government, [Octavian] undertook to change his public image. No longer was a

leaving behind his youth, would also lose the heedless, destructive streak, which had caused her such harm in recent years.

young Octavian represented on coins...but a new idealised image of a great man and a great warrior emerged...an Augustus whose physique embodied a new political ideal'.

Chapter Two: Springtime for Caesar

> 'Now is the winter of our discontent
> made glorious summer by this sun of York'

In the opening lines of Shakespeare's *Richard III* , the future King Richard hails, albeit ironically, the coming of a new age under his older brother, King Edward IV.[1] Significantly, Richard perceives the metaphorical transition under a new ruler as being not from a period of 'winter' to one of 'spring', but from 'winter' directly into 'summer'. The implication is not that a spring season has been bypassed, but rather that spring was not a concept which carried much currency in popular thought in Shakespeare's Britain. Shakespeare's predecessors in Old and Middle English poetry are said to have presented 'a striking contrast between the excellence and vigour of the passages on wintry storms and the weak generalizations of those on spring'.[2] This could be a symptom of the fact that, while early English poetry drew heavily upon classical Greek and Latin works, the cooler British climate could not provide the same experience of temperate springs and blazing summers as could the Greek and Italian. Moreover, the Earth's climate was cooling dramatically just before and during the Elizabethan period, preventing any real sense of distinction between a frozen winter and an equally chilly spring.[3] The coldness of the British climate is perhaps reflected in the fact that, according to Enkvist, the English language did not have its own word for the spring season until well into the 16th century.[4]

Whatever the reason for his neglect of spring, Shakespeare presents a view of the seasons which differs from a modern understanding of the four-seasonal year, and questions the orthodoxy of that conception. Crucially, however, his use of seasonal imagery is indicative of its figurative potential. Shakespeare employs winter and summer as metaphorical representations of two contrasting periods of political rule. The seasons are a tremendous tool for temporal comparison, primarily because they are an ever-present feature of universal human experience: no-one can fail to have

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[1] The pun on 'sun/son' alludes to the sun emblem, adopted by Edward for his family, the House of York.
[2] Enkvist (1957), 11.
[3] Lamb (1964, 163) refers to 'the abrupt chilling of the climate from about 1530-60', 'the late 1500s...were probably the worst time'; 162: 'the period from 1550 to almost 1900 saw the greatest advances of the northern hemisphere glaciers...since the ice age'; 166: 'the big recovery [in temperatures] has been since 1850'.
[4] Enkvist (1957), 158-9. This would have made the idea of 'spring' a novel one to Shakespeare and his audience.

been exposed to them. In addition, they are divisions of time whose individual characteristics are generally considered distinct,[5] and which, in an instant, can inspire broadly positive or negative reactions. In the context of Shakespeare's *Richard III*, for example, most readers would be far more likely to associate summer with their personal happiness than they would winter, even if summer were not given the epithet 'glorious'.

A. The Seasons in the Ancient World

In the ancient world it was not universally accepted that spring was an independent season, nor even that there were four such annual divisions. Although ancient public opinion- especially that of farmers- on the seasons is irretrievable, contemporary literature indicates that there were several concurrent theories on the issue of their number, which endured from early Greek literature up to and far beyond Vergil's late Republican and early Augustan age.[6] By Vergil's time, it was generally accepted that there were four seasons, but it is apparent that this theory certainly held no monopoly, nor was it as straightforward as modern conceptions of four equal seasons.[7]

i) Two Seasons

Especially common in the Greek world, but similarly widespread in the Roman world, was the view that the year was split into two seasons, usually identified with summer and winter. This was an understandable method of division, since it followed the extremes of hot and cold, and held the intervening periods as simply forming the transition between these outer limits. The two-seasonal year appeared commonly in Greek poetry and drama, having first been adopted by Homer in his description of Alcinous' garden in *Odyssey* 7 (117-19):

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[5] Even if Elizabethan Britain did not distinguish between winter and spring, it certainly did between winter and summer.
[6] For a good survey of this variety, see Pease (1957), 660-1.
[7] 'We tend to take it for granted that the year is divided into four seasons, each of approximately equal length. But why should it be?'- Lehoux (2007), 9.

τάων οὔ ποτε καρπὸς ἀπόλλυται οὐδ' ἀπολείπει
χείματος οὐδὲ θέρευς, ἐπετήσιος: ἀλλὰ μάλ' αἰεὶ
Ζεφυρίη πνείουσα τὰ μὲν φύει, ἄλλα δὲ πέσσει.

'The fruit...neither perishes nor fails in winter or in summer, but lasts throughout the year; and continually the West Wind, as it blows, quickens to life some fruits, and ripens others'.[8]

The reach of this view extended into Greek drama, as in Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* (4-5):

ἄστρων κάτοιδα νυκτέρων ὁμήγυριν,
καὶ τοὺς φέροντας χεῖμα καὶ θέρος βροτοῖς

'I have learned to know aright the conclave of the stars of night...bringers of winter and summer unto mankind.'[9]

In each case, the two seasons of the year are named as winter and summer- χεῖμα καὶ θέρος. This view, here seen in verse, was equally common in the prose of science, or natural philosophy. Aristotle, in his *Meteorologica*, refers similarly to summer and winter as the year's seasons (2.4.361a 12-13):

διὰ μὲν οὖν τὴν ἐπὶ τροπὰς καὶ ἀπὸ τροπῶν θέρος γίγνεται καὶ χειμών

'so summer and winter are due to the sun's motion to and from the solstices'.

In 2.5, Aristotle has much to say about summer and winter, but reserves no mention for any other seasons.

ii) Three Seasons

Thriving concurrently with theories that there were either two or four seasons in the year was the idea that there were, in fact, three. While the two-seasonal year is traceable back at least as far as Homer, there is evidence of a three-seasonal year not much later, in Hesiod's *Theogony*. In lines 901-2, Hesiod refers to the three *Horai*, daughters of Zeus and Themis: Lawfulness, Justice, and Peace (Εὐνουμίη, Δίκη, and Εἰρήνη). The *Horai* are usually identified with the seasons of the year, as their

[8] Translation: A.T. Murray.
[9] Translation: H.W. Smyth.

personifications, although it was apparently unusual to name them individually.[10] As to their being three *Horai*, according to Pease, 'this number continues [to be] frequent until later Greek and Roman art, when four seasons are regularly recognised'.[11] This 'frequency' is suggested by the appearance of the three-seasonal year in drama. In Aristophanes' *Birds*, the avian Chorus says (709):

> πρῶτα μὲν ὥρας φαίνομεν ἡμεῖς ἦρος χειμῶνος ὀπώρας:
>
> ''tis from us the signs of the Seasons in turn, Spring, Winter, and Autumn are known'.[12]

While there is, oddly, no place for summer in Aristophanes' trio, it was more common for autumn to be the absent season, as is found in *Prometheus Vinctus* (454-6), tentatively attributed to Aeschylus, which refers to winter, spring, and summer (χείματος...ἦρος...θέρους).[13]

> ἦν δ' οὐδὲν αὐτοῖς οὔτε χείματος τέκμαρ
> οὔτ' ἀνθεμώδους ἦρος οὔτε καρπίμου
> θέρους βέβαιον

In a note on this section of the play, Griffith suggests that 'the Greeks tended to think in terms of three, rather than four, seasons';[14] this may have been the case, but since Griffith appears confident that *Prometheus Vinctus* can be attributed securely to Aeschylus, who, in his *Agamemnon*, made use of a year with two seasons, it is difficult to see how this disparity might suggest such a 'tendency'. If both plays are Aeschylean, but even if not, the implication should be that the way Greek literature[15] approached the seasons was fairly fluid; the variety of ways of dividing up the year were not mutually exclusive, but could be employed alternately depending on context.

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[10] West (1966), 406.
[11] Pease (1957), 660.
[12] Translation: B.B. Rogers.
[13] On the authorship of *Prometheus Vinctus*, see Griffith (1983), 31-2: 'for *Prom*[*etheus Vinctus*].... we have no didascalic information or fifth century testimony, but it has certainly been regarded as Aeschylean at least since the third century BCE, and no doubts as to its authenticity are recorded by ancient authors or in the scholia to the play'; 'a number of scholars, however, have concluded, from the structure and style...of the play, that it is not the work of Aeschylus at all, or that it was left unfinished by him, and completed by a member of his family'.
[14] Griffith (1983), *ad* 454-6.
[15] Greek drama was not "literature" at its conception, but would ultimately come to be treated as such.

iii) Four Seasons

Although it faced greater competition from other views, the modern orthodoxy that the year consists of four seasons was similarly prominent in the ancient world. The earliest mention of the four-seasonal year in literature appears to be in Hippocrates' *Regimen*, which dates to the latter part of the fifth century BCE (3.68).

> τὸν μὲν οὖν ἐνιαυτὸν ἐς τέσσαρα μέρεα διαιρέω, ἅπερ
> μάλιστα γινώσκουσιν ὁι πολλοί, χειμῶνα, ἦρ,
> θέρος, φθινόπωρον χειμῶνα μὲν ἀπὸ πλειάδων
> δύσιος ἄχρι ἰσημερίης· ἠαρινῆς, ἦρ δὲ ἀπὸ
> ἰσημερίης μέχρι πλειάδων ἐπιτολῆς, θέρος δὲ ἀπὸ
> πλειάδων μέχρι ἀρκτούροθ ἐπιτολῆς, φθινόπωρον
> δὲ ἀπὸ ἀρκτούρου μέχρι πλειάδων δύσιος.

Here Hippocrates states: 'I divide the year into the four parts most generally recognised- winter, spring, summer, autumn'. Before giving advice on diet and exercise for each of the seasons, he defines them individually by astral signals: 'winter lasts from the setting of the Pleiads to the spring equinox, spring from the equinox to the rising of the Pleiads, summer from the Pleiads to the rising of Arcturus, autumn from Arcturus to the setting of the Pleiads'. The evidence of Hippocrates could potentially provide access to popular views of the seasons in the ancient world. Although it can be difficult to gain a reliable impression of popular thought on a particular subject from a literary text, Hippocrates' direct statement that 'the majority' (ὁι πολλοί) of his contemporaries thought of the seasons as being four in number is difficult to reject summarily. The context of this statement, the *Regimen*, is not strictly 'literary', in the way that Homer, Hesiod, or the plays of Aristophanes and Aeschylus are; as such, there is little reason to doubt the reliability of Hippocrates' testimony.

The tradition of the four seasonal year, apparently well-established in Hippocrates' day, was transmitted via many other Greek and Latin sources, and was the dominant theory in late Republican Rome.[16] In his *Tusculans*, Cicero refers to 'the fourfold division of the seasons'- '*commutationesque temporum quadrupertitas*' (1.68). In the imperial period, Tacitus suggests the dominance of the four-seasonal year in the Roman mindset. In his *Germania* (26.3), he remarks upon the Germans'

[16] Pease (1957), 661: 'the four-seasonal year, with autumn as the fourth season...is so constantly mentioned as to need no documentation'.

conception of a three seasonal year, with autumn absent, as an oddity, since it differs from the Romans' understanding of the seasons:

> '*unde annum quoque ipsum non in totidem digerunt species: hiems et ver et aestas intellectum ac vocabula habent, autumni perinde nomen ac bona ignorantur*'.

As was Hippocrates for the Greeks, Tacitus can be of service as an indication of the way in which the Roman populace viewed the seasons. The *Germania* is a work of social anthropology, whose subject, Germany and its people, is often described by direct comparison with their Roman counterparts, in order to appeal to the predominantly Roman sensibilities of Tacitus' audience. The phrase, '*annum...ipsum non in totidem digerunt species*' invites one such comparison. The word *totidem* specifically forms this connection by suggesting that the Germans do not divide the year into 'so many seasons [as we, Romans do]'. Tacitus' generalisation about the German view of the seasons suggests that it is a majority opinion; the Roman view with which it is implicitly compared can be regarded likewise as conventional. Once again, the validity of Tacitus' implication that the four-seasonal year predominated in the Roman world need not be unduly questioned; if it were a falsehood, it would destroy the credibility of his statement about the Germans for his Roman audience; this would surely be a needless risk.

iv) Subordination

Although the four-seasonal year predominated, it was not necessarily as straightforward a concept as it might appear. The relationship between the quartet of seasons was often regarded as being unequal: 'spring and fall are sometimes conceived...as subordinate, either compounded of or appended to the two primary seasons of summer and winter'.[17] Indeed, this is apparent in Cicero's *De Natura Deorum* (2.49):

> '*aestates et hiemes efficit et ea duo tempora, quorum alterum hiemi senescenti adiunctum est, alterum aestati*'.

[17] Pease (1957), 661.

Here, Cicero is speaking through Balbus, who is expounding Stoic doctrine, and explaining its differences from competing, Epicurean, theory. Balbus is in the process of explaining the form of the divine; having suggested that it is spherical, like the Earth, he describes how divine activity is manifest in rotary motion, as in the heavenly bodies, and how the sun's course causes the seasons, by turning to the North and then the South. Although the context is one of Stoic theory, Balbus' testimony on the seasons is reliable, since he invokes them as something accepted, which he intends to use as evidence for something more controversial. He refers to summer and winter by name ('*aestates et hiemes*'), but renders the other two seasons as simply adjuncts to these two seasons- spring being connected with 'late winter' ('*hiemi senescenti*'), and autumn with 'late summer' ('*aestati [senescenti]*'). This conception of the four-seasonal year is, therefore, rather more like the basic two-seasonal one, with spring and autumn denied independent status.

Cicero's treatment of the seasons owes something to Aratus, whose *Phaenomena* also exerted a great influence over Vergil in his composition of the *Georgics*, especially in Book 1's section on weather signs.[18] Aratus' year consists of three main seasons: spring, summer, and winter, with a fourth, autumnal season, 'harvest time', only loosely defined as 'waning summer'- φθίνοντος θέρεος (514). Spring too is largely overlooked, as Aratus focuses upon summer and winter. At lines 265-7, he explains how the Pleiades 'mark the beginnings of summer and winter and the onset of ploughing time':

> ὃ σφισι καὶ θέρεος καὶ χείματος ἀρχομένοιο
> σημαίνειν ἐπένευσεν ἐπερχομένου τ'ἀρότοιο.

Although this statement does no violence to the notion of a four-seasonal year, the commentator, Kidd, at this point notes that summer and winter (here θέρεος καὶ χείματος) 'are sometimes used in such a way as to cover the whole year, the warm, good weather season, and the cold, bad weather season'.[19] There is evidence of this in Thucydides, whose account of the Peloponnesian War divides the year into two parts: summer, the time for campaigning, and winter, the "off-season", when conditions prevent active warfare (2.1). Kidd revisits this subject in his note on line 514 of the

[18] Cicero's familiarity with Aratus' work is attested by his composition of a translation of the *Phaenomena*.
[19] Kidd (1997), 280.

Phaenomena (φθίνοντος θέρεος, τοτὲ δ'εἴαρος ἰσταμένοιο- '[day is equal to night] at the waning of summer and again at the beginning of spring'), in which he elaborates upon the status of the other seasons: 'spring and autumn are...subdivisions of θέρος'.[20] Accordingly, Aratus' tends to neglect spring and autumn in favour of the two 'main' seasons. This is especially apparent in his discussion of weather signs related to individual seasons in the latter part of the poem (1046-1103). Here he first provides signs indicating the quality of specific summers (1046), then winters (1047-52), and details ploughing times (1053-9), before turning his attention to signs portending the onset of winter (1064-71), and the coming of summer (1094-1103). Spring is given no treatment, and autumn, or harvest time, is referred to only in relation to the crop yield after summer, or as an indicator of winter's arrival.

v) Flexibility

This brief survey of literary perceptions of the seasons highlights the fact that there were numerous ways of thinking about their cycle in the ancient world. In literature, the notion that the seasons were four in number was certainly most frequent, but not pervasive. Where the four-seasonal year appeared, spring, along with autumn, was usually afforded only subordinate status to summer and winter- the climatic extremes- and was often not even regarded as an independent season at all. The evidence of Hippocrates and Tacitus offers the potential to access the views of the Greek and Roman majority on the subject of the seasons; in each case, they appear to share the tendency to think about the year as being divided into four seasons. However, the consensus view of Hippocrates' and Tacitus' literate audience may not be a reflection of the opinions of their illiterate, or rather non-literate counterparts. In general literary evidence on the seasons cannot be relied upon as an indication of popular thought. The variety of ways of thinking about the seasons in literature militates against generalisation, and suggests fluidity in the manner in which the seasons could be used in a literary context. Poets and dramatists in particular were free to exploit the potential of the two, three, or four-seasonal year interchangeably, depending on their context. This is a symptom of the value of the seasons as literary symbols, witnessed in Shakespeare's *Richard III*.

[20] Kidd (1997), 363.

B. Vergil's Spring

i) Putting one's best foot forward

> *vere novo, gelidus canis cum montibus umor*
> *liquitur et Zephyro putris se glaeba resolvit*
> 1.43-4

The first words after the *Georgics*' proem in Book 1, introducing the poem proper, are an evocation of the early spring season, at which time Vergil advises that the bulk of agricultural labour is to be carried out. At first glance, this would seem to be simply an appropriate image with which to begin what is ostensibly a treatise on farming, spring being connected not only with the beginning of the year, but also with natural productivity. A little later in Book 1, Vergil asserts the equality of the four seasons as divisions of the year: '*temporibusque parem diversis quattuor annum*' (1.258). However, his promotion of spring in the *Georgics* has the effect of making this one season appear to dominate the agricultural year, at the expense of the others; this constitutes a departure from his literary and scientific models on the subject. Throughout the *Georgics*, the ubiquity of references to spring suggests that this particular season has a greater significance within the poem's discourse than the other seasons. Although the word for winter (*hiems*) appears a little more frequently in the text than spring (*ver*), 20 times to *ver*'s 17, this pair are well ahead of summer (*aestas*), which occurs 12 times, and autumn (*autumnus*), 7.[21] Winter and summer are more common in the rest of Vergil's oeuvre, since their number of appearances in the *Georgics* makes up 56 percent and 54 percent, respectively, of their total in Vergil; spring's appearances in the *Georgics* contribute 71 percent of its total in his work, suggesting a special interest in the season in this particular poem. However, it is not so much the volume of specific incidences of the word for spring which lends the season such force in the *Georgics*, but rather its characterisation, through which it eclipses the flimsy, unexceptional other seasons. Spring's literal primacy in the poem is much more programmatic than it would seem, as it comes to have a symbolic force which pervades the *Georgics*' didactic discourse.

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[21] *Ver*: 1.43, 215, 313, 340; 2.149, 319, 323 (twice), 324, 338 (twice); 3.272 (twice), 429; 4.22, 77, 134.

ii) Spring and Youth

The symbolic function of spring, within the poem and without, is connected thematically with the period of youth (*adulescentia*, *iuventa*[*s*]) which was the focus of the previous chapter. In his *de Senectute*, Cicero assimilates the stages of a man's life to the seasons of the year, comparing youth with spring, and old age with autumn:

> *ver enim tamquam adulescentiam significat, ostenditque fructus futuros; reliqua autem tempora demetendis fructibus et percipiendis accommodata sunt; fructus autem senectutis est, ut saepe dixi, ante partorum bonorum memoria et copia.*
> 70-1.

As Powell's commentary on this passage points out, comparison of the four ages of man with the four seasons was not unusual; apparently there was a tradition linking it with Pythagoreanism- something Ovid picks up on in a speech he writes for Pythagoras in his *Metamorphoses* (15.199-214). Indeed, the canonical number four encouraged frequent connection between the ages of man, the seasons, and the four elements in ancient natural philosophy. What is significant about Cicero's contribution to this tradition is that, as Powell points out, 'in the majority of examples, old age corresponds to winter, and is viewed pessimistically';[22] that simply would not do for a treatise about the delights of the senior years. Cicero, therefore, moves old age to autumn, a time when a man can gather the fruits that his life of labour has cultivated. In addition, Cicero forms a connection between spring and youth, which focuses upon this stage of man as the time at which he shows his future promise. This is a further departure from a tradition which generally associated adolescence with the summer season,[23] as is the case in Ovid's Pythagorean speech from the *Metamorphoses*:

> *transit in aestatem post ver robustior annus*
> *fitque valens iuvenis: neque enim robustior aetas*
> *ulla nec uberior, nec quae magis ardeat, ulla est.*
> 15.206-8.

The correlation between the heat of summer and the literary topos of youthful hot-headedness, the latter of which was explored in Chapter One of this thesis, is alluded

[22] Powell (1988), *ad* 70-1. The standard progression would be: spring- infancy, summer- youth, autumn- manhood, winter- old age.
[23] For the summer/adolescence correspondence, see: Diog. Laert. 8.9-10; Gal. *Protr.* 8.

to by '*ardeat*'- 'blazes'. It would appear that Cicero, by virtue of his relocation of old age to the autumn, is forced to break this connection between youth and summer heat. However, the fact that he reserves no mention for the other two ages of man- childhood and manhood- would suggest that the connection between youth and spring is deliberate.[24] Cicero's reassignment of adolescence to spring is possibly unprecedented, although Aristotle, in his *Rhetoric*, suggests that, when giving his Funeral Oration, Pericles said that 'the removal of the youth from the city was like the year being robbed of its spring'(1.7.34):[25]

> καὶ τὸ μεγάλου μέγιστον μέρος, οἷον Περικλῆς τὸν ἐπιτάφιον λέγων, τὴν νεότητα ἐκ τῆς πόλεως ἀνῃρῆσθαι ὥσπερ τὸ ἔαρ ἐκ τοῦ ἐνιαυτοῦ εἰ ἐξαιρεθείη.

There is support for the notion that spring and adolescence were connected in the Roman psyche in certain peculiarities of the *fasti*, the Roman calendar. In his idiosyncratic *Fasti*, Ovid devotes a considerable number of lines to a discussion of the rites of the festival known as the Liberalia (3.713-808), which took place on March 17th annually, placing it in the heart of the spring season, by Ovid's calculations.[26] As its name would suggest, this festival was in honour of Liber (Bacchus) in a role of general fertility god rather than the more common and specific god of wine. One of the traditions of this day was the assumption of the *toga virilis* by teenage boys who had been deemed ready to become *iuvenes* by their parents;[27] these young men would leave behind the *toga praetexta* and, hopefully, the rascally ways of the *puer*.[28] Ovid speculates, mostly through his favoured etymological games, as to the reason why this rite of passage should take place during the Liberalia, without reaching any

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[24] It would follow that childhood should be likened to winter and manhood to summer, but it is uncertain how Cicero would have achieved this.
[25] Translation: J.H. Freese. This does not feature in Thucydides' version of the speech (2.35).
[26] The very first signs of spring come, in Ovid, around February 10th: '*et primi tempora veris erunt*' (2.150). Spring apparently reaches the middle of its course on April 25th ('*in medio cursu tempora veris erunt*'- 4.902), but then ends on May 13th: '*tepidi finem tempora veris habent*' (5.602). Although this makes little mathematical sense, the span of the season accords roughly with Varro's version in his *Rerum Rusticarum* (1.28), which has spring lasting from February 7th to May 9th. See also Feeney (2007), 200.
[27] This is attested elsewhere in one of Cicero's letters to Atticus, where he mentions the possibility of awarding the *toga virilis* (or *toga pura*) to Quintus, a boy in his charge: '*Quinto togam puram Liberalibus cogitabam dare*' (6.1.12).
[28] Ov. *Fast.* 3.771-92.

compelling conclusions, although the idea of the 'liberation' of near adulthood would make some sense.[29]

It is highly plausible that it was through its association with the fertility of the spring season that the Liberalia came to be the day on which the *toga virilis* was bestowed. Liber was, in essence, a fertility god, as is reflected in the lascivious nature of the Bacchic revelries and other rites with which he was associated. That the major festival in his honour should be in the spring, a time of universal growth and reproduction, is therefore entirely coherent. It is equally appropriate that this should be the time for young men to mark their transformation from *impubes* to *pubes*, now sufficiently 'ripe' to reproduce.[30] Since the genuine autonomy which juvenile status allowed a young man was extremely limited, the significance of becoming a *iuvenis* to a Roman teenager is likely to have consisted in no small part in its being a sexual awakening. Love and sex were the preserve of the young man, and sexual experimentation (within defined boundaries) was accepted, or at least quietly condoned, as an integral part of the mental growth from rash *iuvenis* to mature *vir*; it was hoped that a man would exhaust any sexual proclivities before his attentions turned to the more serious public business of manhood.[31] In this light, the assumption of the *toga virilis* becomes something of a sexual liberation for new *iuvenes*.

iii) *It Ver et Venus*

The connection between the spring season and sex is one which is developed in literature by the agency of the goddess, Venus, who is often encountered as a metonym for sexual activity. Ovid dedicates Book Four of his *Fasti*, April, to Venus: '*alma...geminorum mater Amorum*' (4.1). After all, the month of April, Ovid insists, takes its name not from the fact that the earth is now 'open' after the frosts of winter ('*ab aperto tempore dictum*'- 4.89), as some would have it,[32] but because it is named after Aphrodite, Venus' Greek equivalent. The spring month of April is the perfect time for Venus:

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[29] Ovid suggests this in 3.777-8: '*quod es Liber, vestis quoque libera per te / sumitur, et vitae liberioris iter*'. See Miller (2002), 220.
[30] Festus has it that a *pubes* is one '*qui generare potest*' (Muller, 1839: 250).
[31] Eyben (1993), 231-50.
[32] *aperio-Aprilis*: Varro, *Ling.* 6.33; Macrob. *Sat.* 1.12.12-14.

nec Veneri tempus, quam ver, erat aptius ullum
(vere nitent terrae, vere remissus ager;
nunc herbae rupta tellure cacumina tollunt,
nunc tumido gemmas cortice palmes agit),
et formosa Venus formoso tempore digna est,
utque solet, Marti continuata suo est.
vere monet curvas materna per aequora puppes
ire nec hibernas iam timuisse minas.

The joys of the springtime which Ovid details and their association with Venus are, by his time, almost cliché. Ovid inherited a tradition which was established by Vergil and Horace before him, amongst others; his Venusian spring is in its most evolved state.

A significant prototype for this topos comes in Lucretius' *De Rerum Natura*. In the lengthy proem to the first book of his work on Epicurean philosophy, Lucretius invokes the support of the goddess, Venus, '*Aeneadum genetrix*'(1.1). This Venus is credited with bringing all living things into being: '*per te quoniam genus omne animantum / concipitur visitque exortum lumina solis*' (1.4-5). There follows a brief excursus on spring phenomena, which prefigures Vergil's approach to spring in the *Georgics*:

nam simul ac species patefactast ***verna diei***
et reserata viget genitabilis aura favoni,
aeriae primum volucris te, diva, tuumque
significant initum perculsae corda tua vi.
inde ferae pecudes persultant pabula laeta
et rapidos tranant amnis: ita capta lepore
te sequitur cupide quo quamque inducere pergis.
denique per maria ac montis fluviosque rapacis
frondiferasque domos avium camposque virentis
omnibus incutiens blandum per pectora amorem
efficis ut cupide generatim saecla propagent.

All of these things are said to be caused by Venus, who, as Lucretius has stated, is solely responsible for the reproduction of every living thing on Earth.[33] Lucretius takes it for granted that spring and Venus are synonymous with one another. In the "Pageant of Seasons" in Book 5 (737-47), spring and Venus in tandem lead out the seasons of the year:

it Ver et Venus et Veneris praenuntius ante
pennatus graditur, Zephyri vestigia propter
Flora quibus mater praespargens ante viai

[33] Venus is 'an electric symbol of creativity'- Putnam (1979), 18.

cuncta coloribus egregiis et odoribus opplet.
inde loci sequitur Calor aridus et comes una
pulverulenta Ceres <et> etesia flabra aquilonum.
inde Autumnus adit, graditur simul Euhius Euan.
inde aliae tempestates ventique secuntur,
altitonans Volturnus et Auster fulmine pollens.
tandem Bruma nives adfert pigrumque rigorem
reddit. Hiemps sequitur crepitans hanc dentibus algu.

Along with her son, Cupid, Venus is surrounded by vernal features, such as the Zephyr and Flora's blooms. Moreover, it is possible that Lucretius would have considered *ver* and *Venus* to be cognate with one another. In Book One of his *De Rerum Natura* in particular, he develops an analogy between the individual letters of the alphabet, and the atoms from which every form of matter is composed.[34] Beyond simple analogy, Lucretius seems to imply a literal connection between substances or objects and the names for them: for example, fire is made from wood because ***lign****um* contains elements of ***ign****is*.[35] His frequent use of *paronomasia*- placing in close proximity similar sounding words with different meanings- forms all manner of groupings between words and substances; many of these connections are etymologically erroneous, but serve to emphasise the theory that different substances can be formed from the same basic particles in different ratios.[36] In 5.737, the placing together of *ver* and *Venus* is not merely alliterative: the attendant '*Veneris praenuntius*' serves to articulate more precisely a connection between the two figures, the genitive ***Ven****er****i****s* sharing more from an aural perspective with *ver* than the nominative ***Ven****us*. Word-play on Venus' name is very common in Latin love elegy in particular, the goddess being commonly linked with 'binding'- *vincire*, *vincula*, 'indulgence'- *venia*, and love-potions- *venenum*.[37] *Venus* is apparently never elsewhere connected etymologically with *ver*, [38] but Lucretius' efforts at *paronomasia* in 5.737, in combination with the similar symbolic properties of *ver* and *Venus* as

[34] Lucr. 1.196-8; 1.814-29; 1.907-14.
[35] 1.911-14. See, Snyder (1980), 90-1: 'Lucretius' view of the development of language on the basis of natural response to environment, followed by the later influence of utility and convention, led him to believe in a kind of basic natural connection- if not strict etymological relationship- between certain words which happened to be spelled much alike, as *mater* and *materies*, or *ignis* and *lignum*'.
[36] See, Snyder (1980), 74-121.
[37] Hinds (2006), 198. *Venus* is also linked with *venire*, *vincere*, *vis*, *vendere*, as well as *venerari*, which, like *venia* and *venenum* is genuinely cognate with *Venus*.
[38] Hinds (2006, 198) certainly makes no allusion to *ver* as ever having been connected etymologically with *Venus*. In one of his examples, however, he refers to Propertius 3.5.19-25 (180-1), suggesting that an 'etymological subversion' results from the phrase '*vincire Lyaeo*' in line 21 ("loosening" wine in this case 'binds' the poet's tongue), which is corrected by the arrival of '*Venerem*', in 23- the usual "binder". Hinds does not mention the presence of '*verna...rosa*', binding the poet's head in the intervening line 22. Propertius might have conceived of a connection between *ver* and *Venus*.

expressed in the *De Rerum Natura* (and later in the *Georgics*) suggest that there is an implicit etymological connection being made between them.

The close assimilation of *ver* to *Venus* highlights the symbolic role which each of them is playing. Lucretius' Epicurean philosophy depended upon the notion that the gods have no involvement in the affairs of human beings, or indeed the other creatures on the Earth.[39] The influence over mortals which he attributes to Venus within the proem to the *De Rerum Natura* cannot be something in which he genuinely believes. As a poet composing in hexameter verse, it has been suggested that Lucretius feels the need to bow to epic tradition by invoking the aid of some sort of divine being at the opening to his poem; since the idea that Venus could actually furnish such aid would be preposterous to an Epicurean, it could be that Lucretius has made a purely literary concession.[40] However, Venus can be understood in a more symbolic role; although the poet's address to '*Aeneadum genetrix*' in the first line of the proem identifies her with the concrete goddess of mythology,[41] Venus appears elsewhere in Lucretius to be more symbol than deity. In her 1994 book, Monica Gale charts the process by which, after the proem, '[Venus'] attributes are gradually stripped from her, and given instead to blind forces of inanimate nature'.[42] Over the course of the poem, Venus' epithets (*alma*, *gubernans*, *genetrix*) are taken over by *natura* and *tellus*, and by the time she appears in Lucretius' attack on the passion of love in Book 4 (1058-60), she is 'revealed as no more than a metonym for sexual intercourse'.[43] To the Epicurean, it is *natura creatrix* which is truly responsible for the earthly activity with which Venus is credited in the proem; since *natura* has a basic, literal meaning of 'birth', Venus is a fitting symbol for its role as propagator.[44] In the proem, Gale further suggests, Venus can potentially be seen not simply as the creator of spring, but as symbolic of it; indeed, even the statuesque image of Mars reclining

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[39] Lucr. 1.62-79. See also Bailey (1949), 589.
[40] The proem appears to be a 'conventional epic address to the Muse', in which 'Venus has taken over the role of Muse as well as presiding deity'- Gale (1994), 209.
[41] Bailey (1949), 590.
[42] Gale (1994), 212.
[43] Gale (1994), 213.
Similarly, in the extract on the passage of the seasons, Venus' relation to spring is modified by the appearance of Ceres alongside summer (5.743), and Bacchus (*Euhius Euan*- 5.744) in autumn. In each of these latter cases, the deities in question could be functioning merely as metonyms, for the grain harvest and the vintage, respectively.
[44] Gale (1994), 210.

in Venus' lap (1.32-7) 'can be interpreted in these terms: the goddess of peaceful April pacifies the god of blustery March'.[45]

iv) *Laus Veris*

Lucretius' portrayal of Venus exerts a considerable influence over Vergil's depiction of spring in the *Georgics*. Like Venus, spring comes to act as a symbol for reproduction, and creation in all its forms in Vergil's poem. Nowhere is this more keenly established by Vergil than in the passage in Book 2 which has come to be known as the Praise of Spring, or *laus veris*:[46]

optima vinetis satio, cum vere rubenti
candida venit avis longis invisa colubris, 320
prima vel autumni sub frigora, cum rapidus Sol
nondum hiemem contingit equis, iam praeterit aestas.
ver adeo frondi nemorum, ver utile silvis,
vere tument terrae et genitalia semina poscunt.
tum pater omnipotens fecundis imbribus Aether 325
coniugis in gremium laetae descendit, et omnis
magnus alit magno commixtus corpore fetus.
avia tum resonant avibus virgulta canoris,
et Venerem certis repetunt armenta diebus;
parturit almus ager Zephyrique tepentibus auris 330
laxant arva sinus; superat tener omnibus umor,
inque nouos soles audent se gramina tuto
credere, nec metuit surgentis pampinus Austros
aut actum caelo magnis Aquilonibus imbrem,
sed trudit gemmas et frondes explicat omnis.

In this section, Vergil describes the benefits of the spring season, and articulates its power as a generative force. There is no comparable passage elsewhere in the *Georgics* which could be termed *laus aestatis*, *autumni*, or *hiemis*; this specific honour is reserved for spring alone. At the beginning of the passage (321-2), Vergil briefly evokes autumn as sister season to spring, with initially similar benefits, but the subsequent anaphora of '*ver...ver...vere*' (323-4) focuses the reader's attention exclusively upon spring.[47] In tone and detail the passage is highly reminiscent of

[45] Gale (1994), 218. There is allusion here to the proposed etymological connection between Aphrodite and Aprilis.
[46] Servius' designation for this section- *laus veris*- is favoured here in order to avoid any more ideologically-loaded modern terms. The latter part of the *laus veris*, in which Vergil describes spring as the season in which the world began, is postponed here for discussion below.
[47] For further discussion of the relationship between spring and autumn as seasons of change, see p. 132.

Lucretius' proem to Venus.[48] The major players of spring in Lucretius find their way into Vergil: the metonymic Venus makes an appearance ('*Venerem*'- 329), as does the Zephyr ('*Zephyrique*'- 330), whose role as the season's attendant recurs.[49] In addition, further Lucretian imagery is replicated by Vergil; his first image of spring is one of leaves coming to trees ('*frondi nemorum*'- 323; '*frondes explicat omnis*'- 335), a reminder of Lucretius' '*frondiferasque domos*' (Lucr. 1.18). Most notably, however, it is the portrayal of the season as causing universal propagation which Vergil draws upon and develops. Throughout the *laus veris*, and elsewhere in the *Georgics*, Vergil repeatedly describes propagation in such a way as to conflate the sexual act and the birth which it engenders; lines 324-31 contain sustained sexual allusion which alternates wilfully between practice and product. In 324, the spring earth is already pregnant ('*vere tument terrae*'), and yet its sexual appetite would appear still to be insatiable, as it forcibly demands ('*poscunt*') further seed ('*genitalia semina*').[50]

In lines 325-7 Vergil, again evoking a Lucretian image, renders the idea of the universality of spring creation in a more vivid, symbolic manner, by depicting the sexual union of the Earth with her 'husband' the Sky (*Aether*).[51] Vergil's version of this physical-metaphorical intercourse is more overtly sexual than Lucretius': '*imbres, ubi eos pater Aether / in gremium matris Terrai praecipitavit*' (Lucr. 1.250-1). Although both use the euphemistic '*gremium*', Vergil's *Aether* descends in explicitly '***fecundis** imbribus*', and the image of convergence on a grand scale in '*omnis / magnus alit magno **commixtus** corpore fetus*' (2.326-7) is highly evocative of bodies coming together in sexual intercourse.[52] This almighty act of propagation ultimately

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[48] For a comprehensive account of Vergil's debt to Lucretius in the *laus veris* see Farrell (1991), 94-104. Farrell suggests that Lucretius is Vergil's principal model in *Georgics* 2 and 3, and that 'Vergil is most himself when he is being most Lucretian' (96). On the intertextual relationship between the *Georgics* as a whole and *De Rerum Natura*, see Farrell (1991), 169-205.

[49] Cf. Lucr. 1.11- '*aura favoni*' (Favonus and Zephryus are regarded as one and the same); 5.738, above.

[50] The phrase '*genitalia semina*' is a clear Lucretian echo.

[51] Lucretius' *hieros gamos* in 1.248-64 serves as a proof that nothing can be reduced to nothing, even in death, since 'the "death" of rains makes possible the birth of plants' (Farrell, 1991: 98). Farrell suggests that Vergil, in his use of Lucretian material, 'suppresses or ignores...the connection, explicitly drawn by Lucretius between birth and death' (1991: 102). This is true with regard to the immediate context, but in the *Georgics* as a whole Vergil makes much of the causal relationship between death and new birth, which is the focus of Chapter Three of this thesis.

[52] Adams (1982): '*gremium* is sometimes used of the uterus or vagina...The word literally denoted the lap. In this case a word for an adjacent area was transferred to the genitalia' (92)- 'sometimes an explicit word is replaced by a word which strictly designates a neighbouring part without sexual significance' (47). *Commixtus*, 180-1: 'examples [of *misceo* and its compounds] in poetry may owe something to the frequent use of μίγνυμι in the same sense in Homer, Hesiod and elsewhere'; 'its distribution shows that it was learned in tone; in medical Latin it was a technical term'.

bears fruit in line 330- '*parturit almus ager*',[53] but, once again, birth is followed immediately by the desire for further reproduction, as the Earth looks to accommodate the Zephyr's generative breezes: '*Zephyrique tepentibus auris / laxant arva sinus*'(2.330-1). [54] The Earth is credited with a more perfect economy of generation than can be possible; as is often the case for animals elsewhere in the *Georgics*, gestation is elided as intercourse and birth fight for a place within the spring season. This generation affects not just the soil and the *armenta* of 329, it is all pervasive: '*superat tener omnibus umor*' (331).[55] This 'moisture' is synonymous with a general fertility, and the anaphora of *omnis* emphasises the universality of the spring surge.[56]

C. Spring and Creation

i) *Tempore non alio*

The association of the spring season with birth and reproduction, encapsulated in the *laus veris*, is a major theme throughout the *Georgics*. More specifically, propagation, its process and outcome, are inextricably connected with the spring wherever they appear in the poem. While Varro, in his *Rerum Rusticarum*, gives the mating times and gestation periods for every creature he treats, Vergil chooses not to do so. In the *Georgics*, it is to be understood that everything related to breeding should take place in the spring. When Vergil does locate the mating time of any particular animal, it invariably falls within this season. In his attack on the ill-effects of *amor*, in Book 3 (242-83), Vergil implies that spring is the mating season for all animals. The unabashedly negative attitude of this passage, perhaps Vergil's most sustained homage to Lucretius, is a matter for further discussion in due course.[57] The passage begins:

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[53] '*almus*' and '*alit*' (327) are further hints in the direction of Lucretius' '*alma Venus*'.
[54] Page (1898, *ad* 330) regards '*laxant sinus*' as 'partly literal', since 'throughout Virgil speaks of the fields as living beings'. See below for further comment on the Zephyr as a reproductive force. For the euphemistic *sinus*, see the note above from Adams on *gremium*.
[55] Cf. Lucr. 1.19: '*omnibus incutiens blandum per pectora amorem*'.
[56] '*omnipotens*' (325), '*omnis*' (326), '*omnibus*' (331), '*omnis*' (335).
[57] Lucretius spends a large proportion of the fourth book of his *De Rerum Natura* (4.1058ff), railing against passionate love (*amor*), which has the power to disturb a man's Epicurean calm (*ataraxia*). He does, however, allow for sex (*Venus*) with prostitutes, which can relieve the physical urge without affecting the emotions. To Vergil, *amor* and *Venus* are not so clearly distinguished- '*mentem Venus ipsa dedit*' (3.267). See pp. 146-59 for discussion of the negative side to *amor*.

Omne adeo genus in terris hominumque ferarumque
et genus aequoreum, pecudes pictaeque volucres,
in furias ignemque ruunt: amor omnibus idem.
tempore non alio catulorum oblita leaena 245
saevior erravit campis, nec funera vulgo
tam multa informes ursi stragemque dedere
per silvas; tum saevus aper, tum pessima tigris;
heu male tum Libyae solis erratur in agris.

In context, *amor* is not strictly love, or even sex, but rather the urge which drives animals to seek sexual intercourse. Just as in the *laus veris*, Vergil stresses that this desire affects every creature on the Earth ('*omne...genus*'- 242), without exception, and to an equal extent ('*amor omnibus idem*'- 244). Since it is the cause of sex, and by extension reproduction and birth, it is reasonable to assume that the time at which *amor* takes hold is identical to the time when animals start to reproduce. Although Vergil is immediately at pains to establish the fact that *amor* strikes at a specific time, it is not at first explicit that this time is spring. That the violence described in this section only occurs when *amor* exerts its influence is frequently reiterated; Vergil states that the lioness' increased savagery is evident 'at no other time'-'*tempore non alio*' (245)- than when she is gripped by *amor*. In 248-9, there is anaphora of '*tum…tum…tum*', similar to that seen in the *laus veris*;[58] this not only emphasises that the animals' wild behaviour takes place only when they are struck by *amor*, but also confirms the connection between *amor* and spring. A few lines later, Vergil makes explicit this connection, when describing the effects of *amor* upon mares, which are most manifest in spring: '*vere magis, quia vere calor redit ossibus*' (272).

In his *amor* passage, Vergil singles out as its victims the lioness, bear, boar, tiger, stallion, human, lynxes, wolves, dogs, mares. There are, in addition, the bulls which feature in the passage just before the *amor* section (3.215-41), driven to battle by their desire for the same heifer. It is to be understood that these creatures were chosen from the broadest possible range, since there is '*amor omnibus idem*'. The implication, therefore, is that, for these creatures and all others, spring is breeding time, perhaps even exclusively ('*tempore non alio*'). Of the animals Vergil mentions, only the bulls, dogs and horses are treated in Varro's *Rerum Rusticarum*, the others having little or no use on a farm. If Varro is a reliable indicator of contemporary orthodoxy, then in the case of dogs and horses, Vergil seems to be roughly correct:

[58] 2.317, 325, 328. Cf. 1.341-2: '*tum pingues agni et tum mollissima vina, / tum somni dulces densaeque in montibus umbrae*'- further anaphora of *tum* in relation to spring.

dogs are said to breed in the spring, and carry their young for three months (presumably two counted inclusively), while horses and mares breed from the vernal equinox up to the summer solstice, and carry their young for eleven months.[59] However, Varro's dates for the breeding of dogs and horses do stretch beyond spring into summer, something which is not reflected in Vergil. That even this limited level of correspondence has occurred by accident rather than by design is suggested in the case of the cattle, which Varro has mating in the summer, rather than the spring, in the forty days from the rising of the Dolphin.[60] However, Vergil happens upon some semblance of accuracy in that cattle, although they apparently do not breed in the spring, because their gestation is an inclusive ten months, instead give birth to their young in the spring. In the second book of the *Rerum Rusticarum*, Varro discusses the breeding habits of eight different types of animal; of these, four are said to breed in the spring (swine- 2.4.7, horses- 2.7.7, mules- 2.8, dogs- 2.9.11), while the other four breed at other times of the year (sheep- 2.2.13-14, goats- 2.3.8, cattle- 2.5.13, asses- 2.6.3). What this illustrates is that Vergil does not care to be accurate when it comes to the breeding times of specific animals; his work does not depend upon this in the way that Varro's does. Vergil's animals belong to a poetic, rather than prosaic countryside, where spring has the potential to become a symbol for all reproduction and birth, irrespective of what occurs in the 'real' Italian countryside. Vergil's tendency towards relocating to spring that which does not strictly belong there has the effect of elevating the status and importance of the season.

ii) From midwife to *progenitor*

Vergil's poetic spring is not simply a temporal location within whose confines animal breeding and all natural generation occur: the season is actually the agent of this creation. Nowhere is this made clearer than in the brief discussion of *hippomanes*, the madness of mares in heat, which concludes the *amor* passage in Book 3.

> *continuoque avidis ubi subdita flamma medullis*
> *(vere magis, quia vere calor redit ossibus), illae*
> *ore omnes versae in Zephyrum stant rupibus altis,*
> *exceptantque levis auras, et saepe sine ullis*
> *coniugiis vento gravidae (mirabile dictu)* 275

[59] *Rust.* 2.9.11 (dogs); 2.7.7 (horses).
[60] *Rust.* 2.5.13.

saxa per et scopulos et depressas convallis
diffugiunt

Vergil here suggests that mares can be impregnated by the West wind. This, of course, is a remarkable story ('*mirabile dictu*'), but, according to Page, 'the legend of mares becoming pregnant with the wind, and especially the west wind, was universally accepted in antiquity',[61] although 'acceptance' and 'credence' are different things entirely. There were numerous precedents for Vergil's story, most notably in Varro and Aristotle.[62] However, as Thomas points out in his commentary, 'neither Aristotle nor Varro specifies the impregnating wind…the West wind, the wind of spring, is here appropriately the instrument of conception'.[63] Varro has his mares being impregnated '*e vento*', and does not specify the time of year when this phenomenon takes place; it is simply '*certo tempore*'. Mynors believes there to be a simple motive behind Vergil's selection of the West wind as the reproductive force: 'having identified the season as spring he makes the wind west'.[64] Vergil is rarely this straightforward; his selection of the West wind is motivated by his desire to emphasise the creative power of spring. In Vergil, and notably in Lucretius, the West wind- the Zephyr- is the attendant of the spring season. However, since the Zephyr's presence was thought to be felt right up to the early summer, Vergil seeks to make certain that this Zephyr be identified with spring. To achieve this, he prefaces the prodigy of wind-insemination by anaphoric reference to the season, such as is witnessed elsewhere in the poem, in the *laus veris*: '*uere magis, quia uere calor redit ossibus*'. The editor's parentheses make this comment seem like something of an afterthought, as if Vergil were less than confident that he had made the spring connection clear enough.

The notion of impregnation specifically by the West wind is also found in Homer; in *Iliad* Book 16 (150), the poet alludes to the story that Achilles' horses were born of the West wind and the harpy Podarge. While the reference is fleeting, the important differences between this and Vergil's usage of the Zephyr are clear. In Homer, the female is not a horse but a harpy, and the brief mention alludes to a scene

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[61] Page (1898), *ad* 274. So too Mynors (1990, *ad* 271-9): 'that swift horses have been sired by the wind is an idea suitable to the heroic age…but the ancients thought it was also a fact'. It is, perhaps, rather unlikely that those who worked with horses, or were particularly familiar with them, genuinely believed that this was possible.
[62] Varro, *Rust.* 2.1.19; Arist. *Hist. An.* 6.18.
[63] Thomas (1988), *ad* 3.273.
[64] Mynors (1990), *ad* 3.271-9.

involving an anthropomorphic (or "hippomorphic") Zephyr. By contrast, Vergil does not feel the need to provide the Zephyr with a physical avatar, since its reproductive power comes from its association with spring, whose mystical character the poet has been carefully constructing over the course of the *Georgics*. The spring season has already been said to encourage all animals to procreate; the fact that its instrument, the Zephyr, is seen to impregnate certain animals by itself allocates to the spring a more direct role in the creation of life, and serves to illustrate effectively its immense productive power.

iii) *Bugonia*: A spring miracle

The generative power of the Zephyr as the wind of spring is confirmed by a further prodigy in the final book of the *Georgics*. The latter half of Book 4 is dominated by the practice of *bugonia*, the pseudo-scientific means by which a beekeeper can renovate his stock of bees should he lose them all to disease. The practice involves slaughtering oxen and allowing them to decompose in an enclosed space; bees were thought to grow from the carcasses- a misunderstanding similar to the idea of spontaneous generation.[65] After providing detailed instructions as to how the process is to be executed (4.281-314), Vergil embarks upon a substantial epyllion which serves as an *aetion* for *bugonia* (4.315-558), tracing it back to its first performance by Aristaeus (4.549-58). This *aetion* is the single longest set-piece in the *Georgics*, and, therefore, its significance within the work as a whole must not be underestimated. However, it is the account of *bugonia* preceding the *aetion* which is of interest at this point.

Exiguus primum atque ipsos contractus in usus 295
eligitur locus; hunc angustique imbrice tecti
parietibusque premunt artis, et quattuor addunt
quattuor a ventis obliqua luce fenestras.
Tum vitulus bima curvans iam cornua fronte
quaeritur; huic geminae nares et spiritus oris 300
multa reluctanti obstruitur, plagisque perempto
tunsa per integram solvuntur viscera pellem.
Sic positum in clauso linquunt et ramea costis
subiciunt fragmenta, thymum casiasque recentis.
Hoc geritur Zephyris primum impellentibus undas, **305**

[65] The ancients were apparently misled by a species of fly closely resembling bees, which breed in animal carcasses: Ross (1987), 215.

ante novis rubeant quam prata coloribus, ante
garrula quam tignis nidum suspendat hirundo.
Interea teneris tepefactus in ossibus umor
aestuat, et visenda modis animalia miris,
trunca pedum primo, mox et stridentia pennis, 310
miscentur, tenuemque magis magis aëra carpunt,
donec ut aestivis effusus nubibus imber,
erupere, aut ut nervo pulsante sagittae,
prima leves ineunt si quando proelia Parthi.

The shower of bees which issue forth as a result of *bugonia* are an undoubted miracle. At present, however, it is specifically the timing of this marvellous event which attracts attention. Among his other instructions, in lines 305-7 Vergil is very specific about the time at which *bugonia* is to be carried out: not simply spring, but *early* spring, when the agent of the season's growth, the Zephyr, is prominent once again.

Although it is unlikely that anyone in the ancient world with even a passing interest in beekeeping would have regarded *bugonia* as "scientific fact", much as they would have been sceptical about the notion that mares could be impregnated by the wind, its value as a symbol is not to be underestimated. Vergil's placement of this practice in the spring season, whether it is foolproof or fool's gold, begins to arouse greater attention when viewed in the context of the wider tradition regarding *bugonia*. There are several other descriptions of *bugonia* in ancient literature; it is described before Vergil by Philetas, Nicander, and most notably by Varro,[66] and after him, by Ovid,[67] Pliny the Elder,[68] and Columella.[69] While the exact details of the practice vary slightly, with some prescribing the burial and exhumation of the carcasses, the important issue is that those who provide a time of year for the execution of *bugonia* suggest summer, rather than spring.[70] Summer would indeed appear a more suitable time, since, presumably, the extreme heat of the season would speed up the process of decomposition of the ox carcasses.[71] As was the case with regard to his treatment of the breeding habits of certain animals in Book 3, Vergil shows little concern for tradition, or even "science", when pursuing his own ends. If the placing of *bugonia* in

[66] *Rust.* 2.5.5; 3.16.4.
[67] *Fast.* 1.363-80; *Met.* 15.3.64.
[68] *HN* 11.70.
[69] *Rust.* 9.14.6.
[70] Wilkinson (1969), 194. Columella (9.14.6) also suggests that his authorities 'prescribe the thirty days between midsummer and the rising of the Dog-star': Mynors, (1990), *ad* 305-7.
[71] It must be noted that the spring date of the *bugonia* in 4.281-314 'does not follow the date of the first performance, which fell in the Dog-days [of summer]' (Mynors, 1990, *ad* 4.305-7). There are a number of discrepancies between the descriptions of *bugonia* at the middle and at the end of Book 4, which are discussed in Appendix II of this thesis.

spring is a Vergilian innovation, it would appear to be a significant one. As Thomas recognises, within the climate of the *Georgics*, the process of *bugonia* ought to take place in spring, 'the time of generation'.[72] As has been seen to be the case throughout the *Georgics*, Vergil is emphatic in his assertion of the power of the springtime, to the point that he is willing to associate certain features with the spring that would not be linked to it in normal circumstances; in light of this, it is inconceivable that he should choose to place *bugonia*, the single most spectacular act of generation in the whole poem, and arguably the work's culmination, at any time other than spring.[73]

iv) A creative monopoly

The habit which Vergil displays of moving to the spring characteristics which are usually associated with the other seasons is manifest elsewhere in the *Georgics*, and serves to enhance the role of the season to the point where it almost subsumes its partners in the annual cycle. A more mundane indication of Vergil's preference for associating with spring the vast majority of features related to growth is found in a fleeting reference to the planting of beans in Book 1. At line 215, Vergil says that it is best to sow *faba*, which Mynors suggests are 'a form of our "broad beans"', in the spring: '*vere fabis satio*'.[74] Beyond the *Georgics*, however, this is found not to be the case.[75] In Varro, the planting of beans is an autumn event,[76] although Theophrastus does allow that it can occur in spring, but only if the beans 'have missed the first seed time'.[77] The testimony of Columella is more damning; he insists that spring is the *worst* time to sow beans: '*pessime vere*'.[78] Thomas, however, citing Pliny the Elder,[79] claims that Vergil 'is thinking of his native Po valley', where the bean may be planted in the spring, while 'in the warmer southern regions the bean can survive through the

[72] Thomas (1988), *ad* 4.305-7. Thomas' ambivalent view of the *Georgics*' spring is addressed below, at pp. 157-9.
[73] Farrell (1991: 271-2) identifies *Georgics* 4.382 as an allusion to *Iliad* 14.201, as well as 246 and 302, which all come in the "Deception of Zeus". He argues compellingly that Vergil was influenced by ancient allegoresis of Homer, which saw him as a poet of natural philosophy (1991: 257). Heraclitus, for example, interpreted the "Deception of Zeus" as an allegory of spring (*QH* 38-9), since it depicts the union of Hera, who represents ἀήρ, and Zeus, ἀιθήρ; in another view, their intercourse is 'the source of everything that exists' (1991: 271). See below for spring and the *origo mundi*.
[74] Mynors (1990), 49: '[*faba*] were an ancient and widespread source of food for both man and beast, with a place of their own in Roman ritual'.
[75] Mynors (1990), *ad* 1.215.
[76] *Rust.* 1.34.
[77] Theophr. *Hist. Pl.* 8.14.
[78] Columella, *Rust.* 2.10.9.
[79] Pliny, *HN* 18.20.

winter, and is planted in the autumn'.[80] Such apologetics on Vergil's behalf seem unnecessary, given that Columella, who is often the greatest promoter of the usefulness of Vergil's agricultural precepts, does not attempt to explain Vergil's unusual suggestion. The fact that Columella goes so far as to state that spring is the *worst* time to sow beans ('*pessime vere*') would suggest that he had Vergil's comment in mind when discussing the issue, and felt the urge to correct his predecessor's perceived mistake. It was the duty of the *praeceptor* of agricultural didactic to inform his readers of the best conditions in which to do certain things, and, as is the case in the *Georgics*, he rarely offers largely useless advice regarding the worst time to do things; it would, therefore, appear likely that Columella was offering a riposte to Vergil's statement regarding the planting of beans.[81] Whatever Vergil's experience of agriculture, his knowledge of its technical details is brought into question at times in the *Georgics*, more by errors than calculated omissions.[82] For example, in the Plague at Noricum scene which closes *Georgics* 3, Vergil refers to the dramatic spectacle of dead fish washing up on the shore (3.542), but, as Farrell helpfully points out, Noricum was land-locked: 'such passages, which give the *appearance* of a detailed concern with technical knowledge while presenting a seriously confused or even deliberately wrong account, are in fact typical of Vergil'.[83] In the case of the beans, either Vergil is unsure of the exact time of year at which they should be planted, or, more likely, he is being 'deliberately wrong': he simply does not much care to be accurate when it fails to suit his purposes, as was the case in his treatment of animal breeding times.[84] Vergil says that beans are to be planted in spring because that is the season *in the* Georgics when productive things happen: what happens in the "real" world is not important.

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[80] Thomas (1988), *ad* 215.
[81] Wilkinson (1969), 272.
[82] Spurr (1986) has defended Vergil against some of the charges of inaccuracy levelled against him: 'Virgil ensured that his agricultural information was correct' (181). He is successful on some counts, and his decision to focus on the neglected "surface" of the poem is worthy, but few would agree that 'it is...agricultural accuracy which gives life and strength to the poem *and* (therefore) delight to its readers' (183). See also Ross (1987), 12: '[although Vergil] does not give all the information necessary, what he gives is precise, exact, and scientific'.
[83] Farrell (1991), 87, 84. See also, Powell (2008), 231.
[84] Vergil's approach could be compared to that of Hesiod in his *Works and Days*. Before embarking upon a section on seafaring, Hesiod announces his intention to do so, despite the fact that he knows 'nothing of seafaring or of ships' (οὔτε τι ναυτιλίης σεσοφισμένος οὔτε τι νηῶν- 649). Vergil never makes any such admission in the *Georgics*, but it is clear at times that accuracy on specific details is of little concern to him.

v) All things nice

From the mundane to the literary; on at least one occasion, Vergil's sleight of hand is discernible only via an intertextual connection. In lines 338-50 of Book 1, the poet hints at the delights of spring, in something of a prelude to the second book's *laus veris*. Vergil exhorts the farmer to pay due reverence to the gods- '*in primis venerare deos*' (1.338), referring especially to the worship due to Ceres in spring ('*vere sereno*'- 1.340). This evocation of the season motivates Vergil to expand, albeit for just two lines, upon the joys of spring, a time when 'the lambs are fat, the wine most mellow, and there is sweet sleep and dense shade in the mountains': '*tum pingues agni et tum mollissima vina, / tum somni dulces densaeque in montibus umbrae*' (1.341-2).[85] The first of these lines has long been recognised as an allusion to line 585 of the *Works and Days*, where (as some commentators note) Hesiod's concern was with the delights of *summer*, rather than spring. Vergil's departure from his Hesiodic source in moving these features from summer to spring would appear slight, and portends no grand ideological shift. It does not seem to matter to Vergil that the idea of resting on a spring day is fundamentally incompatible with the repeated implication elsewhere in the *Georgics* that spring is a time for relentless activity, as the beginning of the agricultural year.[86] The image of spring rest in 1.341-2 is simply another enhancement of the season's amenity; spring holds a monopoly not only over creation, but also over everything pleasant.

D. Spring and Beginnings

The extent of the influence exerted by the Venus of Lucretius' *De Rerum Natura* over the portrayal of the spring season in the *Georgics* becomes more apparent as the role of spring in Vergil's poem is explored in greater depth. With regard to the Lucretian goddess, Gale posits: 'In the figure of Venus...Lucretius has created a great mythological symbol for all that is positive, creative and attractive in the natural world and in man'.[87] Aside from the 'mythological' aspect, all of this could be said to

[85] As witnessed in the *laus veris* and the *amor* section, the anaphora of *tum* stresses that this is the case at no other time than spring.
[86] Farrell (1991), 152: 'Vergil, bafflingly, assigns this "activity" to early spring...- a time not for rest, as he tells us elsewhere, but to begin the year's work'.
[87] Gale (1994), 223.

be the case for the spring season in the *Georgics*. The season's hegemony over reproduction in the natural world allows it to be viewed as a symbol for creation, and its absorption of the pleasant aspects of the Hesiodic summer encompasses the simply 'attractive' which Gale attributes to Lucretius' Venus. However, Vergil's spring comes to have a much greater symbolic range than Lucretius' Venus. This is made possible partly by the hazy, abstract nature of spring as a symbol, which allows it broader application than the well-defined, often anthropomorphic Venus. As an extension to its association with creation, and natural origins, the spring season in the *Georgics*, and to an extent beyond the poem, comes to represent *beginnings*; these need not be natural, but may be the start of any process or cycle.

i) Back to the front

The *Georgics*' agricultural discourse itself begins in the early spring, '*vere novo*' (1.43). In the countryside setting of the poem, where nature was certainly the dominant timepiece, the springtime would be an uncontroversial place to start.[88] However, to start a discussion about agriculture in the spring is not necessarily as conventional as it might initially appear, since the productive surge of the new season, from the farmer's perspective, was not entirely spontaneous, but needed plenty of human assistance before it could take place. The farming calendar in Hesiod's *Works and Days*, which follows a much more rigid chronology than the predominantly thematic *Georgics*, starts with the preparations for the November ploughing.[89] Although someone foolish enough to refer to the *Georgics* for earnest agricultural instruction might opt to begin with the spring, rather than November ploughing, the fact that Vergil gives instructions on how to construct a plough (1.169-75) would

[88] Cf. Thomas (1988), *ad* 1.43.
[89] Hes. *Op.* 414-57. See West (1978), 52. Hesiod's calendar runs as follows: woodcutting and preparations for ploughing (414-57); ploughing (458-92); winter lull (493-563); pruning of vines (564-70); grain harvest (571-81); summer lull (582-96); threshing (597-608). Since the *Georgics* is a much larger work, it is divided into four books which are loosely based around four separate topics (ploughing, trees and vines, livestock, bees- cf. 1.1-5). There is, therefore, no sense of the chronological sequence of labour over the course of the poem. Even in the treatment of individual topics in each book of the *Georgics* there is no discernible chronology. Where, in Book 1, Vergil discusses ploughing, which is the chief focus of Hesiod's agricultural calendar, he moves from an exhortation to plough in early spring (1.43-6) to an excursus on regional variation (1.56-70), before detailing the benefits of crop rotation (1.71-83). Vergil's concern for chronology is thus seen to be minimal.

suggest that there is work to do before even the spring ploughing can begin.[90] What becomes apparent, then, is that spring was not an automatic selection for the beginning of an agricultural treatise. Vergil seeks, throughout the *Georgics*, to establish the season as a symbol for beginnings; from a literary perspective, therefore, it is entirely fitting that he should set the springtime at the head of his poem, both chronologically and thematically.

ii) *Origo mundi*

The connection between spring and beginnings is more firmly established in the *Georgics*' second book, at the culmination of the *laus veris*, when Vergil suggests that the world began in the springtime.

> *non alios prima crescentis origine mundi*
> *inluxisse dies aliumve habuisse tenorem*
> *crediderim: ver illud erat, ver magnus agebat*
> *orbis et hibernis parcebant flatibus Euri,*
> *cum primae lucem pecudes hausere, virumque* 340
> *terrea progenies duris caput extulit arvis,*
> *immissaeque ferae silvis et sidera caelo.*
> *nec res hunc tenerae possent perferre laborem,*
> *si non tanta quies iret frigusque caloremque*
> *inter, et exciperet caeli indulgentia terras.* 345

Once again Lucretius provides the precedent for such an idea. In the fifth book of his *De Rerum Natura*, the poet describes the beginning of the world; Lucretius' *origo mundi* is characterised by the absence of extremes of hot and cold: '*nec frigora dura...nec nimios aestus nec magnis viribus auras*' (Lucr. 5.818-9), much as Vergil's beginning is spared wintry blasts ('*hibernis parcebant flatibus Euri*'), coming in the temperate season ('*frigusque caloremque / inter*'). In addition, '*umor*' is pervasive in Lucretius- '*calor et umor superabat in arvis*' (Lucr. 5.805), just as it is throughout Vergil's *laus veris*: '*superat tener omnibus umor*' (2.331).[91] There are many points of comparison between the two passages, which need not be enumerated in detail here.[92] Vergil's engagement with his Lucretian precedent is a fine example of literary *aemulatio*, in which allusion is complemented by development, even to the point of

[90] Vergil's instructions on plough-making are, admittedly, fairly redundant, since most farmers would simply buy a plough, rather than construct their own. See Mynors (1990), 37; Farrell (1991), 75.
[91] Cf. Lines 43-4 of Book 1, above, where *umor* makes an appearance in the poem's opening spring scene.
[92] For more detail, see Farrell (1991), 103-4.

"capping" the predecessor. Thomas' précis of the Vergilian passage concludes that 'the beginning of the earth must have been characterized by spring-like conditions'.[93] This is rather more accurate of Lucretius' account than Vergil's; while Lucretius had the world beginning in a season which resembled spring, but which was not explicitly referred to as such, Vergil is more categorical: '*uer illud erat, uer magnus agebat / orbis*'- it *was* spring.[94] This specification can be regarded as significant: 'Virgil's analogy between the mildness of spring and the mildness that made possible the first life on earth…was quite original and the more striking for that fact'.[95] Just as Ovid, in the *Fasti*, is keen to see Venus get the credit she deserves for her hold over the month of April, Vergil makes sure that spring's role in universal creation is duly acknowledged. The suggestion that the universe began in the spring credits the season with responsibility for the supreme act of creation, lending to it an unprecedented significance.

iii) The beginning of Roman time

To a Roman audience, the foundation of Rome and the creation of the world would be almost synonymous. Ovid, in the third book of his *Fasti*, describes Rome's origins in a manner which presents the implication that the city was founded in the springtime (3.9-76). Since Mars was the author of this foundation, by his impregnation of Silvia with Romulus and Remus, the month of March in the *Fasti* is a fitting time to tell the story. The connection of the foundation with spring is more than incidental, however, as Mars celebrates the spring qualities of his month, tying himself to the season. At lines 235-42, in particular, he relates to Ovid the joys of spring, with anaphora of *nunc* in 241-2 making certain of the connection between his month and the season.

quid quod hiems adoperta gelu tum denique cedit, 235
et pereunt lapsae sole tepente nives;
arboribus redeunt detonsae frigore frondes,
uvidaque in tenero palmite gemma tumet;
quaeque diu latuit, nunc, se qua tollat in auras,
fertilis occultas invenit herba vias? 240

[93] Thomas (1988), *ad* 2.336-42.
[94] 'Vergil's assertion that life began in an epoch of springlike clemency is more emphatic than its Lucretian inspiration'- Farrell (1991), 103.
[95] Miles (1980), 139.

nunc fecundus ager, pecoris nunc hora creandi,
nunc avis in ramo tecta laremque parat.

Mars' role in the foundation of Rome earned him the privilege of having his month start the original Roman calendar: '*a te principium Romano dicimus anno*' (3.75). This calendar would not endure beyond the reign of Numa Pompilius, Romulus' successor, who added the months of January and February in front of the original ten. The change does not appear to meet with Ovid's approval, since he suggests that Mars' influence, along with the very newness of spring, should have kept March, or at least the spring season, at the beginning of the year.

'dic, age, frigoribus quare novus incipit annus,
qui melius per ver incipiendus erat?
omnia tunc florent, tunc est nova temporis aetas,
et nova de gravido palmite gemma tumet,
et modo formatis operitur frondibus arbor,
prodit et in summum seminis herba solum,
et tepidum volucres concentibus aera mulcent,
ludit et in pratis luxuriatque pecus.
tum blandi soles, ignotaque prodit hirundo
et luteum celsa sub trabe figit opus:
tum patitur cultus ager et renovatur aratro.
haec anni novitas iure vocanda fuit.'

Ovid makes this appeal to Janus in Book 1 of the *Fasti*, asking why he was given the right to open the year. Janus cites his role in business dealings, but Ovid appears to remain unconvinced, since the issue of the Roman year failing to start in the spring recurs in Book 3. As Denis Feeney says in *Caesar's Calendar*: 'for the Roman year to start with the month of Mars is appropriate ideologically and historically as well as from the point of view of the seasons'.[96] This would have made sense by Ovid's time but it did not necessarily hold true in earlier times; March had started the year at a time when there were only ten months in the year, and it is uncertain whether it would have been a spring month even after the introduction of the extra two months. It is at least highly unlikely that March fell in spring every year, since it was only after the monumental realignment with the sun's movements which preceded the institution of the Julian calendar in 45BCE that the Roman calendar began to set itself into a fixed position against the seasons.[97] Before this time, Suetonius remarks, it was common

[96] Feeney (2007), 205.
[97] Feeney (2007), 194; 152-6.

for harvest festivals to fail to coincide with summer, and likewise vintage festivals with autumn.[98]

iv) Timelessness in the *Georgics*

It was perhaps partly because of the earlier inconsistencies of the Roman calendar that Vergil made no reference to the *fasti* in his poem.[99] However, the detachment between the calendar and the seasons of the natural world was effectively eliminated by the arrival of the Julian calendar, which preceded the publication of Vergil's poem by more than fifteen years. Feeney makes a test case of Varro, who avoids giving dates to the festivals he mentions in his *De Lingua Latina*, which was composed between 47 and 45BCE, just before the calendar change;[100] however, in his *Rerum Rusticarum*, of 37BCE (eight years before the *Georgics*' publication), Varro gives precise dates for the seasons, among other things:[101] 'the Roman calendar is [now] capable of capturing the cyclical predictability of nature itself'.[102] The calendar was, therefore, no longer unfit for purpose,[103] but it clearly did not suit Vergil's purposes. Even the section of Book 1 which is often referred to as the *Days*,[104] because of its resemblance to part of Hesiod's *Works and Days*, contains no dates, but instead uses other time-keeping devices, such as *parapegmata*, which were based on the movements of the constellations, or other natural phenomena.[105] It could be argued that Vergil viewed the *fasti* as being a civil construct, whose bearing did not extend beyond the city of Rome; natural and civic time were, and should be, mutually exclusive, just like rural and urban life.[106] This is an idea explored in Horace's second *Epode*, in which the hypocritical usurer Alfius sings the praises of country life; dates

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[98] *Iul.* 40.1.
[99] Feeney (2007), 207: 'there is not a single date in the *Georgics*'.
[100] Feeney (2007), 199.
[101] *Rust.* 1.28.
[102] Feeney (2007), 200. See also Lehoux (2007), 29: 'after the Julian calendar reform of 45 BC...[the] civil calendar...now tracked the seasonal and astrometeorological cycles extraordinarily well'.
[103] Although the perceived purpose of a calendar varies across temporal and cultural divides. See Feeney (2007), 196.
[104] See especially 1.276-86.
[105] *Parapegmata* were devices used for the tracking of cycles, be they astronomical, astrological, astrometeorological, or occasionally calendrical. A peg or pegs were moved through a series of holes in a stone chart, with a legend marking the various stages in the cycle being followed. Literary *parapegmata* usually depended upon the counting of days from a certain point, in the absence of a physical marking peg. For more background on *parapegmata* and their use, see Lehoux (2007), especially 12-18; 64. See also Feeney (2007), 207.
[106] Feeney (2007), 207; 196.

do not impinge upon the country setting of the bulk of the poem- it is only when the topic returns to Alfius' money-lending, a thoroughly urban pursuit, that the Ides and the Kalends make an appearance (69-70).[107] Similarly, Feeney argues that Vergil omits the calendar from the *Georgics* in order 'to reinforce his general picture of detachment between the rural and urban worlds'.[108] This is not a complete answer; Vergil makes no reference to the *fasti* in the poem in order to emphasise the detachment between *the rural world of the* Georgics, and the "real" world which exists outside the poem, whether in the country or the city. The absence of dates lends to the poem a more gnomic quality; by being less specific, temporally as well as topographically, Vergil deliberately generalises his poem's precepts.

The effects of this gnomic timelessness in the *Georgics* can be explained better by reference to a pair of Horace's *Odes*, whose subject is, in part at least, the spring season: 1.4, and 4.7. These poems each begin by describing the phenomena which signal the start of the spring season: the thawed earth sprouting green grasses, a return to seafaring. In both, however, the idyll is short-lived; the spring scene of Faunus' rites in 1.4 is interrupted sharply by the intrusion of '*Pallida Mors*', at line 13, who dictates that the remainder of the poem dwell on the inevitability of death. The later *Ode*, 4.7, takes a similar detour:

Inmortalia ne speres, monet annus et almum
quae rapit hora diem.
Frigora mitescunt Zephyris, uer proterit aestas,
interitura simul
pomifer autumnus fruges effuderit, et mox
bruma recurrit iners.
Damna tamen celeres reparant caelestia lunae:
nos ubi decidimus
quo pater Aeneas, quo diues Tullus et Ancus,
puluis et umbra sumus.

Horace goes on to catalogue other famous heroes who, like Aeneas, Tullus, and Ancus, were unable to resist the draw of death; no hope, then, for anyone else- all, indiscriminately, end up as '*pulvis et umbra*'. Unlike in the earlier ode, there is a clear sense of progression in this poem. Lines 9-12 evoke the barrelling procession of the seasons; there is no special treatment afforded to spring in Horace, as it is trampled upon by the summer ('*ver proterit aestas*'), which, in turn, gives way to autumn,

[107] Feeney (2007), 207-8.
[108] Feeney (2007), 207.

before winter once again imposes its grip. The speed with which the seasons roll past reflects the fleeting nature of life, a recurring theme for Horace. Horace's seasons are the very seasons of each year, but the expansive sense of time in the poem allows a conception of them as longer portions of time in a human being's life. This is a notion coherent with the correlation between the seasons and the stages of a man's life, witnessed in Cicero at the beginning of this chapter.[109] The seasons can become more variable, abstract units of time, used to represent the component parts of any sort of temporal sequence or cycle, be it the duration of a man's life (as here in Horace and in Cicero), human evolution in general, or the stages in the development of a city. Spring, as the first of the seasons, is naturally representative of the beginning of the sequence. The predominance of the spring season in the *Georgics*, complemented by the poem's lack of calendrical time, promotes the idea of the beginning of an era of some sort, one whose duration is not defined.

E. Beginning at the End: Winter into Spring

Since the procession of the seasons is not a linear sequence, but a cyclical one, the implication for a symbolic spring is that the beginning which it entails is not *ex nihilo*, but comes out of the winter which preceded it. This circularity is evoked by Horace in *Odes* 4.7, above, as he alludes both to the winter which is removed by the poem's spring, as well as the next winter, which will replace the autumn of the new year ushered in by this spring. Winter is, therefore, at once the nearest season to spring, coming directly before it, as well as the season most remote from it, at the end of the cycle. The juxtaposition of winter and spring is a useful tool for the promotion of the idea of spring as a time for renewal, since it places the activity and vitality of the mild season into contrast with the cold inertia of winter. Consequently, one of the most notable features of Vergil's depiction of spring is that, while it is generally shown in a positive light, its benefits are often conveyed through a negative idea: spring is categorically *not* winter, and is often introduced as winter's end, before its own peculiar features are discussed. This tendency to provide winter as a basis of contrast for spring is one of the reasons for the high incidence of the word *hiems* in the *Georgics*, noted earlier in this chapter. Spring in Vergil is the birth of the natural

[109] Cic. *Sen.* 70-1.

world from the 'dead land' of winter;[110] the concept of a spring renewal could not exist without the winter death which precedes it. This idea is clearly illustrated in lines 43-4 of Book 1, at the beginning of the farmer's year:

> *Vere novo, gelidus canis cum montibus umor*
> *liquitur et Zephyro putris se glaeba resolvit…*

Here, 'new spring' is the time when the frosts of the previous winter melt and run down from the mountains, and the clods of earth are loosed from the grip of winter by the warm Zephyr. This Vergilian couplet is reminiscent of the opening lines of Catullus 46:

> *Iam ver egelidos refert tepores,*
> *iam caeli furor aequinoctialis*
> *iucundis Zephyri silescit auris.*

Catullus' spring is pointedly an end to winter, the weather it brings being described by the negative '*egelidos*'- 'no longer cold', or 'with the cold driven out'. In both passages the Zephyr makes an appearance, being one of the stock characters of the spring scene, although its role is somewhat different in Vergil; in the *Georgics*, the Zephyr signals a flurry of activity, spring being the time for most agricultural labour to be expended. The verb '*silescit*' could therefore hardly be applied to Vergil's Zephyr, especially since spring in the *Georgics* is not without stormy weather.[111]

Spring is also very similarly depicted as winter's end in the first of Horace's spring *Odes*, 1.4:

> *Solvitur acris hiemps grata vice veris et Favoni*
> *Trahuntque siccas machinae carinas,*
> *Ac neque iam stabulis gaudet pecus aut arator igni,*
> *Nec prata canis albicant pruinis.*

Horace's vividly pictorial evocation of spring details the first indications of the new season; winter's grip over the world is seen to be loosed when the sailing season begins again, and the farmer no longer needs to warm himself by the fire.[112] Vergil's idea of spring shares more of the vibrancy of Horace's than the soothing calm seen in

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[110] Morgan (1999), 138.
[111] See the beginning of Chapter Three, pp. 132-5 for a discussion of spring storms.
[112] The imagery in *Odes* 4.7, usually viewed as a companion piece to 1.4, is very similar.

Catullus' evocation of the season. For Vergil and Horace, spring's virtues go far beyond its pleasant warmth after the harsh winter, since it allows a return to such vital activities as seafaring and agriculture. The spring opens up land and sea to human endeavour, after the winter had kept them closed; it has the power to 'release…mind and body from the numbness of winter'.[113] This is a metaphor employed by Vergil in his *laus veris* passage. The section is introduced by a warning against planting trees and vines in winter, for that is the time when winter 'closes' the fields with frost: '*rura gelu…**claudit** hiems*' (2.317). Instead, Vergil recommends the spring for planting, when the fields are 'looser' and more tractable: '***laxant** arva sinus*' (2.331). This is the metaphor behind one of the etymologies which Ovid gives for the month *Aprilis* in his *Fasti* (4.89): that it is derived from *aperire*, because the spring month of April is when everything which was closed for winter, including the soil, 'opens'.

F. Italy, Italians, and Spring

Vergil's spring is developing into a powerful and versatile symbol. Its monopoly over creation in the *Georgics* makes the season into the earth's dominant generative force, as the poet draws upon the figure of Lucretius' Venus for inspiration, leaving the unexceptional, "real" spring season of Varro and Cato in its prosaic countryside. Spring's role in universal creation is complemented and extended by its association with beginnings, as Vergil once again contributes to a tradition represented in Lucretius, which would be developed later by Ovid's spring foundation of Rome in the *Fasti*. In addition, the juxtaposition of spring with its precursor, winter, sharpens the reader's focus upon the figure of Spring the Beginner to reveal it as a symbol for *new* beginning, restarting a cycle of growth and decay after its end. Vergil chose to resist using the new Julian calendar in his poem, motivated by the desire to create a gnomic detachment between the "unreal" Italy of the *Georgics*, and the "real" Italy which existed beyond it. This detachment grants the poem's broad figure of spring the necessary remove from the world known to the poem's audience and their state, to allow it to assume a more specific metaphorical, or even allegorical application with regard to this world.

[113] Nisbet and Hubbard (1970), 62.

i) *Hic ver adsiduum*

In the second book of the *Georgics*, Vergil blurs the dividing line between the literary landscape in which his spring holds sway and the "real" world, which the poem's readers inhabited. He does so in an extended passage in praise of the virtues and delights of his Italian homeland, which has come to be known as the *laudes Italiae* (2.136-76).[114]

> *hic ver adsiduum atque alienis mensibus aestas*
> 2.149.

Vergil suggests that the land of Italy, indicated by '*hic*', is a place where the spring season is constant ('*ver adsiduum*'). The fact that this cannot literally be the case is underscored by the paradox created in the second half of the line: although there is constant spring in Italy, there is also room for an extraordinarily long summer, which, like spring, extends into seasons usually untouched by it: '*alienis mensibus*'. It simply cannot be, therefore, that it is spring *all of the time* in Italy, and yet also summer *some of the time*. Besides, Vergil makes it clear in his *laus veris* passage, a little later in Book 2, that it is in large part the juxtaposition of spring's mildness with the harshness of the other seasons which makes it so special: '*tanta quies iret frigusque caloremque / inter*' (2.344-5). Throughout the *Georgics*, it is implicitly the landscape of Italy which Vergil's pupils are to set about cultivating and, therefore, it cannot be true that the spring season is unrelenting there, since there is constant reference to the dangers and uses of the other seasons. James O'Hara has suggested that the seeming impasse between the notion of perpetual spring and the Italy of the rest of the poem is one of many deliberate inconsistencies in the *Georgics* which has- and needs- no solution.[115] Richard Thomas, meanwhile, has gone so far as to consider *ver adsiduum* 'a lie in terms of the realities of Italy within and outside the *Georgics*';[116] he insists that it is erroneous to consider the word '*adsiduum*' as merely 'long', since it was clearly interpreted by Ovid, who alluded to the Vergilian phrase in his

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[114] *laudes Italiae*, like *laus veris*, is Servius' name for this section.
[115] O'Hara (2007), 84-5. While there are surely several such inconsistencies in the poem, *ver adsiduum* need not necessarily be classified among them. See Chapter Three, pp. 159-60, and Appendix II of this thesis, on Vergil's incompatible accounts of *bugonia* in *Georgics* 4.
[116] Thomas (1988), *ad.* 2.149.

Metamorphoses, as 'incessant': '*ver erat aeternum*'.[117] Although this is something of a circular argument, since Ovid's reading of Vergil cannot be identified with any hypothetically "correct" reading, the point that '*adsiduum*' and '*aeternum*' are, in this context, synonymous is valid. However, the 'realities of Italy outside the *Georgics*' have no bearing upon the meaning of *ver adsiduum*.[118] Not only does *ver* have so tremendous a symbolic force *within the Georgics* as to deny its precise identification with the trimester which it commonly denotes, but this figure also truly pervades the landscape of the poem, which is implicitly acknowledged as the landscape of Italy. Put simply, *ver adsiduum* is a metaphor, and one entirely consistent within the context of the poem. The *Georgics*' Italy may not be a place where the spring season lasts all year,[119] but it is, according to Vergil, a place where the presence of the symbolic spring is always felt. The metaphor implies that in Italy there is constant potential for creation and for beginnings, for fresh starts; whether or not this is actually the case is entirely irrelevant.[120] Similarly, the phrase '*alienis mensibus aestas*' need not be interpreted literally: it is perfectly understandable to consider it an implication that Italy basked in unseasonable warmth for much of the year. Such a view does violence neither to the Latin, nor to the metaphorical reading of *ver adsiduum*, and highlights the relative symbolic weakness of *aestas*, in comparison with *ver*. By forging a bond with spring, Italy has gained a powerful ally in the poem's metaphorical and allegorical discourse.

Just as spring's power is reinforced and emphasised by contrast with the other seasons of the year, so too is the vernal climate of Italy distinguished from those of other countries. A pair of descriptive passages in Book 3 contrasts the frozen wastes of Scythia (3.349-83), with the intense African heat of Libya (3.339-48). Although the juxtaposition of these two passages is deliberate and forceful, it is their difference from the description of the *Georgics*' Italy which most stands out.[121] While Italy in

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[117] Ov. *Met.* 1.107. In Thomas' view, the phrase was 'corrected' by Horace's '*ver ubi longum*' (*Carm.* 2.6.17).
[118] See Chapter Three, pp. 157-9, for more on the relationship between the world of the *Georgics* and the 'real' world.
[119] Vergil would, however, have been perfectly entitled to suggest that *his* Italy truly had only one season.
[120] Towards the end of Book 2, at 516-17, there is a more literal suggestion that the life of Vergil's farmer is indeed one of perpetual Italian spring: '*aut pomis exuberet annus / aut fetu pecorum aut Cerealis mergite culmi*'. Vergil emphasises the fact that there is productivity all year round ('*exuberet annus*'), suggesting an idea of 'constant growth' which would be consistent with '*ver adsiduum*'.
[121] Thomas (1988), *ad* 3.349-83: 'the contrasts with the Italian landscape of Book 2 are pointed and pervasive'.

Book 2 is a land of '*ver adsiduum*', sterile Scythia is described as a place where there is '*semper hiems*' (3.356). The effect of the comparison between the countries of Libya, Scythia, and Italy has a pedagogical simplicity: one is too hot, another too cold, but one, Italy, is *just right*.

ii) Of bees and men: the Italian people

The connection formed between spring and Roman Italy is reinforced by the further association of its inhabitants, the Roman people, with the selfsame season. This is a more complex relationship than that created by Italy's '*ver adsiduum*', but is no less critical to the figurative purpose of the spring season in the *Georgics*. Throughout Book 4 of the poem, Vergil strives to accumulate points of comparison between bees- the book being concerned chiefly with apiculture- and the Roman people. The similarity between the bees' *res* and human society in general is intimated from the beginning of the book, as Vergil, in the proem, vows to speak of their '*magnanimosque duces*', their '*mores et studia et populos et proelia*' (4.4-5). This programmatic statement is borne out in the first half of the book, as Vergil treats each of these aspects of bee life in detail, cumulatively nurturing a correlation between the behaviour of bees and humans. It gradually becomes clearer that it is not simply human beings with whom bees are to be compared, but more specifically Romans, as the likes of the *Lar* (4.43), and *Penates* (4.155) are seen to feature in their lives. Moreover, the bees experience not only war in a general sense, but, like the Romans, they are haunted by the spectre of civil war, *discordia* (4.68), as factions fight it out in support of their chosen 'kings' (4.67-87).

Paradoxically, it is at a point where the bees' mores appear to deviate sharply away from those of their human counterparts that Vergil provides the clearest evocation of the relationship between the species. At lines 197-209, Vergil describes the marvellous custom which the bees have of asexual reproduction, which allows them to refrain from subjecting themselves to the dangers of the flesh: '*neque concubitu indulgent, nec corpora segnes / in Venerem solvunt*' (4.198-9). Instead, the bees simply pick their offspring from the foliage around them: '*e foliis natos, e suavibus herbis / ore legunt*' (4.200-1).[122] This could not be further from human

[122] How the infant bees find their way onto the leaves and grasses is not explained.

reproduction, and yet, in line 201, Vergil refers to the new bees as '*parvosque Quirites*'- 'little Romans'. With regard to this phrase, Thomas comments that 'although the application of *Quirites* to the bees is audacious and apparently unparalleled, it need not imply that the bees stand allegorically for specifically Roman citizens'.[123] Naturally, such an implication is by no means 'necessary', but the comparison between bees and men built cumulatively up to this point in the book strongly suggests that the phrase can be read in this way; as Williams says, 'the personification in human terms here is very strong indeed'.[124] It could indeed be that Vergil is talking generally about 'humans', but in that case the use of '*Quirites*' might suggest that 'Roman' and 'human' are synonyms, to one who might see the Roman as the paragon of human existence.

It is through the '*parvos Quirites*' that the Roman people themselves come to gain an association with the spring season, much as their homeland of Italy does. Bees, in *Georgics* Book 4, are explicitly creatures of the springtime. Very early in the book, at line 22, Vergil refers to the spring season, in which the bees begin to swarm, as their possession:[125] '*vere suo*'. On the whole, the commentators provide little of note on this phrase, Williams commenting that 'the spring is their [the bees'] own special time', Mynors, 'the springtime that they love', and Thomas, 'the spring…is the appropriate time for them'.[126] The true value of '*vere suo*', in placing the springtime within the bees' ownership, lies in the triangular connection it forms between the bees, the Roman people, and the spring season, even before the clear correspondences of culture between the species become clear, or before such explicit statements as that of '*parvos Quirites*'. In Book 2's *laudes Italiae*, Italy, the land which the Romans inhabit, and something of a Greater Rome in the view of the provincial Vergil, is blessed with '*ver adsiduum*' (2.149); bees and Romans alike are thus 'creatures of the springtime'.[127]

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[123] Thomas (1988), *ad* 4.201.
[124] Williams (1979), 208. Also, Ross (1987), 208: '*Quirites* would have been striking, and must suggest the Roman citizen body boldly and unmistakably'.
[125] Or perhaps, in context, spring is the time to which they belong.
[126] Williams (1979), *ad* 22; Mynors (1990), *ad* 22; Thomas (1988), *ad* 22.
[127] Miles (1980), 229.

iii) Making Romans

The dependence of bees upon spring is stressed by the association of the practice of *bugonia* with the season, in the description at 4.281-314. When their normal methods of reproduction fail to sustain their numbers, bees can be created from the putrefying carcasses of oxen, a process which takes place in spring: '*hoc geritur Zephyris primum impellentibus undas*' (4.305). The significance of this bee phenomenon again extends to their human- Roman counterparts. As many scholars have suggested in the past fifty years, there is a discernible allegory to be found in the revival of the bee stock effected by *bugonia*, of the establishment of a new regime under Octavian, bringing about the end of the ailing Republic: so Otis, 'life emerges from death: in political terms, the Augustan restoration from the anarchy of civil war; in symbolic terms, the Golden Age from the Age of Iron'.[128] Although some, including Otis, do not seek to politicise the *Georgics* as a whole, as Morgan and others do, most recognise that the comparison is there to be made.[129] If the *Georgics* was published in 29BCE, two years before the founding of the empire under 'Augustus', Otis' statement above is technically anachronistic; however, even by 29, Octavian was in such a powerful position that it must have seemed likely that he would soon become some sort of monarch,[130] and the view that the Republic had been throttled to death by relentless civil war was probably commonly held, as illustrated by the end to *Georgics* Book 1.[131] The connection between *bugonia* and a projected revival of the Roman state is established by the determined manner in which Vergil sets up the bees as an analogue for the Roman people.

The passage in which Vergil informs his readers of the timing for the process of *bugonia* (4.305-7) is reminiscent of lines 43-4 of Book 1, the opening of the poem proper, where the farmer is set to task in early spring.[132] Morgan, as a result, suggests that 'Bugonia might reflect the events of spring or the re-foundation of Rome';[133]

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[128] Otis (1964), 190.
[129] Morgan (1999, 1) considers the poem 'a thoroughgoing exercise in Octavianic propaganda, a precise response to the requirements of the regime'. See Chapter Three, especially pp. 161-72, for a fuller treatment of *bugonia* as allegory, and more bibliography on this issue.
[130] Nappa (2005), 1: 'It became clear, after Actium [in 31BCE] and to some extent even before, that [Octavian] alone was to hold the reins of power in the Roman world'.
[131] '*fas versum atque nefas: tot bella per orbem, / tam multae scelerum facies, non ullus aratro / dignus honos*'- 1.505-7.
[132] Page (1898), *ad* 4.305.
[133] Morgan (1999), 197.

rather, *bugonia* reflects both of these things simultaneously. In the multi-layered symbolic programme of the *Georgics*, the spring revival of *bugonia* appears as an allegory in miniature for the productive activity prescribed by the poem as a whole, along with its outcome; [134] *bugonia* is something of a précis of the poem, and of the great political overhaul to come in Rome. As in *bugonia*, the *labor* expended by the farmer over the course of the *Georgics*' springtime is the groundwork for a revival, not of '*parvos Quirites*', but rather of their larger counterparts. The *labor* of the *Georgics* reflects the hard work necessary at the inception of the new regime, in its "imperial springtime": 'for the farmer as for the statesman there is a time of fruitful renewal when old obstacles give way to new beginnings and the prospect of hard work is immediate and inviting'.[135] Miles argues that this parallel is reinforced by the omission of the farmer from the *laudes Italiae* section, which serves 'to emphasize the close relationship between the landscape and other aspects of civilization and, consequently to enforce the parallels between the work of the farmer and that of laying the foundations of the Italian nation'.[136] The elaboration on *bugonia* which unfolds in the Aristaeus epyllion casts its hero as the *auctor* of the revival, and, therefore, comparison with Octavian and the farmer of the *Georgics* is invited.

G. Spring and Politics

i) Ruling nature

The increasingly familiar metaphorical function of spring as a trope for beginning, and renewal, is being complemented by a more specifically allegorical purpose in Vergil's use of the season, which appears to connote a political transformation. Vergil's employment of spring season in this fashion seems to be original, but the literary notion of a connection between a political era and inexplicitly "spring-like" natural fertility and abundance goes back much further. In Book 19 of Homer's *Odyssey*, Odysseus, in an address to Penelope, suggests that her fame rises up to the heavens (19.109-14):

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[134] cf. 4.6: '*in tenui labor*'.
[135] Miles (1980), 71.
[136] Miles (1980), 128. If the farmer were to appear in the *laudes Italiae*, there would be a necessary contrast formed between him and the praised political figures; his absence allows the reader to imagine the farmer as the statesman's analogue.

ὥς τέ τευ ἢ βασιλῆος ἀμύμονος, ὅς τε θεουδὴς
ἀνδράσιν ἐν πολλοῖσι καὶ ἰφθίμοισιν ἀνάσσων
εὐδικίας ἀνέχῃσι, φέρῃσι δὲ γαῖα μέλαινα
πυροὺς καὶ κριθάς, βρίθῃσι δὲ δένδρεα καρπῷ,
τίκτῃ δ' ἔμπεδα μῆλα, θάλασσα δὲ παρέχῃ ἰχθῦς
ἐξ εὐηγεσίης, ἀρετῶσι δὲ λαοὶ ὑπ' αὐτοῦ.

'as does the fame of some blameless king, who with the fear of the gods in his heart, is lord over many mighty men, upholding justice; and the black earth bears wheat and barley, and the trees are laden with fruit, the flocks bring forth young unceasingly, and the sea yields fish, all from his good leading'.

Odysseus perceives a direct connection between just rule and the plenty borne forth by land, sea, and their creatures. This idea of a correlation between justice in political dealings and fertility is picked up by Hesiod, in his *Works and Days* (225-237):

Οἳ δὲ δίκας ξείνοισι καὶ ἐνδήμοισι διδοῦσιν
ἰθείας καὶ μή τι παρεκβαίνουσι δικαίου,
τοῖσι τέθηλε πόλις, λαοὶ δ' ἀνθεῦσιν ἐν αὐτῇ:
εἰρήνη δ' ἀνὰ γῆν κουροτρόφος, οὐδέ ποτ' αὐτοῖς
ἀργαλέον πόλεμον τεκμαίρεται εὐρύοπα Ζεύς:
οὐδέ ποτ' ἰθυδίκῃσι μετ' ἀνδράσι λιμὸς ὀπηδεῖ
οὐδ' ἄτη, θαλίῃς δὲ μεμηλότα ἔργα νέμονται.
τοῖσι φέρει μὲν γαῖα πολὺν βίον, οὔρεσι δὲ δρῦς
ἄκρη μέν τε φέρει βαλάνους, μέσση δὲ μελίσσας:
εἰροπόκοι δ' ὄιες μαλλοῖς καταβεβρίθασιν:
τίκτουσιν δὲ γυναῖκες ἐοικότα τέκνα γονεῦσιν:
θάλλουσιν δ' ἀγαθοῖσι διαμπερές: οὐδ' ἐπὶ νηῶν
νίσσονται, καρπὸν δὲ φέρει ζείδωρος ἄρουρα.

'as for those who give straight judgments to visitors and their own people and do not deviate from what is just, their community flourishes, and the people blooms in it...Neither does famine attend straight-judging men, nor Blight, and they feast on the crops they tend. For them Earth bears plentiful food, and on the mountains the oak carries acorns at its surface and bees at its centre. The fleecy sheep are laden down with wool; the womenfolk bear children that resemble their parents; they enjoy a continual sufficiency of good things. Nor do they ply on ships, but the grain-giving ploughland bears them fruit.'[137]

The world to which Hesiod's work applies is altogether less heroic, and more parochial than Odysseus', but the idea that political straight-dealing is attended by natural fertility is identical. In each case, there is a sense that the meaning is more than simply metaphorical, and that there is an inherent literal truth. The motif of just political rule bringing natural fertility underpins the mythology of the Golden Age, a

[137] Translation: M.L. West.

tradition entered into repeatedly by Vergil, in *Eclogue* 4, in the Theodicy section of *Georgics* 1 (1.125-8), and in Book 8 of the *Aeneid* (8.319-27). In the *Eclogues* and *Georgics* especially, the Golden Age is characterised by a preternatural bounty, poured forth from the Earth: '*ipsaque tellus / omnia liberius, nullo poscente, ferebat*' (*G* 1.128).[138] As is clear in the *Eclogues* and *Aeneid*, the period known as the Golden Age is identified with the reign of Saturn, father of Jupiter: '*Saturnia regna*' (*Ecl.* 4.6); '*aurea quae perhibent illo sub rege fuere / saecula*' (*A* 8.324-5). In this case, then, Saturn's just rule is reflected both in the metaphor of the Metallic Ages, the Golden Age of course being the finest, but also in an idea, metaphorical or otherwise, that the Saturnian Age brought with it natural abundance. Vergil's use of the Golden Age motif in *Eclogue* 4 is of particular interest, since this poem has a contemporary political resonance to it. Whether one regards the child to which the poem refers as being the prospective offspring of the union between Antony and Octavian's sister, Octavia, or as some other infant, it is significant that Vergil uses the idea of a return to Golden Age abundance ('*redeunt Saturnia regna*'- 4.6) as a metaphor for political security in the present, or the near future. This is something he would develop in his use of the spring season in his later work, the *Georgics*.

ii) Spring as a political metaphor

To a modern audience, the idea of the spring season and its concomitant fertility being used as a metaphor for a period of political time is comfortably familiar. The metaphor is often used in circumstances which take advantage of the juxtaposition of the new season with the harshness of winter, a technique witnessed above in the ancients' accounts of spring. Although his comparand is the summer, rather than the spring season, the opening lines of Shakespeare's *Richard III*, which was considered at the beginning of this chapter, provide a prime example of the metaphorical use of winter as representative of a difficult period politically: 'Now is the winter of our discontent / made glorious summer by this sun of York'. The fact that there is no small hint of irony in Richard's words is immaterial; that he refers to a 'winter' of political 'discontent' is the important issue. Shakespeare chooses to

[138] Vergil's opinion of the Golden Age in the *Georgics* appears rather more ambivalent than in the *Eclogues* or *Aeneid*. See Nappa (2005), 155-8: 'it is possible to see the Golden Age not as a time of ease but of disturbing primitivism, only desirable to those ignorant of the potential of effort to bring something better' (157); also, Perkell (2002).

contrast the cold of winter with the heat of a summer 'sun', rather than the spring. In the present day, however, the political metaphor of spring as a positive start after a difficult 'winter' has entered popular consciousness to a considerable extent. In an historiographical context, spring has come to carry connotations of "revolution", a metaphorical shorthand used to express both (subjectively) positive change and the relative undesirability of the situation which preceded it. This is illustrated by the frequency with which 'spring' appears in the titles of works of historiography concerned with revolution; titles such as *Spring in October: The Story of the Polish Revolution, 1956*, and *Spring in Winter: The 1989 Revolutions*, are common.[139] In each of these cases, the fact that 'spring' refers to the revolutions themselves is highlighted by contrast with the actual time of year when they took place, 'October' and 'Winter' being categorically *not* springtime.

The process by which this political metaphor came to gain such currency must, of course, have been complicated, but the contribution which Augustan literature made to its early growth appears considerable. The comparison between the bees and Romans in the *Georgics*, and their shared dependence upon the spring season encourages a reading of *bugonia*, and of spring in general, as connoting a revival of the Roman people, such as that which Octavian could expedite. Consideration of the prototypes for such a metaphor, in Homer and Hesiod, and their descendents in more recent literature, brings spring as a symbol for political change into the foreground. The Vergilian usage of spring exploits both of the poem's main channels of discourse: it resonates both for the wider audience, and for the narrower audience which consisted of Octavian and those responsible for his image. The purpose of spring in the *Georgics*, aided by its relative ubiquity in the poem, is largely to inspire hope in the poem's wider audience regarding the future of Rome under Octavian. As did his treatment of the *iuvenis*, Vergil's spring also seeks to address a weakness in Octavian's public image, via the juxtaposition of spring against winter. In the allegorical context of the Augustan restoration, 'winter' stands for the civil wars which preceded and brought about Octavian's rise to power. Although there are always those who prosper in such circumstances, notably Octavian in this case, these civil wars were, to most Romans, a catastrophic blight, whose memory was to be retained as a warning against following a similar path in the future. Since Octavian

[139] *Spring in October*: Syrop (1958). *Spring in Winter*: Prins (1990).

was, to a large extent, responsible for the events of the civil wars, Vergil's apology was entirely necessary to try to repair some of the damage which the young Caesar had caused. The expediency of the spring season as a conciliatory symbol appealed directly to Octavian and his inner circle.

The evidence of Horace's *Odes* suggests a cross-pollination of ideas between friends, and fellow "Augustans".[140] The *Odes* endorse and develop the metaphorical function of spring and winter in a contemporary political context. Spring features prominently in *Odes* 1.4 and 4.7, but it is in other poems in the same collection in which Horace suggests a political approach to the seasons. In 1.2, which was probably written around the time Vergil was finishing his *Georgics*, Horace paints a fearful picture of Rome's distant past, and the more recent civil wars. In the poem's opening lines, Horace uses the metaphor of wintry weather to represent this past hardship (1.2.1-2):

> *iam satis terris nivis atque dirae*
> *grandinis misit Pater...*

Jupiter has sent enough dreadful snow and hail upon the Roman people, and they are long overdue some fairer weather. Horace seeks the one who can deliver them from this seemingly endless winter, a young man ('*iuvenem*'- 1.2.41), Julius Caesar's avenger ('*Caesaris ultor*'- 1.2.44), who does not shrink from the titles of '*pater atque princeps*' (1.2.50). Under this man, Octavian, Horace predicts better things for his people, and with his last line he stresses the dependence of a positive future upon Octavian's leadership: '*te duce, Caesar*' (1.2.52).

In *Odes* 2.10, a poem concerned chiefly with the idea of the 'golden mean' ('*auream mediocritatem*'- 2.10.5), Horace revisits his wintry theme, but makes much more explicit its meaning (2.10.15-18).

> *informis hiemes reducit*
> *Iuppiter, idem*
> *summovet. non, si male nunc, et olim*
> *sic erit...*

[140] 'The question of the direction of influence between Virgil and Horace is in general not an easy one'- Thomas (1988), 9.

Again Horace uses winter as a figure for hardship, in this case perhaps more personal than political, but in the subsequent sentence he decodes his own metaphor. The notion of Jupiter bringing and taking away winters is to be interpreted as a reassurance that, even if things are going badly now, they will not always do so.

It is in the Fourth book of his *Odes*, whose character is more patently Augustan, that Horace most clearly deploys the spring season and its connoted fertility in a political setting. In 4.5, composed around 13BCE, Horace looks forward to Augustus' return to Rome after a foreign campaign, and describes the blessings which his presence brings.

> *lucem redde tuae, dux bone, patriae:*
> *instar veris enim vultus ubi tuus*
> *adfulsit populo, gratior it dies*
> *et soles melius nitent.*
> 4.5.5-8.

Horace combines a metaphor of light and darkness, evoking the '*lucem*' which Augustus casts over the '*patriae*', with a spring metaphor: his face shines 'like spring' ('*instar veris*') upon his people, making the day a happier one and the sun brighter. This association of Augustus with spring is followed by an implication that his rule by its justice brings fertility and prosperity (4.5.17-24).

> *tutus bos etenim rura perambulat,*
> *nutrit rura Ceres almaque Faustitas,*
> *pacatum volitant per mare navitae,*
> *culpari metuit fides,* 20
> *nullis polluitur casta domus stupris,*
> *mos et lex maculosum edomuit nefas,*
> *laudantur simili prole puerperae,*
> *culpam poena premit comes.*

Horace's sentiments echo those witnessed in Homer, and especially Hesiod. The idea that women are having sons similar to the children's fathers is a reference to lines 225-38 of Hesiod's *Works and Days* (above), and Horace's allusion to successful shipping in line 19 is a pointed inversion of the Hesiodic notion that seafaring is somehow immoral. More importantly, the mention in line 18 of *Ceres* and *Faustitas* suggests the increased agricultural productivity presided over by Augustus, much like the good king evoked by Odysseus in *Odyssey* 19 (107-14). Unlike its Greek precursors, Horace's version connects this increased fertility and sense of prosperity

with the spring season specifically, which is mentioned by name in the ode's sixth line, and is associated via metaphor with Augustus. Horace's metaphorical application of the seasons, and of spring in particular, in a political context in his *Odes* would appear to complement Vergil's approach with regard to Octavian. Both poets were engaged in creating in their audience a sense of hope for Rome under Octavian-Augustus, although Horace would appear to have been eager to bury, rather than address his ruler's past, unlike his contemporary, Vergil.

Vergil, and later Horace, empowered the spring season as a positive metaphor for Octavian's rule; in doing so, they appealed directly to their ruler's sensibilities. Spring, as Vergil had described it, was uniquely appropriate to the idea of an "Augustan Restoration"; the Vergilian notion that the season's new life did not come from nothing, but rather returned its former vitality to the Earth and its creatures, made it an opportune figure for such a Roman revival. Spring imagery would also prove a perfect complement to Augustus' promotion of birth and the family. Vergil had provided Octavian with an invaluable prototype for his propaganda, which the new Caesar could exploit widely in his own self-promotion. The influence of this model is a matter for speculation, but the resemblance to it borne by much of Augustus' official publicity would suggest that it was an early contribution to a movement which would gather in pace and proponents. This is reflected in Horace's *Carmen Saeculare*, which Augustus commissioned in honour of the revived *Ludi Saeculares*, of 17BCE. As an official commission, this poem more accurately fulfils the '*haud mollia iussa*', which Maecenas apparently issued to Vergil in his *Georgics* (3.41); the *Carmen Saeculare* can be seen as the literary blueprint for the Augustan age, or, at least, the manner in which that era wished to style itself.

In the opening lines of the *Carmen Saeculare*, Horace invokes the patron gods of the poem, who will define and underpin its message throughout:

> *Phoebe silvarumque potens Diana,*
> *lucidum caeli decus*

As deities associated with the sun and moon, Apollo and Diana's presence allows Horace to stress their association with light, and the positive metaphors which that

idea carries.[141] Diana, however, has special potency as a symbol of birth and fertility, as is elaborated in lines 13-24.

Rite maturos aperire partus
lenis, Ilithyia, tuere matres,
sive tu Lucina probas vocari 15
seu Genitalis:
diva, producas subolem patrumque
prosperes decreta super iugandis
feminis prolisque novae feraci
lege marita, 20
certus undenos deciens per annos
orbis ut cantus referatque ludos
ter die claro totiensque grata
nocte frequentis.

The epithet *Lucina*, says Putnam, 'not only has associations with childbirth in Latin literature as early as Plautus but is particularly suitable in a context that foregrounds the presence of light and its conjunction with life'.[142] More significantly, Putnam further suggests that the appellative *Genitalis* had not been attributed to Diana before Horace's use of it in the *Carmen Saeculare*;[143] Diana's new title confirms her connection with birth, and foregrounds this aspect of her divinity in the context of Horace's hymn. This emphasis on childbirth is a response to Augustus' attempts to restore and promote the sanctity of marriage, which culminated in legislation of 18BCE, alluded to in the '*lege marita*' of line 20.

The hymn's promotion of fertility is not limited to human procreation; there is a climate of generation and abundance which is present throughout. In lines 29-32, Horace stipulates that, in this new era, the regeneration in human affairs will be matched by abundance in all nature:[144]

fertilis frugum pecorisque Tellus
spicea donet Cererem corona; 30
nutriant fetus et aquae salubres
et Iovis aurae.

The prosperity engendered by the stability of the Augustan regime is reflected metaphorically, and perhaps even literally, in the increased fertility of the Earth: 'in the *carmen saeculare*, the promise of fertility is a direct consequence of political

[141] Putnam (2000), 53-4.
[142] Putnam (2000), 62.
[143] Putnam (2000), 62.
[144] Putnam (2000), 66: 'growth in inanimate nature must parallel and accompany...the regeneration of humankind'.

policy; it calls for concrete realisation'.[145] This is a notion coherent with the figurative use of spring as a symbol for a period of political growth. The natural wealth of the new age is reiterated towards the end of the poem, as Horace catalogues the virtues which are now to return to Rome:

> *iam Fides et Pax et Honos Pudorque*
> *priscus et neglecta redire Virtus*
> *audet adparetque beata pleno*
> *Copia cornu.* 60

The culmination of these blessings is the coming of *Copia*, 'Plenty', who, with her full horn, guarantees the natural bounty promised by Horace throughout the hymn.

iii) Seeing abundance

The divine characters of the *Carmen Saeculare* were all key figures in Augustan iconography; the visual vocabulary of the new age was dominated by images denoting natural fertility and abundance. Augustan art and architecture were saturated with images of natural prosperity and fecundity, evoking the larger theme of a new Golden Age, which Augustus' accession to power was thought to have heralded.[146] The most prominent exponent of this visual metaphor was the Ara Pacis Augustae, which was completed in 9BCE. On September 23rd of every year, the day of the autumnal equinox and, more importantly, Augustus' birthday, the shadow cast by the gnomon of Augustus' sundial (Horologium Augusti) would enter the doorway to the Ara Pacis, and point towards the altar itself.[147] This is an indication of the importance of the Ara Pacis within the Augustan artistic-political schema. The enclosure to the altar is remarkable for its overwhelming density of images, which would attract and maintain the interest of viewers of any educational background.[148] The majority of these images symbolise the natural prosperity and fertility which the Augustan Peace had made possible.[149] The lower panels on the outside of the

[145] Zanker (1988), 176.
[146] Zanker (1988), 172-83.
[147] Favro (1996), 130.
[148] Favro (1996), 227: 'the intricate iconography engaged the minds of learned observers; lively detailed representations of lizards and bugs entertained the uneducated'. Besides, even those ignorant of their meaning could have appreciated the beauty of the images depicting mythical and divine characters.
[149] For a comprehensive account of the variety of images on the Ara Pacis, see Rehak (2006), 96-137.

enclosure are covered on all sides with reliefs of acanthus, interspersed with other plants and small animals.[150] The acanthus appears wildly overgrown, but it is in fact perfectly ordered and symmetrical, an indication of the element of control which was necessary for the prosperity of the Augustan state.[151] Acanthus, along with many other sorts of vines and garlands, was an extremely common symbol in Augustan iconography; the vine was a straightforward symbol of growth in nature, and was a simple image to reproduce.[152] The upper panels depict mythological and allegorical scenes, involving recognisable divine and historical figures. One of the most prominent reliefs depicts a reclining female deity, with two babies reaching for her breast, and her lap full of a variety of fruits.[153] This goddess has commonly been identified as Tellus, although a credible case can be made for her to be any one of Venus, Ceres, Italia, or Pax Augusta, whom Rehak, like Zanker, favours as the potential subject of the relief.[154] Her precise identification is not necessary, since her function as a figure for fertility is clearly indicated by the use of symbols in the relief, and is not dependent upon her being named.[155] The adornment of this deity with twin infants, along with fruit, grain and flowers associates her with human propagation and prosperity, along with fertility in nature, and connects the two with one another. Her surroundings increase her symbolic weight; beneath her lie a grazing sheep and an ox, for Zanker, 'symbols of the increase of herds and flocks and of the blessings of country life'.[156] The plants around her are 'overly large', suggesting not simply abundance, but an extraordinary success in nature.[157] The figures flanking the goddess are either the twin *aurae*, the winds on land and sea, or perhaps two of the Horae, the

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[150] See Appendix I, Fig. 3.
[151] Kellum (1994), 217. Kellum highlights the similarities between this aspect of the Ara Pacis and the images found in the Garden Room at the Villa *ad Gallinas*, which belonged to Augustus' wife, Livia. The garden mural similarly exhibits preternatural fertility, depicting plants of different seasons all in bloom at the same time (221). Although the Garden Room was essentially a display of private, rather than public Augustan art, Kellum suggests that it may have been open to selected visitors (223-4).
[152] Zanker (1988), 182: 'the vine...proclaims the fertility and prosperity of the new age'.
[153] See Appendix I, Fig. 4.
[154] Rehak (2006),112. Although Pax is missing her most common attributes, the cornucopia and the caduceus, the fruit in her lap is the same as that found in the cornucopia, and the children with whom she is depicted are to be seen as products of her peace. If this is not Pax Augusta, she is strangely absent from a monument in her honour.
[155] Zanker (1988), 174: 'it is immediately obvious that she is a divinity whose domain is growth and fertility'. The altar as a whole was purposely non-specific, since it lacked a cult statue: 'who the final recipient of any sacrifice at the Ara Pacis was to be, was deliberately left ambiguous'- Elsner (1991), 54.
[156] Zanker (1988), 174.
[157] Zanker (1988), 175.

seasons, which bring their individual fruits to each part of the year.[158] This composite relief bears a striking resemblance to that imagined in lines 29-32 of Horace's *Carmen Saeculare*, in which Earth, fruits, cattle, grain, and the breezes all feature.[159] The resulting implication is that there was a common pool of symbols which the literary and visual proponents of the Augustan age each drew upon. This degree of programmatic coherence is witnessed beyond the Ara Pacis. The famous statue of Augustus from Prima Porta bears on its cuirass a relief depicting Mother Earth in a scene strikingly similar to that of the Pax/Tellus relief from the Ara Pacis;[160] like Pax, Tellus has twin babies on her lap, and is surrounded by natural growth. Alongside her there rests a giant cornucopia, symbol of abundance, which appears in line 60 of the *Carmen Saeculare*. Further correspondence with the *Carmen* is found in the presence elsewhere on the cuirass of the deities Apollo and Diana, patrons of Horace's poem.

Works of Augustan art, such as the Prima Porta Augustus and the Ara Pacis are often noted for 'the didactic plan of [their] composition',[161] which reinforces their identification as "official" exponents of Augustan propaganda. The *Carmen Saeculare* provides the subtitles to their images. Although it is beyond doubt that Vergil will have composed his *Georgics* with the encouragement and keen interest of his patrons-Maecenas, and the future emperor himself, he was not working to fulfil a commission. In spite of this, the *Georgics* functions as a didactic model for Augustan propaganda. Vergil's spring displays a lack of specificity in its associations, as the poet attributes to it any number of positive features, in imitation of the Lucretian figure of Venus. This fluidity of approach is also present in Augustan art, which, says Zanker, displays a 'broad spectrum of associations and the general applicability of individual symbols'.[162] The potential for Augustan art and architecture to function as propaganda was dependent upon the principle of repetition, which created meaning by fashioning a complementary picture.[163] In the case of the Pax/Tellus relief on the Ara Pacis, the precise identification of the divine female protagonist is problematised by her

[158] Rehak (2006: 111) suggests that they could also be aspects of the goddess, Venus.
[159] Zanker (1988), 176: 'There can be no doubt that the key elements of this vision originated in Augustus's inner circle and are closely bound up with the program for the Secular Festival'.
[160] See Appendix I, Fig. 7.
[161] Zanker (1988), 177.
[162] Zanker (1988), 177.
[163] Favro (1996), 173: 'Augustus created urban ensembles based on visual and symbolic alignments'; 'repetition...created cognitive groupings in the cityscape' (153).

multiple symbolic accessories, but the difficulty is obviated by the sheer volume of adjacent images related to fertility, which transmit the meaning by bombardment.

Underpinning the *Carmen Saeculare* and the visual iconography of the Augustan period there is a coherent and concerted attempt to associate with the new regime the idea of fertility and natural prosperity, via the ubiquity of symbols related to these things; their relationship is intended to appear causal. The title "Augustus", which the Senate granted to Octavian in 27BCE, is cognate with the verb *augere*, "to increase":[164] its adoption constituted a pledge by the *princeps* to guarantee greater prosperity for Rome and her people. The notion of direct proportionality between political and natural prosperity was present in Homer and Hesiod, and was subsequently transmitted and developed by Horace and Vergil, not only in his georgic spring, but also in his treatment of the Golden Age. There is a greater subtlety of approach in the *Georgics*; rather than explicitly identifying the connection between just rule and natural prosperity, the reader is to intuit the benefits of Octavian's governance from the depicted abundance of his nation. The foundations laid by Vergil served to establish imagery of spring-like fertility as an accessible metaphor for a new and promising political era in a Roman context. It was immaterial whether or not Augustus' subjects actually experienced an increase in natural fertility, or their own for that matter: 'the imagery of lasting happiness transcended any reality and eventually came to shape the common perception of reality'.[165] After years of toil and instability, it was irresistible for the Romans to believe, or at least hope, that their *patria*, land of constant opportunity, of *ver adsiduum*, was presenting them with a chance for revival in the figure of Octavian.

[164] Favro (1996), 104.
[165] Zanker (1988), 172.

Chapter Three: Destruction and Creation

The spring of the previous chapter is something of a half-truth; this is not to say that it is false, but rather that, in the case of the *Georgics* specifically, it is not the whole truth. On a very basic, but no less important level, the positive representation of spring in the *Georgics* is something which endures within the mind of the reader beyond the end of the poem. This will have influenced subsequent Augustan art and literature, in promoting a valuable metaphor for the new regime under Octavian-Augustus which offered a wealth of visual possibilities. The image of spring-like fertility which dominates the Ara Pacis and the *Carmen Saeculare* is consistent with the positive depiction of spring in the *Georgics*, but in each case the ability to develop and elaborate upon the existing theme is restricted by a mixture of purpose and intended audience. The propagandist function of the Ara Pacis demanded the repetition of easily recognisable stock figures and familiar features in order for its message to be understood; even in the case of the 'Pax' relief, where there is some doubt over the depicted deity, the trappings of natural abundance with which she is surrounded make it clear that she is representative of fertility. Meanwhile, the *Carmen Saeculare* was written for public performance at the Secular Games, and was therefore constrained by the necessity to appeal to the *plebs*. The Ara Pacis had also to appeal both to learned elite and uneducated *plebs* alike.[1] Propaganda intended for public consumption had to be concise and straightforward; this is true both of written and visual propaganda.[2] Literary works of poetry and history were not subject to the same restrictions, since they were targeted at the educated elite classes.[3] Their authors were allowed greater scope for thematic development and use of nuance, confident that their audience would be able to follow them.

The *Georgics* is one such work, and Vergil one such author; in his depiction of spring in the poem, Vergil exploits the potential for subtlety of approach which the combination of his literary medium and lack of commission granted him. The *Georgics*' spring has a monopolistic grip over creation and positive events in the poem, and is therefore at its core the positive *exemplum* which can inspire Augustan

[1] 'Any monument must "speak" to the public- common as well as elite- in an established and understood visual language if it is to make its messages clear'- Rehak (2006), 134.
[2] See Yavetz (1984), 13: 'written propaganda addressed to the masses would have to be short, like slogans on coins'. Rehak (2006, 134), after Yavetz, applies the same principle to the Ara Pacis.
[3] Yavetz (1984), 13.

iconography, but it is not without its negative aspects. During the course of the poem, spring is also seen to be responsible for a number of destructive and violent events. Spring's control over the weather, and animal behaviour, witnessed in the last chapter, is not always seen to be exerted positively in the *Georgics*. Starting with spring storms in Book 1, this chapter examines the evidence for a destructive side to spring, and considers the extent to which this moderates the season's function as a symbol of creation in the *Georgics* world-view.

A. Flood Warnings

i) Spring storms

In line 115 of Book 1 Vergil issues a warning that the role of spring in the farmer's year may not be exclusively positive. In a discussion of irrigation, Vergil mentions flooding, which is considered to be a feature of the spring and autumn months, when stormy weather is most common.[4] These seasons are described by the phrase, '*incertis…mensibus*', an allusion to the transitional status of spring and autumn, between the extremes of temperature experienced in summer and winter.[5] The fluctuant, unpredictable weather of spring and autumn contributed to their uncertain status as independent seasons, witnessed at the beginning of the previous chapter; while summer and winter were recognised respectively by their almost uniformly hot or cold weather, spring and autumn were more difficult to define.

The spring season's potential for stormy weather is realised later in *Georgics* 1. At 311-34, Vergil offers a vivid description of a storm.

> *Quid tempestates autumni et sidera dicam,*
> *atque, ubi iam breviorque dies et mollior aestas,*
> *quae vigilanda viris? vel cum ruit imbriferum uer,*
> *spicea iam campis cum messis inhorruit et cum*
> *frumenta in viridi stipula lactentia turgent?* 315
> *saepe ego, cum flavis messorem induceret arvis*
> *agricola et fragili iam stringeret hordea culmo,*
> *omnia ventorum concurrere proelia vidi,*
> *quae gravidam late segetem ab radicibus imis*
> *sublimem expulsam eruerent: ita turbine nigro* 320

[4] See Mynors (1990), *ad* 1.115: 'the unpredictability of flood damage in spring and autumn is one of its unpleasant features'. Also Farrell (1991), 97: 'spring and fall appear as times of uncertain or even dangerous weather'.
[5] See Ross (1987), 120.

ferret hiems culmumque levem stipulasque volantis.
saepe etiam immensum caelo venit agmen aquarum
et foedam glomerant tempestatem imbribus atris
collectae ex alto nubes; ruit arduus aether
et pluvia ingenti sata laeta boumque labores 325
diluit; implentur fossae et cava flumina crescunt
cum sonitu fervetque fretis spirantibus aequor.
ipse pater media nimborum in nocte corusca
fulmina molitur dextra, quo maxima motu
terra tremit, fugere ferae et mortalia corda 330
per gentis humilis strauit pavor; ille flagranti
aut Atho aut Rhodopen aut alta Ceraunia telo
deicit; ingeminant Austri et densissimus imber;
nunc nemora ingenti vento, nunc litora plangunt.

In the *praeteritio* of 311-15, Vergil passes over stormy weather in autumn, summer, and ultimately spring: '*ruit imbriferum ver*'. The lengthy description of the storm which follows is not explicitly allotted a particular time of year, and there is a degree of controversy over this issue. Page notes a contrast between the '*fragili...culmo*' of line 317 and the '*viridi stipula*' of 315, suggesting that this marks a change from the unripe green stalks of early spring to the dried straw of midsummer.[6] Mynors and Thomas agree on an earlier time for this storm, during the barley harvest in early June, making it a spring phenomenon.[7] Page's summer date for this storm is the more compelling on the evidence of lines 316-7: the image of 'golden fields' ('*flavis...arvis*') is certainly more typical of summer than spring. Nonetheless, the description of the storm in the subsequent lines is otherwise deliberately generic: it is provided as an example of a storm which can strike at *any* time. From line 115 of Book 1, the reader has already been alerted to the idea that the spring and autumn seasons carry the greatest risk of catastrophic storms; in addition, it is *imbriferum ver* which is the last of the seasons to be mentioned before the set piece begins. In the midst of the storm the phrase '*ruit arduus aether*' (324) echoes '*ruit imbriferum ver*' (313), forging a firmer connection with the spring season. Each of these phrases looks ahead to the metaphorical intercourse between Aether and Terra in Book 2's *laus veris*,[8] but the violence of *ruit* has no equal there: these are not the life-giving rains of

[6] Page (1898) *ad* 1.317. So too Williams (1979), *ad* 1.311-15: '[Vergil] then passes to a summer storm at harvest time'.
[7] Mynors (1990), *ad* 1.317; Thomas (1988), *ad* 1.311-15: 'the storm which occupies the body of the passage also occurs in the spring, during the cutting of "winter wheat"'. The drying up of the river beds suggested by '*cava flumina*' in 326 could easily have started by early June in the Italian climate, so this proves no obstacle to a spring date for the storm.
[8] 2.325-7. *Aether* descends in '*fecundis imbribus*'.

the spring surge, but those of washing away.[9] Regardless, therefore, of the precise timing of the storm in 316-34, it is clear that spring is subject to the same kind of destructive weather as can strike at other times of year, possibly even to a greater extent than the other seasons.

The destructiveness of the storm is exemplified, as it uproots and sweeps away the harvest; the image of the stalks floating away ('*stipulasque volantis*'- 321) in a dark whirlwind ('*turbine nigro*'- 320) is particularly vivid. At 322, '*saepe etiam*' essentially introduces another example of a different storm, but its effect is equally devastating. While earlier in Book 1, the farmer had imposed his dominance over the land and nature in general in military terms,[10] nature now has the opportunity to launch a counter-offensive; it brings rain in an '*immensum...agmen*' (322), which washes away the works of men and their allied cattle alike ('*sata laeta boumque labores / diluit*' (325-6). The present tense verbs, such as *ruit* and *diluit*, express the terrible regularity of this sort of meteorological event.

The revelation of Jupiter's divine agency behind the storm at 328 ('*ipse pater*') makes matters all the more helpless for man, yet implies that there is method behind the madness which he is enduring. Mynors comments that this *pater* is Jupiter 'in less paternal aspect than he will wear in 353', [11] when he will introduce to man the signs by which he can predict the weather. On the contrary, this is simply the other side of Jupiter's paternal role: the *signa*, on the one hand, are an incentive for mankind to respect his divine authority, while, on the other, thunder and lightning are a warning of the consequences of failure to offer the proper respect. If this is the same *pater* as the one who introduced agricultural *labor* in the theodicy earlier in Book 1 (118-59), then he is motivated not by malice or vengeance, but the desire to harden and improve mankind.[12]

> *pater ipse colendi*
> *haud facilem esse viam voluit, primusque per artem*
> *movit agros, curis acuens mortalia corda*
> *nec torpere gravi passus sua regna veterno.*
> 1.121-4

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[9] 'Aether is a creature of many moods'- Putnam (1979), 51.
[10] 1.99: '*exercet*', '*imperat*'. Also, in 1.160, the farmer's tools are his '*arma*'. See below, pp. 172-5, for more on the analogy between agricultural and military activity.
[11] Mynors (1990), *ad* 328-9.
[12] See Gale (2000: 62) on the 'good' Jupiter. *Pace* Putnam (1979), 52: 'the value of Jupiter's theodicy as a whole is challenged by his third epiphany [i.e. his role in the "spring storm"]'.

The devastation which Jupiter causes strikes fear ('*pavor*'- 331) into the hearts of the Earth's inhabitants, driving them to flight (330-1). The phrase '*mortalia corda*' (330) recalls '*acuens mortalia corda*' from the theodicy (123); the implication is that it is through this fear that Jupiter intends to 'sharpen mortal hearts', and to prevent mankind from slipping into idleness. Even in causing destruction this *pater* retains his Stoic, providential aspect.[13]

ii) One great storm

The emphasis placed upon Jupiter's role in bringing storms and their resultant floods recalls Vergil's brief reference to the myth of Deucalion and Pyrrha, earlier in Book 1 (61-3).

> *continuo has leges aeternaque foedera certis*
> *imposuit natura locis, quo tempore primum*
> *Deucalion vacuum lapides iactavit in orbem,*
> *unde homines nati, durum genus.*

Deucalion and his wife, Pyrrha, witnessed the devastating impact which Jupiter can have in his role as storm-bringer, since they were left to repopulate the Earth after the Great Flood, an almighty act of washing-away.[14] When Zeus floods the earth, either to destroy the Bronze Age, enraged by its crimes,[15] or simply because of man's wickedness,[16] Deucalion and Pyrrha survive by floating in the ark[17] which Deucalion has built. When the flood waters recede, a distraught Deucalion consults the oracle of Themis, who tells him that, in order to restore the human race, he and Pyrrha must throw 'the bones of their mother' over their shoulders.[18] Deucalion correctly interprets this phrase as meaning 'stones', their 'mother' being the Earth. Those stones which Deucalion throws over his shoulder become men, and those thrown by Pyrrha become

[13] See Morgan (1999: 106-7) on destruction and providence in Stoic cosmology.
[14] For the myth of Deucalion and Pyrrha, see: Pind. *Ol.* 9.41-64; Apollod. 1.7.2; Ov. *Met.* 1.318-415. Nappa (2005), 34: 'the allusion to Deucalion and his part in the origin of the (current) human race...will suggest to the audience the flood that Jupiter sent to destroy a wicked and corrupt first human race'.
[15] Apollod. 1.7.2. The earliest extant account, Pindar's ninth *Olympian*, does not give a reason for the flood.
[16] Ov. *Met.* 1.253-312.
[17] The meaning of the Greek word, λάρναξ, is apparently uncertain in context.
[18] Ov. *Met.* 1.351-415.

women.[19] At this point in the *Georgics*, Vergil has just mentioned the different products of certain parts of the world, and is here elaborating upon the origins of the principle of regional variation in agricultural productivity. The connection of the rules ('*leges aeternaque foedera*')[20] of regional variation with the myth of Deucalion traces them back to the distant past: 'these rules are coexistent with the human race as we know it, and dictated the colonization of the earth's surface'.[21] Vergil does not provide a complete explanation for regional variation, since he provides information only as to *when* it came into effect, and not *how* it did so. These lines do contain an *aetion*, but it is of man's hardiness instead: mankind became '*durum genus*' because it was created from stones, thrown over the shoulders of Deucalion and Pyrrha.[22]

The reference to the Deucalion myth necessarily evokes an image of a vengeful Zeus, whose motivations are punitive rather than constructive. In the theodicy of *labor*, and even in the storm scene of 311-34, the reader comes to experience the king of the gods in a more benevolent guise. Unlike Zeus, this Stoic Jupiter inflicts the suffering of storms and relentless toil upon mankind for its own good, in order to improve it. However, Joseph Farrell argues that Vergil forms a connection between the angry Zeus and the Jupiter of *Georgics* 1's theodicy of *labor* by alluding to Pindar's version of the Deucalion myth, not in his own treatment of that particular myth, but rather in the theodicy itself.[23] In the Ninth *Olympian*, Pindar says that, following the flood which left Deucalion and Pyrrha as the only surviving humans, the waters receded 'by the crafts of Zeus'- Ζηνὸς τέχναις (52); in *Georgics* 1.122-3, Vergil has Jupiter move the fields 'by craft': '*primusque per artem / movit agros*'. If, as such an intertextual connection would suggest, the king of the gods both floods the Earth and institutes *labor* by identical *means*, it could be construed, moreover, that he does so with identical *motive*, i.e. to improve mankind for its own benefit. Vergil's allusion to Pindar, coming after his earlier reference to the myth of Deucalion and Pyrrha, encourages the reader to approach the myth from a new, Stoic perspective. From this vantage point things look more promising: while the myth of Deucalion is an extreme example of the damage which Jupiter can inflict with the

[19] In Apollodorus' account (1.7.2.), Zeus simply sends Hermes to the couple and tells them to create a new race of humans by throwing stones over their shoulders.
[20] This phrase is generally regarded as an allusion to Lucretius' '*foedera naturai*' (1.586).
[21] Mynors (1990), *ad* 1.62.
[22] This *aetion* goes back as far, in extant literature, as Pindar's ninth *Olympian* (41-64). See Mynors (1990), *ad* 1.62.
[23] See Farrell (1991), 150.

storms and floods witnessed in 1.311-34, the reader is assured that, however catastrophic the storm may be, the intention behind it will be earnest. Deucalion and Pyrrha provide an appropriately didactic example, since their despair at the near-extinction of mankind does not prevent them from seeking and following advice which allows them to start their race anew. In this way their story is notably similar to that of Aristaeus, who suffers the collapse of his bee stock, and seeks advice in order to restore it.

iii) The political *tempestas*

In the previous chapter, spring was revealed as a symbol for beginnings. The implication, in Book 2's *laus veris*, that the world began in the springtime (2.336-45) is the clearest evocation of the season's power to start new life. As a reference to the origin of the current human race, this brief passage invites comparison with the Deucalion myth, which is an *aetion* of the same event.[24] In other ways also, the myth is associated with spring in the *Georgics*. Vergil's initial, explicit reference to Deucalion comes shortly after the opening to the poem's agricultural discourse, with its early spring setting ('*vere novo*'- 1.43). Appearing at this point, Deucalion is the first mythical character to be named in the poem proper (i.e. after the proem); this is appropriate for a figure so closely related to the idea of "beginning". However, the Deucalion myth represents an end as much as it does a beginning, since it encompasses the extinction of one human race, and the founding of another; this further connects it with spring, which, by its juxtaposition with winter, is symbolic of a beginning after a previous end. In addition, the manner of the 'end' in the Deucalion myth, brought about by storm and flood, also associates it with spring, a season infamous for its storms: the storm described at 1.311-34 is rather like a miniature version of the storm which wipes out the human race. The resultant thematic connection between storms, the Deucalion myth, and spring has repercussions for the symbolic function of the spring season within the *Georgics*: by associating flooding, and specifically the most catastrophic example of flooding that could be imagined, with spring, Vergil risks tainting the season's creative image.

[24] Nappa (2005: 92) makes this connection between the world's spring origins and the Deucalion myth.

The significance of this development is suggested by engagement between the storm at 1.311-34 and events at the end of Book 1, a relationship founded initially upon the depiction of the destructive behaviour of rivers. In each case, water is responsible for having a catastrophic effect upon the georgic existence. In the spring storm, rain washes away the crops and the work of the cattle, while rivers grow in size (1.324-7).[25] Later in Book 1, after Caesar's death, the river Po carries away stables and pack-animals alike in a vortex:

> *proluit insano contorquens vertice silvas*
> *fluviorum rex Eridanus camposque per omnis*
> *cum stabulis armenta tulit.*
> 1.481-3.

The verb '*diluit*' (1.326) is recalled in 481's '*proluit*', as the Po wreaks a now familiar havoc.[26] Further, the battle waged by opposing winds in the "spring storm" is described by the phrase '*omnia ventorum concurrere proelia vidi*' (1.318); the verb *concurrere* is only otherwise used in the *Georgics* at 1.489, in reference to the battle of Philippi:[27]

> *ergo inter sese paribus concurrere telis*
> *Romanas acies iterum videre Philippi*

This is the most explicit reference to the recent Roman civil wars in the whole of the *Georgics*. As in 318, the battle is given a witness: just as Vergil has seen the warring winds, so too has Philippi seen great forces in opposition, in this case, perversely, both forces were Roman ('*paribus...telis / Romanas acies*').

Joseph Farrell has suggested a further connection between the storm of 1.311-34, and the "storm" at the end of Book 1, based on their shared debt to a single Homeric model. The storm of 311-34 is described in terms evocative of a storm at *Iliad* 16.384-93, which appears as the Danaans rout their Trojan attackers.[28] The events at the end of Book 1, meanwhile, are also comparable to the Homeric scenario; in both cases, the events described are 'a cosmic reflection of disorder in human

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[25] See above for text.
[26] At 4.371-3, Vergil refers once again to the might of the river Po, which flows 'more violently than any other through rich farmland': '*Eridanus, quo non alius per pinguia culta...violentior effluit*'.
[27] From the clash of winds to 'man's own futile clashes'- Putnam (1979), 51.
[28] See Farrell (1991: 218-20) for the several similarities between these two passages.

affairs', and are also, in each case, 'characterized as a punishment for unjust ways':[29] Homer's Zeus is angered at man's use of violence to pass crooked decrees in the assembly, while at *Georgics* 1.501-2, the assassination of Julius Caesar and the subsequent civil wars are regarded as a punishment for Trojan wrongs:

> *satis iam pridem sanguine nostro*
> *Laomedonteae luimus periuria Troiae;*

One can add to this axis the storm which strikes the Earth in the Deucalion myth, since it too, in Apollodorus, is characterised as a punishment visited upon mankind by Zeus because of its transgressions.[30]

Assimilation between storms and periods of personal or political hardship, such as the civil wars, was extremely common in Latin literature. The word *tempestas*, which Vergil uses at 1.311 of the bad weather which he subsequently describes, was very often used in a figurative sense to refer to the "storms" of human life: wars, famines, catastrophes, or personal struggles with adversity.[31] In *Georgics* 3, Vergil describes the Noric plague as a *tempestas*:

> *hic quondam morbo caeli miseranda coorta est*
> *tempestas totoque autumni incanduit aestu*
> *et genus omne neci pecudum dedit, omne ferarum,*
> *corrupit lacus, infecit pabula tabo.*
> 3.478-81.

The plague is described not in aquatic terms,[32] like the flood, but rather as a great fire,[33] 'blazing with all the heat of autumn' ('*totoque autumni incanduit aestu*').[34] Both the plague and the Great Flood are "storms" of exceptional magnitude, which destroy life indiscriminately; they are both acts of sweeping away, necessitating a new

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[29] Farrell (1991), 220; also 225: 'the approach of storm is implicitly likened to the approach of war, the equivalent terms in the respective worlds of Aratus [Vergil's putative model in his "Weather Signs" in the second half of *Georgics* 1] and Homer'.

[30] Apollod. 1.7.2.

[31] Vergil uses the word in this sense in the *Aeneid*, for example at 7.223: '*quanta per Idaeos saevis effusa Mycenis / tempestas ierit campos*'. The figurative use of *tempestas* is employed several times by Cicero: *De Or.* 1.2; *Rep.* 2.11; *Att.* 10.4.5. It also appears in Sallust (*Cat*. 20.3), Livy (4.44.9), and in many authors during the imperial period, including Tacitus (*Ann.* 11.31), Seneca (*Controv.* 10.3.5), and Statius (*Theb.* 3.229).

[32] Although it does have a marked effect upon sea creatures, as the tide washes them up like shipwrecked souls upon the shores: 3.541-3. The verb '*proluit*' (543) is used of the sea, recalling its use of the Po at 1.481, and '*diluit*', of 1.326, which is likewised placed in enjambment at the beginning of the line.

[33] The plague is '*sacer ignis*' (3.566), and is consistently described in terms related to heat.

[34] The passage on storms in *Georgics* 1 was introduced by a reference to '*tempestates autumni*' (311). Autumn and spring were thought to be the worst times of year for storms: see note 4.

start.[35] The civil wars as a whole were regarded as a similarly cataclysmic event, whose outcome could have been equally terminal for Rome.[36] The wider impact of the Noric plague is expressed in very similar terms to those used to describe the effect of the civil wars at the end of Book 1: both are depicted as causing a failure of agriculture. When the ploughman in Book 3 loses one of his oxen to the plague, he is forced to abandon the plough, and leave his work unfinished.[37]

> *it tristis arator*
> *maerentem abiungens fraterna morte iuvencum,*
> *atque opere in medio defixa reliquit aratra.*
> 3.517-19.

Ultimately, the farmer will be left to scratch at the earth with mattocks and his fingernails.

> *ergo aegre rastris terram rimantur, et ipsis*
> *unguibus infodiunt fruges*
> 3.534-5.

A very similar fate befalls Italian agriculture during the civil wars, a time when the plough's role in society is equally diminished.

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[35] Morgan (1999) highlights the role of Stoic cosmology, which involved the cyclical descent towards ἐκπύρωσις –total dissolution and reformation by fire, in the latter half of *Georgics* 4 (see especially 1999: 85-7). This process illustrates the interdependence of destructive and constructive violence, which serves to 'place a positive gloss on the violent chaos which accompanied the establishment of the new regime' (87) with a view to recasting the civil wars 'as a destruction which is the necessary pre-requisite of the restoration of order' (107). The influence of Morgan's political interpretation of the *Georgics* over some of the content of this chapter is self-evident. The role of spring, and of "creative destruction" in general in the poem as a whole can act as a complement to this aspect of Morgan's work, which focuses almost exclusively upon the second half of *Georgics* 4. While Morgan attributes a consistently Stoic aspect to the Aristaeus epyllion, Gale (2000: 112) argues for a more complex play of conflicting beliefs in the *Georgics*, which 'eschews...both Lucretian Epicureanism and Aratean Stoicism, and puts nothing definite in their place'.

[36] Thomas (1988), *ad* 1.311-50: 'the storm came without warning and is as devastating as its political counterpart at the end of the book- the civil strife which tears Rome apart'. Also, Nappa (2005), 61: 'Caesar's murder breached the *pax deorum* and led to the worst of Rome's human storms, civil war'. Miles (1980: 223-4) argues that the Noric Plague is a reinterpretation of the causes of civil war as it was depicted at the end of Book 1. There it is a punishment for human error- the murder of Julius Caesar, while here disaster is simply a natural phenomenon: 'civil disorder, like the plague, is inevitable and inescapable; its destructiveness is beyond human power to check or ameliorate' (224).

[37] The absence of suitable cattle also leads to an inability to perform religious rites properly, such as those in Juno's honour, described at 3.531-3. Harrison (1979) argues that the impiety of the people of Noricum is the cause of their misfortune, but the implication of '*tempore non alio*' (531) is surely that it is the plague itself which brings about their failure to observe due ritual practice. See Gale (2000), 76; Mynors (1990), *ad* 3.331.

> *non ullus aratro*
> *dignus honos, squalent abductis arva colonis,*
> *et curvae rigidum falces conflantur in ensem.*
> 1.506-8.

The fields are left to descend into squalor by the farmers, whose absence is the result of a number of factors. The principal of these is that they have had to answer the call to arms, alluded to by the beating of scythes into swords in line 508, but it could be that they have already died in battle,[38] or that their land has been confiscated for the resettlement of civil war veterans.

In both the plague scene and the civil war chaos at the end of Book 1, Vergil presents an auditory aspect, giving the sense that the natural world is literally bewailing the current state of affairs. The murder of Caesar is signalled by the noise of dogs and birds (1.470), the din of clashing arms in the German sky (1.474), and 'speaking' cattle ('*pecudesque locutae*'- 1.478). During the plague, the air is filled with the bleating of flocks and the lowing of cattle, echoing around dry riverbeds:[39]

> *balatu pecorum et crebris mugitibus amnes*
> *arentesque sonant ripae collesque supini.*
> 3.554-5.

The same sense of audible turmoil is evident in the storm at 1.311-34. The passage as a whole makes extraordinary use of 's' sounds in particular, and is heavily alliterative and assonantal throughout. In lines 326-7, Vergil's efforts to evoke the sound of the storm and its effects are especially noticeable:

> *implentur fossae et cava flumina crescunt*
> *cum sonitu fervetque fretis spirantibus aequor.*

The direct reference to the great noise of the storm in 327's '*cum sonitu*' is borne out by the alliteration of 'f' and 's' in both lines.[40] As often, it is tempting to suggest onomatopoeia, but it is enough simply to note the remarkable acoustics of the passage, which reflect or imitate the din produced by the destructive storm.

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[38] Page (1898: *ad* 1.507) points out that '*squaleo*, *squalor*, *squalidus* are continually used of *mourning*, and so the fields are...represented as mourning for the husbandmen who have been carried off to the wars'.

[39] 'Tisiphone's oppression is first sensed in terms of sound. Instead of streams, banks, and hills happily echoing to a shepherd-poet's song, we have banks that are dry, hills that are *supini*, sloping and helpless, all resounding to the groaning of animals'- Putnam (1979), 231.

[40] Thomas (1988), *ad* 1.326-7

The analogy between the *tempestates* of storm, plague, and civil war can be extended to the *tempestas* which wipes out humankind in the Deucalion story. The myth of Deucalion and Pyrrha provides a fitting allegory for the civil war period, with a rather more hopeful outcome than the Noric plague, since it allows for the renovation of Roman affairs which Vergil foresees under Octavian. Storm and flood, whose violence the *Georgics* does not shrink from cataloguing, represent the metaphorical, and literal, razing of Roman Italy, her people and lands, by the destructive activity of the civil wars.[41] Vergil makes no attempt to deny or diminish the truly harrowing nature of such events: too many witnesses could testify to the horrors of the civil wars. But there is a future beyond the flood; Deucalion and Pyrrha repopulate the Earth with the aid of more favourable divine treatment, and mankind is able to start again. The Deucalion myth is particularly relevant to the period of history during which the *Georgics* was written, since it entails the near total destruction of a previously existing civilisation, which had been deemed unsatisfactory by Zeus-Jupiter. Any fresh start for the *Georgics*' Roman audience would be from the ashes of the Republic, an era which had decayed as much as the doomed Bronze Age. The Bronze Age was not completely annihilated, since Deucalion and Pyrrha were allowed to survive it, and entrusted with the responsibility for starting a new race of humans. In the mortal figures of Deucalion and Pyrrha, it is possible to see the Roman people themselves, survivors of the civil wars, who are invited to rebuild their fortunes from the remnants of the Republic.[42]

iv) *Caesar Tonans*

The agent of the storms described at 1.311-34 is openly indicated as Jupiter, in, I have argued, a Stoic guise. The storm which causes the Great Flood in the Deucalion myth is of the same author, although the Greek tradition dictated that this Zeus was no Stoic, but a vengeful god who sought only to punish mankind.[43] Although he is not mentioned in the context of the Noric plague, Jupiter is also implicitly responsible for that particular *tempestas*, not only because he effects the

[41] Horace, in *Odes* 1.2, assimilates the civil war period to the Flood of '*saeculum Pyrrhae*' (6).
[42] In 18BCE, Augustan marriage legislation would make official the exhortation to repopulate the Roman world. This is celebrated by Horace in his *Carmen Saeculare* (20).
[43] Although the earliest extant account of the Deucalion myth- Pindar's ninth *Olympian*- does not give a reason for the flood, Apollodorus (1.7.2) has it that Zeus wished simply to destroy the Bronze Age because of its wrongs: a straightforward case of crime and punishment, with no implied rehabilitation.

fulfilment of the Fates, but because the fury Tisiphone, identified at 3.552, is under his overall control.[44] In the *Aeneid*, the Furies, or *Dirae*, are presented as attendant upon Jupiter's throne: '*hae Iovis ad solium saevique in limine regis / apparent acuuntque metum mortalibus aegris*';[45] at 12.853-4, Jupiter sends one of the *Dirae* to scare Juturna away from her brother Turnus' side. The phrase '*acuuntque metum mortalibus aegris*' is reminiscent of Jupiter's purpose in instituting *labor* at *Georgics* 1.123: '*acuens mortalia corda*'; Jupiter is always keen to 'sharpen' man's wits, whether by his own direct actions, or with the help of the *Dirae*. The appearance of Tisiphone in the Noric plague scene is, therefore, consistent with Jupiter's usual *modus operandi*.

In the proem to Book 1, Vergil muses on the potential destinations for the divine Octavian; although the implication here is that his deification is a future event, Vergil asks him to start to perform one of his divine duties early, and to receive prayers:

> *da facilem cursum atque audacibus adnue coeptis,*
> *ignarosque viae mecum miseratus agrestis*
> *ingredere et votis iam nunc adsuesce vocari.*
> 1.40-2.

Only gods should receive prayers, and the assenting nod which Vergil asks of Octavian (*adnue*) is an action usually performed by a god. It is from the verb to nod, *nuo* or *adnuo*, that *numen*, the word for "divine power" is derived according to Varro (*Ling.* 7.85), since the nod is an expression of divine control over human affairs.[46] More importantly, the act of nodding is something usually associated with Jupiter, king of the gods, alone. In the *Aeneid*, the verb *adnuo* is used three times in relation to Jupiter (1.250, 9.106, 10.115); the tremendous power of the Jovian nod over Earth and heavens is expressed at 9.106 (repeated at 10.115): '*adnuit et totum nutu tremefecit*

[44] *Pace* Putnam (1979), 229: 'Virgil does not say here who releases Tisiphone from the underworld'.
[45] *Aen.* 12.849-50.
[46] The nod is 'the traditional sign of divine assent'- Harrison (1991), *ad* 31.

Olympum'.[47] This image looks back directly to Zeus' nod in Homer's *Iliad*, whose consequences are equally tremendous:[48]

> ἦ καὶ κυανέῃσιν ἐπ' ὀφρύσι νεῦσε Κρονίων:
> ἀμβρόσιαι δ' ἄρα χαῖται ἐπερρώσαντο ἄνακτος
> κρατὸς ἀπ' ἀθανάτοιο: μέγαν δ' ἐλέλιξεν Ὄλυμπον.
> *Iliad*, 1.528-30.
> 'The son of Kronos spoke, and bowed his dark brow in assent, and the ambrosial locks waved from the king's immortal head; and he made great Olympus quake'. (Trans. Murray)

In *Aeneid* 9.625, Ascanius makes an appeal to Jupiter which is verbally identical to that made to Octavian at *Georgics* 1.40: '*Iuppiter omnipotens,* ***audacibus adnue coeptis***'. Vergil's adherence in the *Aeneid* to the poetic convention that only the king of the gods can provide an assenting nod thus draws attention retrospectively to his departure from this convention in *Georgics* 1.40, highlighting the fact that Octavian is *not* Jupiter, or at least *not yet*.[49]

At the end of the *Georgics*, in the *sphragis*, Vergil alludes to the current situation of Octavian:

> *Caesar dum magnus ad altum*
> *fulminat Euphraten bello victorque volentis*
> *per populos dat iura viamque adfectat Olympo.*
> 4.560-2.

Octavian is not yet a god, since he is still 'making his way to Olympus', but it is suggested that he has heeded Vergil's request to start his divine activity, since he is already making storms of his own (*fulminat*). To produce thunder and lightning is to emulate Jupiter,[50] with all the connotations of Roman literary *aemulatio*: to emulate Jupiter is, in effect, to attempt to supersede him.[51] Octavian is not simply copying

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[47] In this particular line, Vergil's word order suggests an intertextual connection with Catullus 64.204: '*annuit invicto caelestum numine rector*' (see Hardie, 1994: *ad* 106). Elsewhere, Vergil's use of the verb *abnuo*- to nod in prohibition- suggests an Ennian influence: '*abnueram*' in *Aeneid* 10.8 points in the direction of *Annales* 262 (Skutsch), '*abnueo certare*' (see Harrison, 1991: *ad* 8).

[48] See Hardie (1994: *ad* 104-6) on the 'less fully realized anthropomorphism' of Vergil's Zeus/Jupiter compared with his Homeric model.

[49] Vergil's appeal in *Georgics* 1.40 does not necessarily imply, however, that Octavian is truly capable of providing him with the assenting nod.

[50] Thomas (1988: *ad* 4.560-1) points out that 'the verb *fulmino* occurs here for the first time with a personal subject other than Jupiter'.

[51] See Chapter One, pp. 70-1, for a discussion of Octavian's emulation of Jupiter as an example of hubris. Also, Nappa (2005), 217; Thomas (1988), *ad* 4.560-1.

Jupiter, he is *being* Jupiter, and in his specific role as controller of the weather.[52] Where Jupiter appears in this role in the *Georgics*, it is thus possible to see him as an avatar for Octavian.[53]

The prominent role which Jupiter takes in causing the various destructive *tempestates* in the *Georgics* implies a similar function for the "new" Jupiter, Octavian. The analogy between destructive storms, and the metaphorical *tempestas* of civil war, serves to extend Octavian's sphere of influence from the meteorological to the historical: far from being conveniently ignored, Octavian's involvement in causing the civil wars is acknowledged, and even proclaimed. The appearance of the Stoic Jupiter in the theodicy of *labor* section in Book 1 gave the king of the gods a more providential aspect; this could serve to gloss over Octavian's motives in taking part in the civil wars by implying an element of foresight, suggesting that he knew that what he was doing would be for the benefit of Rome in the long term. In the first chapter of this thesis it was suggested that Octavian's depiction as a *iuvenis*, with its inherent connotations of rash heedlessness, could be seen as an attempt to diminish his responsibility for the civil wars, his *iuvenalia*. The contrasting implication that he had clear motives in waging these wars, and that they were in fact positive ones, would provide a note of dissonance with the image of Octavian as short-sighted *iuvenis*. This dissonance does not rule out either possibility; each provides a perspective for thinking about Octavian's relationship with the civil wars.[54] Crucially, the motivation behind the civil wars is of relatively little import, since they have already taken place; it is a peripheral issue in the *Georgics*' allegorical discourse. It matters not so much why Octavian brought about the civil wars, but that he did so. Jupiter has absolute control over *tempestates*, which means that he dictates not only when they arrive, but also when they are dispersed. By giving Octavian the questionable gift of responsibility for the civil wars, the *Georgics* empowers him to bring about their end, and to see to it that they do not happen again. The myth of Deucalion and Pyrrha

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[52] Nadeau (2008) highlights Horace's frequent assimilation of Augustus to Jupiter in his *Odes*. Augustus is also seen often in the *Odes* as '*cosmocrator*', controlling the weather. As Nadeau points out, this was a practice which started with the assimilation of Hellenistic kings to the figure of Zeus (460). For a summary of Horace's usage with regard to Augustus, see (2008) 458-61.

[53] This is only one filter to place over the figure of Jupiter in the poem.

[54] Nappa (2005: 3) argues that the *Georgics* presents a number of perspectives upon Octavian: 'Vergil can have his poem project both positive and negative images of Octavian because he is speaking to him directly' (217). Octavian is an addressee in the *Georgics*, but not, as Nappa has it, *the* addressee; where a potentially negative opinion of him is presented in the poem, it is always moderated by a positive one, as is the case in Vergil's treatment of Octavian's involvement in the civil wars. *Pace* Gale (2000), 270.

gives an indication of the kind of lifeline which the Romans can expect from their god after the civil wars, as they are given the opportunity to start their race again from the barebones.[55]

B. *Amor*

In the previous chapter, spring was credited with a monopoly over animal reproduction, in part due to the *Amor* passage in Book 3 (242-83), where the urge to procreate is described as an explicitly spring phenomenon.[56] In this passage, emphasis is placed not upon the function of *amor* in reproduction, but its capacity to cause violence and destruction by the negative effect it has upon the animal temperament.

i) A catalogue of ills

Omne adeo genus in terris hominumque ferarumque
et genus aequoreum, pecudes pictaeque volucres,
in furias ignemque ruunt: amor omnibus idem.
tempore non alio catulorum oblita leaena
saevior erravit campis, nec funera vulgo
tam multa informes ursi stragemque dedere
per silvas; tum saevus aper, tum pessima tigris;
heu male tum Libyae solis erratur in agris.
nonne vides ut tota tremor pertemptet equorum
corpora, si tantum notas odor attulit auras?
ac neque eos iam frena virum neque verbera saeva,
non scopuli rupesque cavae atque obiecta retardant
flumina correptosque unda torquentia montis.
ipse ruit dentesque Sabellicus exacuit sus
et pede prosubigit terram, fricat arbore costas
atque hinc atque illinc umeros ad vulnera durat.
quid iuvenis, magnum cui versat in ossibus ignem
durus amor? nempe abruptis turbata procellis
nocte natat caeca serus freta, quem super ingens
porta tonat caeli, et scopulis inlisa reclamant
aequora; nec miseri possunt revocare parentes,
nec moritura super crudeli funere virgo.
quid lynces Bacchi variae et genus acre luporum
atque canum? quid quae imbelles dant proelia cervi?

[55] In *Odes* 1.2, Horace is explicit about Jupiter's role in causing the Flood ('*misit Pater*'- 2), but treats Octavian as a separate figure, Rome's potential saviour.
[56] 3.272. See pp. 96-8.

Vergil reveals the dangers of *amor* from the very beginning of his treatment, presenting it, in '*in furias ignemque ruunt*', as a fiery and destructive madness.[57] *Amor* is a madness whose impact is universal: not only does it strike every species ('*omne...genus*'), but each with equal ferocity: '*amor omnibus idem*'. The 22-line catalogue of animals affected by *amor* juxtaposes their otherwise varied temperaments with the uniform symptoms which they display in their afflicted state. This great levelling-out leaves the animal kingdom in a condition opposite to that of the Golden Age: rather than abolishing the predator-prey dynamic,[58] *amor* unites animals in a common antagonism. The most vicious animals, like the lioness (245), are now more dangerous than ever ('*saevior*'), and even the meekest of animals, like stags (265), become unusually violent ('*dant proelia*'). The madness brought about by *amor* consists in its singularity of purpose: it is an urge which causes its victims to neglect all other natural impulses. For example, in the case of the lioness, her ferocity is usually motivated by her maternal instinct to feed and protect her cubs, but in the grip of *amor* she is so distracted as to forget them entirely ('*catulorum oblita*'). Equally, with regard to the other carnivorous creatures mentioned, such as the bear and the tiger, there is no suggestion that their violence is connected in any way with their desire to feed.

In the midst of the descriptions of animal behaviour, there appears man, who is no more immune to the effects of *amor* than any other creature, and, therefore, is indiscriminately added to the pile without any explicit intimation of his "humanity".[59] The story at 258-63 is an account of the legend of Leander and Hero, but, in order to stress the universal affliction of *amor*, Vergil uses the generic '*iuvenis*', and '*virgo*'.[60] The madness of human *amor* is less manifestly violent than that of other animals, but it is just as heedless, and just as destructive, causing the deaths of both *iuvenis* and *virgo*.

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[57] This phrase is 'a powerful mingling of the two ideas of *amor* as a madness and a fire': Thomas (1988), *ad* 3.244.
[58] '*nec magnos metuent armenta leones*'- *Eclogue* 4.22.
[59] Otis (1964), 175: 'the animal is partially humanized and the human is partially animalized'; the result of this normalising is that the two become indistinguishable from one another.
[60] See Chapter One, pp. 51-2, for a fuller discussion of Vergil's use of the story of Leander and Hero.

ii) Mares: *furor insignis*

The passage from 266-83 is largely concerned with *hippomanes*, "horse-madness", which apparently drives mares wild in the mating season. It is in this section, at line 272, that Vergil first makes explicit the fact that *amor* belongs to the spring season. Before describing the miraculous impregnation of horses by the Zephyr, Vergil provides an example as evidence of the peculiar fury ('*furor...insignis*') of mares when they are ready to breed, which sets them apart from other animals.[61]

> *scilicet ante omnis furor est insignis equarum,*
> *et mentem Venus ipsa dedit, quo tempore Glauci*
> *Potniades malis membra absumpsere quadrigae.*
> *illas ducit amor trans Gargara transque sonantem*
> *Ascanium; superant montis et flumina tranant.*
> 3.266-70.

Vergil evokes the story of the charioteer Glaucus, who was torn limb-from-limb by his horses- a penalty exacted by a slighted Venus: '*mentem Venus ipsa dedit*'. There are numerous versions of the events which lead to Glaucus being punished in this way,[62] but Vergil is not concerned with the details of his crime. It is Vergil's contention that the fate of Glaucus is merely one example of a commonly occurring phenomenon: the violent behaviour of amorous mares. It is not in his interest to offer any specifics because he wants this scenario to appear as generic as those involving other animals in 242-65; the addition of the name of Glaucus simply verifies Vergil's account. The sexual urge is the cause of the mares' violence, just as it was for all other animals ('*amor omnibus idem*'- 244), so it is not necessary for Glaucus to be seen to make any personal contribution to his demise. *Venus* plays two parts here: the evocation of the myth of Glaucus casts her as an anthropomorphic deity, but in the context of an attack on *amor* it is her metonymic role as sexual desire which stands out.[63]

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[61] Mynors (1990), *ad* 3.266: 'mares when in season were so notorious in Antiquity for their ferocity that they deserve to be presented as a separate animal from the stallion'.
[62] See Mynors (1990), *ad* 3.267-8.
[63] Venus appears here as a more negative influence than she does generally in the *Georgics*, but she is nonetheless representative of spring sex: Ross (1987), 167: 'not only is all this the work of Venus herself, but it is also the result of spring'. See Chapter Two, especially pp. 90-4, for more on Venus.

iii) One for all: *Amor* and the *iuvenis*

Vergil's attack on *amor* has a precise model in Lucretius, a fact which provides some insight into its peculiar function within the *Georgics*. In Book 4 of his *De Rerum Natura*, Lucretius is similarly critical of *amor*- passionate love- which can prevent a man from achieving a state of pure Epicurean calm.[64] Lucretius, unlike Vergil, is concerned strictly with *amor* among humans, and allows for sex- *Venus*- to be part of a healthy life, as long as it comes without emotional attachment, with prostitutes for example. Vergil does not differentiate between different forms of *amor* as Lucretius does; for him *amor* and *Venus* are synonymous, as is illustrated by the presence of *Venus* in the story of Glaucus' mares, which is simply another example of the havoc caused by *amor*. Vergil's approach to *amor* is "one size fits all", whether for animals or humans: *amor omnibus idem*. This *amor* is all-encompassing, since it can manifest itself either in the romantic love of Leander and Hero, akin to the passionate love that troubles Lucretius, or equally the indiscriminate desire of the lioness, wandering the plains in search of *Venus*.

Vergil pointedly fails to mention that this *amor* is also the spur behind procreation- something inherently positive from the poem's georgic standpoint. This aspect of his depiction of *amor* invites reflection upon the manner in which young men, *iuvenes*, are portrayed within the *Georgics*. Young men, such as Aristaeus, Leander, and Orpheus, are consistently depicted as being governed in their actions by *amor*.[65] Consequently, they are often seen to be destructive, violent creatures, much like the animals at this point in Book 3. However, it is the young man's passion and vigour which can also make him uniquely effective.[66] *Amor* in animals can be positively channelled into procreation, and it can also be of benefit to the *iuvenis*, driving Orpheus' initially successful foray into the Underworld, Leander's multiple crossings of the Hellespont, and Aristaeus' creation of new bees.[67] There is no fundamental difference between the urges behind the violent behaviour in the *amor* passage, and procreation or juvenile success: they are, after all, *amor idem*. It is the effective application of external control which is the deciding factor in determining

[64] Lucr. 4.1058ff.
[65] See Chapter One, especially pp. 72-4.
[66] 'Humans also have that elemental vitality that is the source of both creativity and destruction in animals'- Miles (1980), 197.
[67] Nappa (2005), 138: *amor* can be a drive towards any goal, not just sex.

whether this urge is manifested creatively or destructively. The presence of a passionate nature is not itself undesirable in animals, as Vergil indicates by his advice that horse-trainers should choose high-spirited horses ('*calidumque animis*'- 3.119), but if the horse is poorly broken, it will resist the reins and fail to respond to the whip (3.206-8). The similar rejection of the reins by horses in the grip of *amor* (250-4) is a failure of training.[68] Animals when in heat must have their efforts directed into reproduction, or else they will go wild.[69] In the same way, young men, slaves to the same urges, must be trained to use their powers positively. Aristaeus, before receiving the guidance of Cyrene, started a chain-reaction of destructive events in his lustful pursuit of Eurydice, but, following Cyrene's advice, harnessed his energy creatively in gaining new bees. Meanwhile, Orpheus' rejection of Proserpina's instructions results in his utter failure.

The *iuvenis* is emblematic of *amor*, since he displays it in its purest form, and his every action is governed by it. The tendency of the *iuvenis* towards destructive behaviour, along with his powerful creative potential, is the result of his total subjection to this elemental urge. *Amor* is itself a defining symbol of the spring season: it explicitly belongs to the spring ('*tempore non alio*'), and implicitly drives the season's reproductive, and more generally creative surge. This is why spring comes to be associated not simply with creative activity, but also with the violence of storm, flood, and animal fury; spring, like *amor*, *because of amor*, is a double-edged sword. *Ver*, *Iuvenis*, and *Amor* are placed in apposition to each other by Vergil: they all represent the inextricable connection between creative and destructive forces, due to their shared origin.[70]

iv) *Amor* and civil war

The violence described as a product of *amor* at 3.242-83 takes up a vital position within the *Georgics*' metaphorical and allegorical discourse, specifically on the subject of the civil wars. This connection is achieved in part indirectly, by comparison between the cause and effect of animal violence, and of the Noric Plague

[68] Miles (1980), 190.
[69] Miles (1980), 196: 'controlled and ordered, the forces of nature are beneficent. Uncontrolled, they are destructive in their blindness'. On this idea of 'blindness', see *Georgics* 3.209-10, where the destructive sexual urge is referred to as *amor caecus*.
[70] On the basic connection between creation and destruction in the *Georgics*, see: Gale (2000), 269; Miles (1980), 254; Morgan (1999), 205-7.

at the end of Book 3.[71] At a basic level, a connection is established between plague and *amor* by their visible impact upon the animal kingdom, and its every species.[72] Precise verbal echoes confirm the link between the two sources of animal chaos. The plague is '*sacer ignis*' (3.566), and is repeatedly described in terms evocative of heat and flame;[73] *amor* too is described as '*ignem*', at 3.244. The plague causes madness in animals, and particularly horses: '*furiisque refecti / ardebant*' (3.511-12), just as animals under the influence of *amor* '*in furias...ruunt*' (3.244).[74] Finally, the indication that the failure to observe proper ritual practice during the plague comes at '*tempore non alio*' (3.531), looks directly back to the use of the same phrase at 3.245.[75] The pervasive violent behaviour aroused in animals by *amor* is analogous to the destruction of the same species by the Noric plague. The analogy between the Noric plague and the carnage which followed the assassination of Julius Caesar, described at the end of Book 1, suggested that the plague could be interpreted as a figurative representation of the civil wars;[76] *amor*, meanwhile, provides another perspective on the madness of civil discord. While the origins of the civil wars are not truly hinted at in the Noric plague, the *amor* passage provides evidence of the primal urges that motivate civil strife. Octavian, as a *iuvenis*, has his actions dictated by *amor*, and is, as a result, predisposed towards destructive behaviour, but the selfsame urge also drives creation. There is no indication that the negative effects of either plague or *amor* are in any way avoidable;[77] they occur naturally and cannot be cured, hence the failure of medicine to have any impact upon the plague (3.548-50). The *amor* passage is similarly characterised by helpless observation; the evocation of the Glaucus myth serves as a cautionary tale, ostensibly warning against contact with mares in heat.

It is not only through its identification with the Noric plague scene that *amor* comes to be associated with the civil wars. Just as the discussion of spring flooding in

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[71] 'We need not dwell on the fact that this passage [the Noric plague] and the preceding passage on love are parallel to the "storm" of civil war and the great storm sequences in the first book'- Ross (1987), 181.
[72] '*genus omne neci pecudum dedit, omne ferarum*' (3.480) recalls '*omne adeo genus in terris hominumque ferarumque*' (3.242).
[73] '*incanduit*' (3.479), '*ignea...sitis*' (3.482-3), '*ardentes*' (3.564).
[74] The plague also has an opposite, but equally perverse effect on animals. While *amor* makes them more violent, the plague can make them alarmingly placid, destroying the predator/prey relationship, as sheep wander among wolves without harassment (3.537-40).
[75] Thomas (1988), *ad* 3.244-5.
[76] See pp. 139-42.
[77] Gale (2000), 179: 'the *labores* of disease and sexual attraction are ultimately inescapable'.

Book 1 is prefaced by a reference to Deucalion, the *amor* section is preceded by a hint of its significance as political allegory. At 3.215-41, Vergil describes at length a battle between two bulls in the mating season over an attractive cow ('*formosa iuvenca*'- 3.219). The passage is an extended example of the effects of *amor caecus* upon one particular species, and introduces the subject of *amor* ahead of its more universal treatment in 242-83.[78] Though the focus is ostensibly upon cattle alone, it is implied early on in the passage that the bulls' behaviour is indicative of the response of any mammal to *amor caecus*, especially a human being. The object of the bulls' affection is at one point referred to as '*femina*' (3.216): the word can be used of a female of any species, but it appears a deliberately generic choice here, in order to give the account of the conflict a gnomic quality.[79] The only recourse for the bulls to settle the issue is to join battle ('*proelia miscent*'- 3.220), with the inevitable result being defeat for one of them. After the fight is over, the warriors can no longer share a stable, so the defeated becomes an exile:

> *nec mos bellantis una stabulare, sed alter*
> *victus abit longeque ignotis exsulat oris,* 225
> *multa gemens ignominiam plagasque superbi*
> *victoris, tum quos amisit inultus amores,*
> *et stabula aspectans regnis excessit avitis.*

The mention of exile ('*exsulat*') and realms ('*regnis*') in particular adds a human, specifically political colour to the affair. The professed purpose of the set piece of the bulls is to explain why cowherds send their bulls as far away as possible from the cows in the mating season, a practice Vergil refers to as *relegatio* ('*relegant*'- 3.212): a technical term for the expulsion of a citizen from Rome for political reasons.[80] The conflict between the two bulls is in this way presented as a fight between Roman citizens which, since it is resolved on the battlefield in *proelia*, is tantamount to civil war. In the figure of the defeated bull, who leaves behind his ancestral realms and ends up 'far away, on unknown shores', there is a hint in the direction of Antony, Octavian's defeated foe at the battle of Actium, but precise allegorising is

[78] The bulls are affected by '*Venerem et caeci stimulos...amoris*' (3.210).
[79] Putnam (1979), 191-2: 'for the first time in Latin letters the word *femina* is applied to a female animal / without an expressed substantive, as if we were to see the heifer linguistically in human terms'.
[80] Miles (1980), 187. Ovid was a victim of *relegatio*.

unnecessary here: the bulls can represent any civil war generals.[81] In this instance, the defeated bull exacts violent revenge upon his proud conqueror (3.229-41), curtailing any notion of complete correspondence with the conflict between Octavian and Antony. The failure of the bulls' initial battle to provide a conclusive result in their conflict is, however, highly evocative of the protracted trading of blows which took place during the Roman civil wars.

The retaliation of the defeated bull is once again rendered in Roman military terms, as he 'moves his standards' towards his enemy ('*signa movet*'- 236). A simile at 237-41 describes his attack as a giant wave crashing against a cliff. As a depiction of aquatic violence, the simile loosely recalls the overflowing of the river Po after the murder of Caesar (1.481-3), which also had a destructive effect on the *stabula*, and both portended and reflected the coming civil war. The simile is particularly applicable to a civil war context because it evokes the difficulty of achieving a conclusive result in a conflict between two formidable, equally-armed opponents, irresistible force and immovable object. In *Aeneid* 7 (528), Vergil repeats the first line of this simile in describing the clash of native Italians and Trojans after Ascanius kills Silvia's stag, a battle equivalent to civil war.[82]

In *Georgics* 4, a parallel scenario to the battle of bulls comes at 67-102, where Vergil describes a war between two bee factions, and their respective generals, which likewise takes place in spring.[83] Their quarrel is explicitly referred to as *discordia* (4.68), further strengthening the analogy between Romans and bees, as *parvos Quirites*, formed throughout Book 4; bees are equally vulnerable to civil strife. The analogy between the battle of the bees and Roman civil war is confirmed by the use of specifically Roman terminology in the description of both sides: for each there are *praetoria* (4.75) and *plebs* (4.95).[84] As with the bulls, bee combat is described in

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[81] Nappa (2005), 136: 'there are obvious political resonances here, and it is tempting to view the passage as a full-scale allegory of the Roman civil wars with rival generals fighting for Italy'; since the defeated bull becomes an exile, 'by implication the victor gets not only the cow but also the kingdom' (135).

[82] Mynors (1990), *ad* 3.237-41.
Two similes in *Aeneid* 12 (103-6; 715-22) depict Turnus and Aeneas as raging bulls, battling against one another. The reference at 12.715 to the mountains of Sila specifically recalls the battle of the bulls from *Georgics* 3, in which the setting was the same (*G.* 3.219); the reader of the *Aeneid* is reminded of the '*formosa iuvenca*' whose fate is to be decided by the fight between Aeneas' and Turnus' bulls, Lavinia. Although the different backgrounds of Turnus and Aeneas are emphasised ('*Tros Aeneas et Daunius heros*'- 12.723), the conflict between them is comparable to civil war, since the Roman race will ultimately be the shared legacy of Latins and Trojans.

[83] Farrell (1991), 240; Putnam (1979), 275.

[84] Powell (2008), 248.

militaristic terms worthy of human warfare, its sights and sounds rendered in keen detail.[85] The bees' preparations for war are reminiscent of the training of the initially defeated bull (3.229-34), but more directly recall the Sabine pig[86] in the *amor* passage: the bees sharpen their stings on their beaks, '*spiculaque exacuunt rostris*'- 4.74, just as the pig sharpens his tusks (or teeth), '*dentesque Sabellicus exacuit sus*' (3.255). Bees are absent from the treatment of *amor* in Book 3 because of their supposed immunity to sex,[87] but it is clear that they can be forced into violent conflict by a different kind of *amor*; bees, after all, are slaves to '*amor habendi*' (4.177).[88] It is this desire, not simply to 'possess', but rather to 'hold power' that drives bees and Romans alike to war. The reference to *rostris* in 74 is highly evocative from an allegorical perspective. It first calls to mind the speaker's platform, the Rostra, beside the Senate house in the Roman Forum; the sharpening of the bees' stings on their *rostris* is a metaphor for the deepening resentment engendered by the exchange of rhetorical barbs in the public Forum, which may similarly be followed by all-out warfare. In addition, the word naturally points to the *rostra* of warships, which had been pitted against each other many times in the recent civil wars in the name of Octavian, against Sextus Pompeius at Naulochus, and latterly against Antony at Actium. Octavian commemorated victory at Naulochus by setting up beside the Rostra a column decorated with ships beaks, *columna rostrata*; the column features prominently in his coinage of the period.[89] After Actium, Octavian established a new speaker's platform, decorated with *rostra* from Egyptian warships, in front of the temple of the Divine Julius, opposite the old platform in the Forum.[90]

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[85] Vergil's anthropomorphic bee battle is regarded as an inversion of a Homeric simile at *Iliad* 2.87-93, where the Achaeans' response to Nestor's encouragement to take up arms is described in terms of thronging bees. See Powell (2008), 231.

[86] Putnam (1979: 197) argues convincingly that '*Sabellicus...sus*' refers to a pig, rather than a boar. The boar has already been mentioned by this stage in the *amor* section ('*saevus aper*'- 3.248), and it is the savagery of the usually placid pig which interests Vergil here. See also, Mynors (1990), *ad* 3.255.

[87] See 4.197-202.

[88] See Putnam (1979), 258; cf. Perkell (1989), 129. The phrase '*amor habendi*' is used at *Aeneid* 8.327; along with '*belli rabies*', it was responsible for man's descent from the Golden Age into an era of baser metal, according to Evander.

[89] See Appendix I, Fig. 8. Also, Zanker (1988), 41-2. The column, described by Appian (5.130), was an imitation of the Column of Duilius, also situated by the Rostra, which commemorated a naval victory over the Carthaginians in 260BCE. Octavian was keen to assert his naval prowess, having been embarrassed frequently by Sextus Pompeius at sea.
Cf. *Aen.* 8.684. In the Actium scene on the shield of Aeneas, Agrippa is depicted wearing the naval crown decorated with golden ships' beaks ('*rostrata corona*'), awarded to him after his victory over Sextus Pompeius.

[90] Zanker (1988), 80-1.

The battle of bees can be put to an end by the scattering of a little dust by the beekeeper (4.86-7):

> *hi motus animorum atque haec certamina tanta*
> *pulveris exigui iactu compressa quiescent.*

Although the idea that the bee war can be ended by a handful of dust emphasises their 'slightness and insubstantiality',[91] this does not negate their function as a model, however imperfect, of (rather than for) the human race;[92] it is likely that Vergil saw this 'insubstantiality' as another trait shared by bees and men, whose troubles can equally be ended by the dust to which they are reduced in death.[93] The role of the beekeeper in relation to the bees is equivalent to that of Jupiter, who has the power to bring an end to human life: civil war has a habit of spurring him into taking this sort of action.[94]

After the battle is ended, the beekeeper examines the two factions and their leaders (4.88-102). The respective appearances of the two bee kings and their subjects are clearly reminiscent of Octavian and Antony, and their followers, at least as they appeared in Octavian's propaganda.[95] One king is golden and gleaming ('*elucent…et fulgore coruscant*'- 4.98), the other '*horridus*', dragging his bloated paunch ('*latamque trahens inglorius alvum*'- 4.94).[96] The subjects share their kings' physical features (4.95-9):

> *ut binae regum facies, ita corpora plebis:*
> *namque aliae turpes horrent, ceu pulvere ab alto*
> *cum venit et sicco terram spuit ore viator*
> *aridus; elucent aliae et fulgore coruscant*
> *ardentes auro et paribus lita corpora guttis.*

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[91] Nappa (2005), 167.
[92] *Pace* Miles (1980), 233.
[93] Thomas (1988), 162: 'the lines...suggest the frailty of bees (and ultimately the frailty of man is only different in degree), a theme which occupies V. through much of the book'. In *Carmen* 1.28.3-4, Horace's use of the phrase '*pulveris exigui*' in the context of a dirge for the deceased Archytas suggests that he saw a human parallel in the Vergilian lines: '*pulveris exigui prope litus parva Matinum / munera*'. cf. Hor. *Carm.* 4.7.16: '*pulvis et umbra sumus*'.
[94] Mynors (1990), *ad* 4.86-7: 'to transfer the dust from swarming to civil war may well have been the poet's own idea...recalling the association of dust with our own mortality'.
[95] See Nappa (2005), 170; Wilkinson (1969), 181.
[96] Antony was said to have put on more than a little weight during his time of luxurious indulgence in Egypt. Powell (2008: 247, 251) argues that the reference to the "good" king being '*insignis...ore*' (4.92) is an allusion to the famous good looks of Octavian: in *Eclogue* 1.62, Tityrus says that he will never forget the face of his saviour ('*illius...vultus*'- understood to be a reference to Octavian). Likewise, Horace, in *Odes* 4.5.5-8 (discussed in the previous chapter, p. 124), describes the 'shining' quality of the face of Octavian-Augustus ('*vultus...tuus*'- 6).

The horrid rabble who follow the "bad" king represent the rough, polyglot hordes who backed Antony at Actium, as they are depicted on the shield of Aeneas in *Aeneid* 8 (685-8). The simile of the thirsty traveller, spitting up sand, evokes the desert lands of Egypt and the Near East, which furnished Antony with these troops. The "good" bees gleam like their ruler, distinguished in their golden finery, a symbol of their morally upstanding nature.[97] In order to ensure that this better race survive to provide honey, the beekeeper is to put to death the "bad" king: '*dede neci*' (4.90). As a metaphor for the death of Antony this would appear uncharacteristically blunt for Vergil, but in the context of a civil war allegory with clear nods in the direction of Octavian and Antony, the implication is difficult to rule out.

v) A theodicy of *amor*

The battle of the bee kings enhances the figurative potential of its precursor in Book 3, the battle of the bulls. The *amor* passage in Book 3 articulates the connection between creative and destructive forces, and explains the behaviour of *iuvenes*, revelations which can be of benefit in interpreting the cause and effect of the civil wars. The set-piece battles of bulls and bees situate *amor* more directly within the contemporary political climate, illustrating its role in recent events.[98] While the intratextual connection between the *amor* passage and the Noric plague scene reflects the destructive impact of civil war upon the Earth's creatures, a further echo adds a more constructive dimension to *amor*. The phrase '*amor omnibus idem*' (3.244), an intimation of the universal effect of *amor*, recalls '*labor omnia vicit / improbus*' from the theodicy of *labor* in Book 1 (145-6); both phrases appear as aphorisms, expressing a general truth about human, or animal, existence. The connection between these two phrases allows for some of the connotations of the one to rub off on the other. Agricultural *labor* and *amor* each appear destructive and undesirable to some extent: one sees man acting violently against nature, the other sees the natural world turn inwardly violent.[99] In the theodicy of *labor* section, it is implied not only that the

[97] In *Aeneid* 8, Octavian's followers would be distinguished in gold on the shield of Aeneas.
[98] 'The boundless energy which is manifest in violent lust is the same as that which expresses itself in procreation...or in the spirit of the war-horse. Similarly, the civil wars manifest the very energies and ambitions which led to Roman greatness in the first place'- Miles (1975), 194.
[99] See '*Militia culturae*', pp. 172-5, for a discussion of the violence inherent to agriculture.

difficulty and unpleasantness of work is a product of Jupiter's design, but also that this design has been implemented for the ultimate benefit of mankind. *Amor*, for all its connotations of internal and civil strife, can also be seen as part of the providential scheme; it is what brings about human and animal reproduction, which is inherently beneficial. Its connection with the theodicy of *labor* reiterates this point, implying that even *amor caecus* was divinely ordained for a positive purpose. Both *amor* and *labor* contribute to the developing motif of destructive and constructive activity as inextricably connected, with its implications for the civil war, Octavian, and Rome.

vi) Spring and ambivalence

The animal violence of *amor* and the storms and floods of Book 1 are explicitly connected with the spring season in the *Georgics*. The existence of these destructive aspects forces the audience to reassess the meaning and validity of Book 2's *laus veris*, and spring's depiction at various stages in the poem as a predominantly creative, positive force. In "pessimistic" readings of the poem, such as those of Thomas and Ross, the dangers of spring are privileged over its benefits, which are regarded as 'unreal', or even 'lies'.[100] The use of such terms overstates the generic purity of the *Georgics* as a work of earnest agricultural didactic.[101] Elsewhere in the poem, Ross recognises traces of the idealised pastoral world of the *Eclogues*: 'we often feel that we are in a poetic Arcadia, not on a Lucanian ranch'.[102] Evidence of the pastoral in the *Georgics* is just one example of its tendency to resist classification within a specific genre. In this respect, the *Georgics* is at once similar to the *Eclogues*, but also their inversion: while, in the *Eclogues*, an alien world (the so-called 'real' world) of confiscations and hardship often intrudes into the pastoral idyll,[103] in the *Georgics*, the pastoral idyll impinges upon the more ambivalent world expected of agricultural didactic. The *laus veris*, along with the *laudes Italiae* and the passage in

[100] Ross (1987), 165: (On *amor*) 'Virgil's emphasis on spring here as the time for natural savagery seems to be another pointed contradiction of the unreal praise of spring'. To Ross, the *laus veris* is a 'great lie' (136). See also (1987), 92: 'we know better than to accept the seductive allure of season or deity'. The pervasive use of vernal imagery on the Ara Pacis suggests that its viewers did not 'know better'.

[101] 'So much of what is most memorable in the *Georgics* is at least untypical of reality'- Powell (2008), 255. See Chapter Two, pp. 109-11, on Vergil deliberately distancing his georgic world from the 'real' world.

[102] Ross (1987), 184.

[103] 'Virgil politicises pastoral space by admitting elements of the wider world, including the world of high politics, into his green one'- Martindale (1997), 109.

praise of country life from the end of Book 2 are the points at which the pastoral world-view of the *Eclogues* imposes itself most forcefully upon the *Georgics*. Their conception of the world is as indispensable to any notion of what constitutes 'reality' *within the poem* as those passages which would appear more consistent with the agricultural didactic of Cato, for example. In view of this, the benefits of spring as they appear in the *Georgics* cannot simply be discarded in favour of those negative aspects which correspond more closely with what one might expect to find in an agricultural handbook. It may be that what is 'real' within the *Georgics* does on occasion appear to correspond with what is 'real' in the world outside the poem,[104] but it does violence to the poem to disregard as 'lies' all that does not meet this criterion. The only 'reality' significant to the search for 'truth' in the *Georgics* is that which it constructs for itself; that Vergil's georgic reality is at times inconsistent even internally is perhaps what makes this poem his most complicated.[105] Regardless of their literal truth, the positive and negative aspects attributed to spring in the *Georgics* are equally valid in assessing the function of the season within the poem. The counterpoints to spring's benefits serve to modify the audience's reception of the season, but do not negate the positive impact which it has elsewhere; the result is at times agonistic, but the picture is complementary.

Spring is capable of wondrous feats of creation because of the tremendous power bestowed upon it by *amor* and Venus, but this raw energy necessarily carries with it the potential to cause harm. The *iuvenis*, like spring, is governed in his actions by *amor*; in the absence of proper guidance, his lack of perspective causes in him a tendency towards destructive acts, but when harnessed properly, his *amor* can make him particularly effective. In spring, the balance is weighed more heavily in favour of the creative, but in the presence of *amor* there is always latent violence.[106] From an allegorical perspective, the destructive events of spring insist upon the inevitability of the violence of civil war, and allow it to become part of a renewal of Roman affairs.

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[104] Thomas (1988, *ad* 4.134-43) is especially receptive to the passage in Book 4 about the Corycian gardener because he 'works within the realities of all seasons...In this his environment is distinct...from the fictitious situation of the *Laudes Italiae*'. Like Ross' 'great lie', Thomas' suggestion that the praises are 'fictitious' seems unnecessary.

[105] See below for discussion of O'Hara (2007) and inconsistency as a feature of Roman epic.

[106] *Pace* Ross (1987), 122: 'Virgil knows that Spring…may represent a hope, an ideal abstraction, but that it can be no reality, that spring in the farmer's calendar and in the real world is a time of danger and conflict more likely to result in destruction than in generation and growth'.

The reference to the Deucalion myth hints early on at the bold implication that this violence might even be *necessary* in order for a renewal to take place.

C. *Bugonia*: Life after Death

The emergence of the destructive events of spring as allegory for the Roman civil wars portends the function of the epyllion in *Georgics* 4, which is the one section of the poem as a whole most prone to allegoresis.[107] In the previous chapter, *bugonia*, a method for creating new bees, was identified as a miracle analogous to the renovation of Roman affairs under Octavian-Augustus. Like the storms in Book 1, and *amor*, *bugonia* is a spring phenomenon, and, once again, it is not without its negative, destructive aspects. *Bugonia* involves a number of unpleasant pre-requisites, being dependent upon the slaughter of cattle. As in his treatment of *tempestates*, Vergil does not hold back from presenting the unsavoury nature of *bugonia*. This side to *bugonia*, further evidence of violent activity taking place in spring, enhances its potential to be viewed as an allegory for Octavian's Roman revolution, which was itself brought about by the violence of civil war.

i) The price of success

Exiguus primum atque ipsos contractus in usus
eligitur locus; hunc angustique imbrice tecti
parietibusque premunt artis, et quattuor addunt,
quattuor a ventis obliqua luce fenestras.
Tum vitulus bima curvans iam cornua fronte
quaeritur; huic geminae nares et spiritus oris
multa reluctanti obstruitur, plagisque perempto
tunsa per integram solvuntur viscera pellem.
Sic positum in clauso linquunt et ramea costis
subiciunt fragmenta, thymum casiasque recentes.
Hoc geritur Zephyris primum impellentibus undas,
ante novis rubeant quam prata coloribus, ante
garrula quam tignis nidum suspendat hirundo.
4.295-307.

' tu munera supplex
tende petens pacem, et facilis venerare Napaeas;
namque dabunt veniam votis, irasque remittent.
Sed modus orandi qui sit prius ordine dicam:
quattuor eximios praestanti corpore tauros,
qui tibi nunc viridis depascunt summa Lycaei,
delige, et intacta totidem cervice iuvencas.
Quattuor his aras alta ad delubra dearum
constitue, et sacrum iugulis demitte cruorem,
corporaque ipsa boum frondoso desere luco.
Post, ubi nona suos Aurora ostenderit ortus,
inferias Orphei Lethaea papavera mittes
et nigram mactabis ovem, lucumque revises:
placatam Eurydicen vitula venerabere caesa.'
4.534-47.

There are two different descriptions of the process of *bugonia* in *Georgics* Book 4. The first (295-307) describes a modern, pseudo-scientific procedure which

[107] For a full bibliography of the early development of this allegorical reading, see Nadeau (1984), 59-60. See also, Miles (1980), 255, 291; Morgan (1999), 115, and *passim*.

takes place in Egypt, while the second (538-47) is a sacrificial practice, prescribed to Aristaeus by his mother, Cyrene, and carried out unerringly. That the two descriptions are fundamentally incompatible is not as unusual as it might seem; as James O'Hara demonstrates in his 2007 book, *Inconsistency in Roman Epic*, this sort of discrepancy is a feature of all Latin epic, one which it inherited from its Hellenic and Hellenistic precursors.[108] Vergil was working within a tradition responsible for so inconsistent a poem as Catullus 64, which presents the Argo as the first ship ever to have sailed, then proceeds to detail the earlier seafaring exploits of Theseus.[109] The fact that both versions of *bugonia* deliver explicitly the same outcome from roughly the same source- a new swarm of bees from dead cattle- means that, in the present context at least, they can be seen as complementary. Their differences, and the purpose of their incompatibility, are discussed in detail in an appendix to this thesis.

In each case, *bugonia* is a costly enterprise; while, in the case of Aristaeus' sacrifice, this price is his eight finest cattle and a black sheep, in the account of the modern *bugonia* it is the suffering of the bovine victim which is more keenly felt. In lines 299-302, in particular, there is an intense feeling of pathos at the conditions imposed upon the unlucky calf. Vergil emphasises the youthfulness of the victim, with the diminutive form '*vitulus*', and mention of the fact that its horns have only been growing for two years ('*bima curvans iam fronte*').[110] The audience's pity is further elicited by the suggestion that the bullock is unwilling and resistant ('*reluctanti*');[111] this is a redundant comment as far as the didactic, faux-scientific exposition of this passage is concerned, and, consequently, its purpose can only be to make the scene appear more brutal. Finally, the savage violence of the slaughter is explicitly described, as the bullock's nostrils and mouth are plugged to prevent it from breathing ('*obstruitur*'), and its flesh is beaten to a pulp through its unbroken skin- the alliteration of the plosives in '*plagisque perempto…pellem*' give an audible force to

[108] See, O'Hara (2007), 1-7 for an outline of his arguments, and 83-5 for some examples of inconsistency in the *Georgics*.
[109] O'Hara (2007), 36; also 34: 'Catullus 64 can be seen as setting the standard for later poets in at least two respects: the persistent habit of starting a poem with a striking inconsistency, and the tendency to play with chronological problems and mythological variants'.
[110] Perkell (1989), 79.
[111] In stark contrast to this is the '*felix…hostia*' of the spring sacrifice of 1.345. Whilst '*felix*', in context, refers to the luck and happiness the sacrifice will bring to the people enacting the rite, rather than the victim itself, the tone of the image is entirely lighter and devoid of pathos.

these lines.[112] There is no question of Vergil glossing over the horrific pre-requisites necessary for *bugonia* to take place- far from it; the violence of the bullock's slaughter is positively underlined, and the audience's gaze is held firmly upon it.[113] They must respect the sacrifice made by the calf for the beekeeper's benefit.

ii) *Bugonia* and civil war

The close identification between bees and Romans in *Georgics* 4 makes it possible to see *bugonia* as an allegory for the renovation of Roman affairs under Octavian. The account of *bugonia* at 295-314 is very often conflated with the sacrifice performed by Aristaeus, since it is the epyllion itself which is most commonly allegorised. The negative depiction of the slaughter involved in bringing about *bugonia* (295-314) is a critical factor in the application of this allegory. As in the *tempestates* of storm, flood, and plague, the violence which takes place is representative of the civil wars which fatally ravaged the Republic.[114]

Like the Deucalion myth, *bugonia* involves the extinction of a particular species, from the perspective of the deprived beekeeper at least. In Aristaeus' case, his bees have been lost to a disease ('*amissis...apibus morboque fameque*- 4.318) whose mercilessness recalls the Noric Plague from Book 3 ('*morbo caeli*'- 3.478).[115] The death of *parvos Quirites* at the hands of this disease is an uncomplicated metaphor for the devastation visited upon the Roman populace by the civil wars.[116] In this respect, the disease is analogous both to the plague, and to the flood of the Deucalion myth, but the fact that it comes before *bugonia* even takes place makes this episode more

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[112] The frequency of the letter 's' in this extract, particularly in '*nares et spiritus oris*', is worthy of note: the repeated 's' sounds could suggest the breathless struggle of the bullock.

[113] Miles (1980), 253: '[Vergil] does not simply deny the fact of death or its horror'. Also Morgan (1999), 12: *bugonia* is 'unashamedly repulsive'.

[114] Nadeau (1984), 67: 'the sacrifice enjoined upon Aristaeus...is a symbol for the bloodshed of the Civil War, which was ended by Augustus' victory at Actium'. Even *bugonia*'s outcome is reminiscent of civil war, since, in lines 308-14, 'a whole cluster of words...recalls the moment in clear spring when the bees rush from their gates and mingle together loudly in battle'- Putnam (1979), 275.

[115] Miles (1980: 219-23) draws comparison between the Noric plague and *bugonia*- which both involve the death of cattle (3.515-30)- and the description of the civil wars at the end of *Georgics* 1. Books 1 and 3 each feature a succession of signs portending the future disaster which is ultimately realised.

[116] Farrell regards the bees' disease as 'thematically identical to civil war' (1991: 264). He argues that the illness which afflicts the bees is identified with civil war in the series of similes at 4.260-3, which alludes to *Iliad* 14.392-401 (1991: 248-51). The sound the sick bees make is comparable to the battle cry of the warring Trojans and Achaeans, and there are also verbal connections with the chaos depicted at the end of *Georgics* 1, following Julius Caesar's murder: *fornacibus* (1.263) recalls the use of the same word in the same metrical position at 1.472; in the *bugonia*, 4.309's '*visenda modis animalia miris*', is reminiscent of '*simulacra modis pallentia miris*', 1.477.

complicated from a figurative perspective. It is possible that the *bugonia* represents the dismantling of the Republican system of government after the conclusion to the civil wars, something which had looked increasingly likely since Octavian had finally rid himself of any rivals to his hegemony at Actium in 31BCE; Aristaeus' bovine sacrifice could prefigure the sacrifice of the Republic itself. This would essentially be out of keeping with the way Octavian-Augustus would subsequently style himself, as "restorer of the Republic", but it is attractive to see, in the reconfiguration of the matter of the calf into that of the bees, the adaptation of the executive machinery of the Republic to suit the new system of government.

The detail of the *bugonia* itself militates against its symbolic disassociation from the civil wars. The protracted beating which the calf endures in 299-302 might represent the equally prolonged suffering of Rome and her people during the civil wars. It is most significant that this horrific ox slaughter is perpetrated by the farmer himself, since it comes as a marked departure from the poem's treatment of the relationship between man and ox up to this point.[117] Throughout the *Georgics* the ox is presented as the farmer's noble companion, the one other with whom he truly shares his *labor*. This is indicated from the beginning of the poem, when the bull, rather than the farmer, is the subject of the first agricultural action: '*depresso incipiat iam tum mihi taurus aratro / ingemere*' (1.45-6). In Book 2, the slaughter of cattle for human consumption is presented as a paradigm for the sinful behaviour of Iron Age man (2.536-7). This is precisely because of his important, reciprocal relationship with the farmer, which affords the *taurus* a long, highly pathetic lament at its death in the Noric plague scene (3.515-30). The ploughman is noticeably saddened by the loss of his companion ('*tristis arator*'- 3.517), and frees the bull's yokemate, which grieves at '*fraterna morte*' (3.518). [118] In 525, the poet asks what good the bull's work did him, now that he has been so helplessly struck down by plague: '*quid labor aut benefacta iuvant?*'; this *labor* is the work he shared with the farmer. Within this ethical framework, the brutal slaughter of the bullock by the farmer in *bugonia* is

[117] Cf. Powell (2008), 253: 'since bovines are for Virgil the main symbol of agriculture, and the cost of *bougonia* in slaughtered (and uneaten) cattle is high, this- rather horrific- killing would be a further appropriate symbol of the carnage among Romans caused by civil war'.
[118] Cf. 2.510: '*gaudent perfusi sanguine fratrum*'- civil war. The fraternity in 3.518 is strictly a bovine one, but the sense of brotherhood amongst cattle strengthens the connection with man.

tantamount to civil war: *bugonia* demands that the farmer kill his former comrade at 'arms',[119] just as civil war turns once co-combatants into enemies in fatal strife.

It has been suggested that Vergil's choice of an Egyptian location for the contemporary practice of *bugonia* (4.287-94) lends to it a more specific allegorical weight. It would certainly seem significant that Vergil should transfer what was established as an essentially (proto-)Roman sacrificial practice[120] by an Arcadian ('*Arcadii...magistri*'- 4.283) to an Egyptian setting in the modern era. Commentators on the *Georgics* have generally considered the location of the modern *bugonia* in Egypt appropriate in view of the literary tradition, which had long been promoting an image of the 'East' as 'the provenance of ethnographical θαύματα ("marvels") in general';[121] Egypt would have seemed sufficiently exotic to a Roman audience to encourage them to suspend their disbelief that such a miracle as *bugonia* was actually possible. However, the timing of the *Georgics*' publication would have insisted upon the mention of Egypt carrying a more specific contemporary resonance for its readers. Yvan Nadeau has argued persuasively that *bugonia* is to be seen as an allegory for the battle of Actium, where recently Octavian had defeated Antony and Cleopatra's Egyptian forces, effectively ending the civil wars.[122] Nadeau's interpretation holds the single event of Octavian's victory at Actium as the catalyst for a revival of Roman affairs. In the present reading, *bugonia* stands more generally for the civil wars which had been waged between Octavian and a series of enemies, and even those which had taken place in the years before Octavian entered the public arena; this had been a long and difficult gestation for Romans.

If the practice of *bugonia* symbolises the civil wars themselves, perhaps the disease which precedes it can be seen as representative of something else. The bees of *Georgics* 4 are sometimes seen as an idealised version of the Roman populace:[123] these 'little Romans' embody everything which is good about their larger

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[119] The farmer's tools, including the plough, are his '*arma*'- 1.160.
[120] See Appendix II for Aristaeus' *bugonia* as a Roman sacrificial practice.
[121] Thomas (1988), *ad* 4.287-94. Mynors (1990: *ad* 4.287-8) draws his readers' attention towards a letter of Pliny the Younger (8.20.2), which describes Egypt as '*miraculorum ferax commendatrixque terra*'; Mynors later cites 'the technical skill of ancient Egypt' as an explanation for the development of the practice of *bugonia* from its initial origins (1990: 321).
[122] Nadeau (1984), 72-3. Nappa (2005: 189) also regards Vergil's choice of Egypt as having been motivated by Octavian's victory over Antony and Cleopatra, which was sealed with their deaths in that country.
[123] La Penna (1977), 65; Dahlmann (1954).

counterparts, but without some of their vices, mainly due to their lack of sex.[124] The death of bees through disease could represent the perceived moral decay which ruined the Roman Republic in the first century BCE and led to the civil wars; after the best citizens died out, Rome tore itself apart looking for their replacements. One could look too hard: it would be futile and reductive to attempt to press the chronology of *bugonia*, and the events leading up to it, into an allegory which corresponds perfectly with the civil wars.[125] Such contrivance would be inconsistent with Vergil's general use of figurative language. For example, Vergilian similes are not reliant upon absolute identity between their *comparanda* in order to be "successful"; there are usually multiple points of comparison between the two, but differences are very often there to be found.[126] Sometimes these differences appear deliberately to challenge the analogy which the simile serves to suggest,[127] but often they may simply exist outside the frame of the simile, and be therefore irrelevant to it.[128] Both the disease which wipes out a whole bee stock (whether Aristaeus', or the generic example at 281-314), and the *bugonia* itself, which follows it, point figuratively in the direction of the Roman civil wars. At a purely symbolic level, it is reasonable to conflate these two events in this respect.

iii) Aristaeus, Octavian, and Deucalion

While there is no specific agent mentioned in the first account of *bugonia*, before the epyllion, Aristaeus is explicitly responsible for carrying out the sacrifice at the end of *Georgics* 4, which is equated with *bugonia*. Reading *bugonia* as an allegory does not necessarily demand a similar sense of agency for the civil wars, but the analogy elsewhere in the *Georgics* between Jupiter, usher of *tempestates*, and

[124] 4.197-201: Bees simply pick their offspring from the leaves around them. On the bees as inhuman, see: Nappa (2005), 182; Miles (1980), 246.
[125] Besides, several scholars have made a very good case for the bees being far from 'perfect' Romans. For instance, their '*amor habendi*' (4.177) is a far from admirable replacement for sexual *amor*. See Perkell (1989), 127-9; also, Putnam (1979), 254-8, on the bees' existence as 'a decline from, rather than a reversion to the golden age' (254).
[126] See West (1969), on 'Multiple-correspondence similes in the *Aeneid*'. West argues that 'almost all the similes in the *Aeneid* contain many details which correspond to details in the surrounding narrative' (40).
[127] West (1969: 40) calls this sort of correspondence '*irrational*'. See also, Powell (2008), 252: 'any elaborate metaphor, or allegory, must by definition involve some difference between the objects compared'.
[128] At 4.170-8, Vergil uses a simile about the Cyclopes to evoke bees at work. The parenthesis '*si parva licet componere magnis*' (176) admits that there is something faintly ridiculous about the mock-epic comparison.

Octavian makes it extremely difficult to look beyond the new Caesar as an analogue for Aristaeus here.[129] Aristaeus is a particularly suitable analogue for Octavian, and specifically for the Octavian of the recent past, who was one of the major protagonists in the civil wars.[130] As was highlighted in Chapter One, both are *iuvenes*, and both have an inherited divinity: Aristaeus through his parents, Apollo and the nymph, Cyrene, and Octavian through his adoptive father, the deified Julius Caesar. Here, by his identification with the soon-to-be-divine offspring of a god, as opposed to the king of the gods, Jupiter, Octavian is less vulnerable to accusations of hubris: Aristaeus is very much his equal.

Comparison with Aristaeus can also provide a positive perspective on Octavian's motivation during the civil war. There is plenty to criticise in Aristaeus' behaviour, especially from what the audience is told by Proteus, but his actions in the narrative of the epyllion display notable *pietas*. He is insolent in his manhandling of Proteus, but is simply following Cyrene's orders, illustrating his sense of familial duty to his mother, and his respect for her divinity. His cattle-slaughter is also prescribed by Cyrene, and is performed as a sacrifice to appease other gods, a further demonstration of piety. It does not matter that Aristaeus' motives are essentially self-seeking, only that he follows the proper procedure in order to reach his ends. Aristaeus' relationship with the gods is similar to Deucalion's. Like Aristaeus, Deucalion is more privileged than the rest of mankind, since he is chosen by Zeus to survive the flood, but his respect for the gods is manifest in his actions. After the devastation of the flood, Deucalion consults a divine oracle for guidance, and follows the cryptic instructions he receives in order to start a new human race. The emergence of Aristaeus as an analogue for Deucalion adds a further dimension to the allegorical reading of the Deucalion myth. Octavian has already been seen as capable of causing the flood, by his identification with Zeus-Jupiter, but his correspondence with Aristaeus places him in the different role of Deucalion in the myth. With Octavian as Deucalion, the issue of the provenance of the flood which destroys mankind (or the

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[129] See Chapter One, pp. 67-70, for more direct comparison between Aristaeus and Octavian. Also, Miles (1980), 291: 'Aristaeus and Caesar are both heroes who either have demonstrated or will demonstrate their godlike superiority to ordinary men by performing the seemingly impossible task of replacing a ruined society with a new one'.

[130] Nadeau (1984) regards the Aristaeus epyllion as an allegory for the events surrounding Octavian-Augustus, Antony, Cleopatra, and the battle of Actium. He argues that the main theme of the epyllion is the contrast between Aristaeus, the Statesman, who represents Octavian, and Orpheus, the Lover, Antony. By drawing parallels not only with contemporary Roman events, but also with the *Aeneid*, Nadeau insists upon correspondence between Aristaeus, Octavian, and Aeneas.

Roman *respublica*) is not critical, but rather his response to that crisis. Deucalion and Aristaeus both reverse the fortunes of an ailing race, and their actions in doing so are sanctioned by the gods directly. Octavian will restore and repopulate the Roman *respublica*; though his means may appear destructive, like the civil wars and the actions of Aristaeus, they are divinely ordained. Octavian cannot be held responsible for the destructive consequences of his carrying out the will of the gods.

These repercussions are clearly manifest in the violence of *bugonia*, which is exemplified particularly in the first account of the practice, at 4.295-314. Vergil prefaces this description by alluding to the extraordinary circumstances which give a beekeeper recourse to *bugonia*:

> *sed si quem proles subito defecerit omnis*
> *nec genus unde novae stirpis revocetur habebit*
> 4.281-2

The decision to exact *bugonia* is not to be taken lightly; it is a last resort, employed when the bee stock has failed utterly, and there are no other options available. Aristaeus meets these criteria: his bees die out completely, and his situation would be hopeless without divine assistance, since it is a god, Orpheus, who is responsible for his loss. The sacrifice of eight of his best cattle (and a sheep) is prescribed to him by Cyrene, without any suggestion of an alternative.[131] Transposing this aspect of *bugonia* onto the context of the Roman civil wars offers a defensive gesture on Octavian's behalf: he was forced to resort to civil war by the gravity of the situation in Rome, and had exhausted all other options.

iv) Accentuating the positives

In the proem to *Georgics* Book 3, as Vergil muses upon his poetic success, he imagines himself building a temple and holding triumphant festivities in Octavian's honour. In describing these rites, the poet remarks upon the amenity of cattle slaughter for the purpose of sacrifice:

> *ipse caput tonsae foliis ornatus olivae*

[131] The issue of whether or not the potential gain justifies the sacrifice is considered below. For Aristaeus, though, economics are an irrelevance: this is a matter of pride, of restoring his lost honour: '*etiam hunc ipsum vitae mortalis honorem...relinquo*' (4.326-8).

dona feram. iam nunc sollemnis ducere pompas
ad delubra iuvat caesosque videre iuvencos
3.21-3.

The sight of slaughtered cattle in a religious setting is a delightful one. This positive aspect of bovine sacrifice, and its relationship to Octavian, is maintained in the *bugonia* of Book 4. However the violent pre-requisites to *bugonia* are received, they do not detract from its success on its own terms. *Bugonia* was invented as a way of restoring a decimated stock of bees from the carcasses of oxen, and on both of the occasions when it is enacted in *Georgics* 4 it achieves these desired results with dramatic effect. The exact procedure involved may differ in each case, but the outcome is described in very similar terms.[132]

Interea teneris tepefactus in ossibus umor
aestuat, et visenda modis animalia miris,
trunca pedum primo, mox et stridentia pennis,
miscentur, tenuemque magis magis aëra carpunt,
donec ut aestivis effusus nubibus imber,
erupere, aut ut nervo pulsante sagittae,
prima leves ineunt si quando proelia Parthi.
4.308-14.

Hic vero subitum ac dictu mirabile monstrum
aspiciunt, liquefacta boum per viscera toto
stridere apes utero et ruptis effervere costis,
immensasque trahi nubes, iamque arbore summa
confluere et lentis uvam demittere ramis.
4.554-8.

The creation of bees from the ox carcasses is a miraculous event ('*miris*'- 309, '*mirabile*'- 554). They form gradually from the *umor* of the cattle, but eventually burst forth in an explosion of life.[133] Their numbers are great, as they form a cloud, brimming with raindrops. The savagery of the slaughter involved in *bugonia* is not erased from memory- Vergil made certain of that through the pathos of his graphic description of it, but the creation of the new bees is no less a positive wonder.

From an allegorical perspective, it is difficult to separate the idea of the creation of bees from the analogy formed throughout *Georgics* 4 between bees and Romans. *Bugonia* is set up to be the denouement of the poem's political message: the death and destruction of the civil wars is succeeded by a prosperous new life for the Romans.[134] Under Octavian-Augustus there will come a new world order, a better human race, like that created by Deucalion and Pyrrha. The image of the bees

[132] It is notable that Vergil does not simply repeat lines 308-14 at 554-8, in the Homeric style which he employs when Proteus carries out Cyrene's instructions (548-53). Apart from a few verbal echoes (*miris*/*mirabile*, *nubibus*/*nubes*, *stridentia*/*stridere*), lines 554-8 are remarkably dissimilar to 308-14 in their choice of words, especially since they describe the same scene.
[133] *Umor* is a feature of spring's reproductive surge: 1.43, 2.331. See Chapter Two, p. 96.
[134] Nadeau (1984); Miles (1980), 254-5; Otis (1964), 188-90.

swarming through tree branches (4.557-8) is reiterated in *Aeneid* 7, when bees are seen swarming at the top of Latinus' laurel tree in Laurentum:

> *huius apes summum densae (mirabile dictu)*
> *stridore ingenti liquidum trans aethera uectae*
> *obsedere apicem, et pedibus per mutua nexis*
> *examen subitum ramo frondente pependit.*
> 7.64-7.

This prodigy is immediately interpreted by the king's *haruspex* as boding ill for the Laurentines: a foreigner is coming to supplant Latinus at the top of his kingdom (7.68-70).[135] When Latinus seeks clarification from the oracle of Faunus, the response spins future events more positively: Latinus is to marry his daughter, Lavinia, to the arriving foreigner; this foreigner and his people will have dominion over the world (7.96-101). This reiterates Anchises' prophesy from Book 6, and makes clear to the audience that the arriving foreigners are Aeneas and his Trojans.[136] From a Laurentine perspective, the prodigy is ambiguous at best: their role in the predicted Trojan success is unclear.[137] However, although it is no consolation to the Laurentines, both soothsayer and oracle suggest a positive future for the Trojan arrivals: as proto-Romans, success for the Trojans is success for Rome.[138] So, just as it does in *Georgics* 4's *bugonia*, the swarm portends the prosperity of the Roman people.[139]

The message of renewal inherent to *bugonia* is uncontroversial, but the quality of this renewal, both from a literal and an allegorical perspective, has been called into question in scholarship on the *Georgics*. Christopher Nappa, whose reading of the poem is unashamedly political, does not see, in *bugonia*, the 'resurrection' that Otis, for instance, attributes to it:[140] 'for Aristaeus, success consists not in regaining his lost bees but in getting new ones...Those who have found a story of redemption or

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[135] There was a long tradition in Greek literature of bee activity indicating important arrivals (Paus. 9.40.2; Plut. *Mor.* 96B); meanwhile, 'at Rome they are a *dirum ostentum* and portend great events (Pliny, *HN* 11.55), military defeat (Val. Max. 1.6.12: Pompey at Pharsalus), the end of Republican freedom (Cic. *Har. Resp.* 25)...the death of a consul or ruler (Tac. *Ann.* 12.64.1)'- Horsfall (2000), 87.
[136] Some of the verbal details of the prodigy point in the direction of the Trojans: '*liquidum*'- 'it is no accident that the adj. too is suggestive of the Trojans' voyage over the ocean'; '*vectae*'- 'the verb...is unsurprisingly one often used of the Trojans' voyage'- Horsfall (2000), 88.
[137] 'the bees here are not definably a "good" or "bad" omen'- Horsfall (2000), 87.
[138] *Pace* Horsfall (2000), 87: 'the *vates*' reply...is firmly in Greek colonial terms and it is not helpful to introduce nations of the bees' commonwealth as symbolic of human states'.
[139] Elsewhere in the *Aeneid*, Vergil maintains the connection between bees and Romans, as in 6.703-18, where Anchises uses a bee simile in his projection of the coming Roman race. In *Aeneid* 1.430-8, the Carthaginians building their city are described with another bee simile, as Aeneas mistakes Carthage for his fated Rome. See Nadeau (1984), 70-1.
[140] Otis (1964), 188-9.

salvation...bear the burden of showing exactly how this can be attained'.[141] Nappa is right to raise this issue: Aristaeus' bees experience no 'resurrection', since it is nowhere suggested that his old bees are brought back to life, rather that he is given new ones. Yet it is this aspect of *bugonia* which makes it all the more effective as an allegory for the Augustan restoration. In Chapter Two of this thesis, spring developed into a symbol for new life after death, something which, in a political context, became synonymous with an idea of "revolution". *Bugonia*, in its first instance explicitly associated with the springtime (4.305-7), toes the season's symbolic line perfectly: it too involves the creation of new life after death, both of the old bees and of oxen. The Roman revolution which this process reflects is one which will involve the death of the old, Republican system of government, and its replacement with a new, essentially monarchical one. Although Augustus would insist that his position in the state was coherent within the traditional Republican system of government, his power and its endurance were unprecedented.[142] Besides, in 29BCE, when the *Georgics* was completed, it would have seemed likely to Roman observers that Octavian would implement a more absolutist regime than he ultimately did.[143] Vergil's insight into Rome's future political direction was considerable, and he transmitted his projections with great subtlety in his *Georgics*. The result is a poem which is not naively optimistic: *bugonia* portends a revival of Roman affairs, but makes no secret of the fact that things are going to be different from the way they were before the civil wars. Vergil's Roman audience is invited to look forward, rather than long for a flourishing Republic, which many of his contemporaries had never experienced. That Octavian will bring the civil wars to an end is an enticing enough prospect on its own. What follows is unlikely to be an exact replica of the Republic at its height, but will at least provide the stability that was lacking during the civil war period.

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[141] Nappa (2005), 213.

[142] In his *Res Gestae* (34), Augustus said that, in 27BCE, he transferred the Republic from his control to that of the senate and the Roman people: '*ex mea potestate in senatus populique Romani arbitrium transtuli*'. From this point on, he surpassed others only in *dignitas*, not in *potestas*: '*Post id tempus praestiti omnibus dignitate, potestatis autem nihilo amplius habui quam ceteri qui mihi quoque in magistratu conlegae fuerunt*'.

[143] The Senate and the Roman people made a dedication to Octavian in 29, '*re publica conservata*', but, as Millar (2002: 264) explains, "*res publica*" usually means "the state", or "the condition of public affairs", rather than "the Republic". The bloodshed of the civil wars had made the Roman people fear not simply for the survival of their system of government, but for the very existence of their state: its "preservation" (*conservata*) was enough to start celebrating. This is why coins of 27 referred to Augustus as 'vindicator of the liberty of the Roman people' (*Libertatis p.R. vindex*), and carried the inscription '*Pax*' on the reverse (*RIC*, Augustus no.10)- Millar (2002), 265.

v) Life *from* Death

Bugonia, like the spring season in which it takes place, symbolises the promise of new creation after seemingly terminal destruction. It adds a previously absent dimension to this equation, though, by articulating a causal connection between destruction and *con*sequent, not just *sub*sequent, creation, between end and new beginning. The bees which swarm out of the carcasses of oxen are, in the first instance (4.308-14), visibly formed from the matter of those carcasses, and in the second instance (4.554-8), a gift in response to the sacrifice of the oxen. In each case, the new bees' existence is contingent upon the slaughter of the cattle. Whether or not the resultant bees are a worthy replacement for the bovine victims, the violence which ended the lives of the oxen is rendered constructive by the issue of the bees. In the Aristaeus epyllion, the deaths of Eurydice and Orpheus are also indirectly responsible for the discovery of *bugonia*, and therefore have a constructive element. *Bugonia* suggests that death and destruction are actually necessary in order for creation to occur: the process, after all, consists not of a resurrection, but 'an exchange of death for life'.[144] This principle of 'exchange' demands the death as counterbalance to the life which succeeds it: the one cannot exist without the other.

This is a critical development in the allegorical function of *bugonia*. Thus far, the process has symbolised the civil wars and their conclusion, at the hands of Octavian, and the promise of a new Rome thereafter. The fact that the creation of new bees is entirely conditional upon the death of cattle adds the further implication that the civil wars, which are represented in the cattle slaughter, were actually necessary in order for Rome to gain a new lease of life under Octavian's leadership. This notion does not negate the genuine suffering which was endured by the Roman people during the civil wars, which was admitted in the ordeal of the calf at 4.295-314, but it does attempt to recast this suffering as a means to an end, and therefore worthwhile. The civil wars become a part of a process with a positive outcome; this outcome may seem remote from the audience's perspective, because they cannot be certain that the current peace will last, so Vergil must play the *vates*, and provide them with a hopeful

[144] Perkell (1989), 76. See also, Putnam (1979), 136: the *Georgics* illustrates 'man's...constant need to barter life with death, to procure gain in one aspect of nature only with loss in another'. As a "zero-sum" operation, there is a necessary ambivalence to this exchange. Putnam's reading is, however, chiefly concerned with loss, rather than gain.

forecast.[145] Octavian, who was seen in the figure of Aristaeus, practitioner of *bugonia*, is therefore exonerated for his role in bringing the civil wars to bear on the Roman people. The providential aspect of his behaviour invites comparison with the Stoic Jupiter, present in the theodicy in *Georgics* 1, and, I have suggested, in the poem's various *tempestates*; their actions may appear destructive and callous, but they are ultimately for the benefit of mankind. Even the Zeus of the Deucalion myth can be viewed in a similar way: he destroys the majority of the human race, but only so that he can replace it with a new, morally superior one.[146] The Rome of the civil war period, heavily criticised at the end of *Georgics* 1, '*ubi fas versum atque nefas*' (1.505), should not be mourned too intensely if it is replaced by a better model.

Reading the Deucalion myth as an allegory, it has been possible to consider Octavian in the different roles of Zeus-Jupiter, who controls mortal affairs, and Deucalion, himself mortal, and subject to the will of Zeus. Aristaeus is also comparable to both figures, since he destroys life, like Zeus, and, equally, creates life after suffering loss at divine hands, like Deucalion. In Chapter One, an analogy was formed between the characters of Aristaeus and Octavian on the grounds that they are both depicted as young men, *iuvenes*. The success Aristaeus achieves in creating new bees is gained by his characteristic youthful vigour, as he manipulates Proteus and slaughters cattle.[147] In the *iuvenis*, the combination of unadulterated *vis* with limited perspective can often lead to destructive consequences, but it is through this destruction that the young man can be uniquely effective. Octavian will achieve success in the same way, creating a new Rome by destroying life in the civil wars.[148] While Octavian is elsewhere assimilated to Jupiter, master of providence, his correspondence with Aristaeus emphasises their shared youth, and makes him appear as much subject to the Fates as any mortal. This does not negate the impression that Octavian's actions are part of the providential scheme, but rather questions the access he might have had to that scheme during the civil wars. Once again though, it matters

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[145] See Morgan (1999), especially 106-34. Vergil aims to show 'the paradoxical power for good of highly destructive events' (108) in order to 'rehabilitate' both the civil wars and Octavian, their protagonist, as a force for good (134). *Bugonia* suggests that 'the civil wars will engender a new Rome' (123).

[146] Ovid, in his *Metamorphoses*, suggests that Deucalion was the ideal source for a new, better human race because he was the most pious and just of the pre-Flood human population (1.322-3).

[147] See Chapter One, pp. 55-62.

[148] Cf. Powell (2008), 253: 'No effective apologist could ignore [the] bloodshed [of the civil wars]; better to confront it, and to suggest that in some way what might seem like a horrific waste was in fact benign'; *bugonia* makes 'a delicately indirect, metaphoric, claim that carnage within the state might be not merely excusable but necessary' (2008: 254).

not whether Octavian knew that what he was doing was for the good of Rome, but only that it should turn out that way.

D. Creative Destruction

The principle of exchange- of death for life- which underpins *bugonia* makes the practice into a kind of "creative destruction", that is, a process whose outcome is ultimately positive, or creative, but which demands destruction or violence as a prerequisite.[149] The discovery of a causal relationship between creation and destruction in *bugonia*, serves to complement the role of spring as a symbol for beginnings in the *Georgics*. *Bugonia*, with its spring *labor* and reward, can be seen as a microcosm of the agricultural activity prescribed in the *Georgics* as a whole, much of which takes place in the spring season.[150] Throughout the poem, the causal connection between destructive and creative activity is hinted at, before it is finally realised in the creative destruction of *bugonia*. With the advent of this paradigmatic act, the audience is invited to re-evaluate certain aspects of the poem's wider agricultural exposition in order to find further examples of creative destruction.[151]

i) *Militia culturae*

From Book 1 onwards, Vergil suggests that the farmer's work, and, by extension, all civilised activity, is essentially violent and destructive.[152] This is most clearly illustrated by the analogy drawn between agriculture and warfare, which dominates Book 1 and extends noticeably into Book 2: the farmer is depicted as being

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[149] The expression "creative destruction" is used by economists to describe a particular process of economic growth as a result of radical industrial innovation. In its use here, the phrase has a more generic, literal meaning.

[150] See Chapter Two, pp. 118-9.

[151] Several studies of the *Georgics* have identified a connection between destructive violence and creation in the poem. Morgan (1999) has much to say on the subject, although his focus is almost entirely upon the second half of Book 4. The basis in Stoic cosmology which he provides for this idea is extremely useful: see especially 106-8. For more general comment on this theme, see: Gale (2000), 111, 232-4, 269; Perkell (1989), 34-7, 71-9; Ross (1987), 83; Miles (1980), 187, 197, 254; Putnam (1979), 249; Otis (1964), 189-90.

[152] Perkell (1989), 33-4: 'that agriculture requires the destruction and domination of natural things becomes a leitmotif of the poem, ultimately and dramatically exemplified in the *bougonia* that concludes *Georgic* 4'.

at war with a recalcitrant nature.[153] Just before the theodicy of *labor* section, in Book 1, Vergil begins to describe agricultural activity using words such as '*exercet*' and '*imperat*' (1.99), vocabulary far more commonly found in a strictly military context.[154] When the poet moves on to explain the origins of labour, he looks back to the Golden Age, a time when 'no farmers subjugated the land' ('*ante Iovem nulli subigebant arva coloni*'- 1.125). The introduction of work seems to be a change for the better, since it aims to harden the sluggish human race through necessary activity,[155] but the entire theodicy section displays a marked contrast between the violence of work and the peace which existed before it. At the institution of *labor*, man begins to capture and deceive nature ('*captare…fallere*'- 1.139), to beat rivers into submission ('*verberat amnem*'- 1.141); violent toil is all-pervasive: '*labor omnia vicit / improbus*' (1.145-6).[156] Some "optimistic" critics of the poem have interpreted this phrase as implying some sort of triumph of Iron Age technology, i.e. that relentless labour achieved mastery over everything. This is a misapprehension of the negative connotations of *improbus*.[157] The phrase '*labor...improbus*' suggests that work is unrelenting and far from pleasant, and is consistent with the wider depiction of agriculture as a violent struggle against nature.[158]

The analogy between work and military activity is most sharply indicated shortly after the theodicy section, by Vergil's reference to the farmer's tools as '*arma*' (1.160). Such an application of the word was unprecedented in georgic literature;[159]

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[153] The martial character of agriculture, as depicted in Book 1 particularly, has been well discussed but is worthy of consideration here. See especially, Perkell (1989), 33-8; Gale (2000), 252-8; also, Powell (2008), 239-40; Miles (1980), 78; Betensky (1979).

[154] The consistent use of such military terminology, along with verbs of a more generally forceful nature in an agricultural context throughout Book 1 and beyond serves to sustain the connection between farming and warfare. cf. '*insequitur*'- 1.105; '*domitum*'- 2.114; '*cogendae…domandae*'- 2.62; '*exerce imperia*'- 2.370.

[155] '*curis acuens mortalia corda*'- 1.123.

[156] Perkell (1989), 97: 'the military mode connoted by *vicit* thus epitomizes the new regime [the Iron Age], in which total community has been replaced by total combat'.

[157] The vast majority of incidences of the adjective *improbus* in Latin literature are represented by the *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae* as '*malus*', '*scelestus*', '*iniustus*', or the like, in a moral sense. Vergil's '*labor...improbus*' is bracketed with the minority (about 1/8) which suggest no moral resonance, but most of the examples still seem to carry negative connotations, which the *TLL* characterises as something like 'vastness beyond endurance' or 'of such great size as can cause annoyance'. On the usage of *improbus* in Augustan literature, Mynors (1990: *ad* 1.145-6) suggests that 'in no single instance…does it fail to convey a note of disapproval, and to render it merely "tireless" here…would ignore the evidence'.

[158] Wilkinson (1969: 141) argues that '*labor improbus*' is an indication of what man thinks of hard work whilst he is doing it; its very harshness makes him unable to enjoy it, and temporarily blinds him to the positive outcome which it will engender. So too Nappa, (2005), 42: '*improbus labor* is both "deplorable work" and "devastating suffering" if one has to do it to survive'.

[159] Perkell (1989), 36; Powell (2008), 240.

Cato and Varro, for instance, draw no comparison between farming and warfare. While the Greek ὅπλα was used of tools of all kinds, martial and agricultural, its Latin equivalent, *arma*, had not entered the agricultural sphere before Vergil used it in this sense.[160] The novelty of Vergil's sustained connection between farming and warfare increases its significance within the *Georgics*' ethical framework. Agricultural *labor* is difficult, even unpleasant, and for the farmer it may feel like nature is constantly resistant to his efforts, but this does not negate the fact that hard work is inherently productive. Throughout the *Georgics*, *labor* is consistently promoted as the only path to success.[161] The violent, occasionally destructive demands which agriculture makes of the farmer are absolutely necessary if he is to increase his yield, to create more life.[162]

In the context of a political reading of the poem, the metaphor of agriculture as warfare has much to offer. The farmer's work in the *Georgics* is representative of the political *labor* expended by Octavian and his proto-Augustan followers in order to revitalise Roman affairs. This political activity consisted largely of civil war, which, in *bugonia*, is presented as an integral part of a process with a positive outcome- a new Rome. By emphasising the martial nature of the farmer's *labor*, Vergil allows for war to be an acceptable part of the statesman's *labor* in bringing about a regime change.[163] In the Roman mindset, war against a foreign enemy was positively desirable, a vehicle for the pursuit of *gloria* and the opportunity to impose justice widely;[164] civil war, *discordia*, was an abomination.[165] At the end of *Georgics* 1, *discordia* becomes a real part of the farmer's life, as his once metaphorical *arma* are beaten into actual weapons: '*curvae rigidum falces conflantur in ensem*' (508). The distinction between the farmer and his political analogue collapses as not simply *war*, but specifically *civil war* becomes a part of the farmer's life, just like the statesman's.

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[160] Nappa, (2005), 45 N87. It is highly likely that Vergil was alluding to *arma*'s Greek counterpart here, as he often employs such bilingual wordplay in the *Georgics*: see Nappa (2002).
[161] See Gale (2000: 143-58) on the depiction of *labor* in the *Georgics*. Vergil depicts *labor* as inescapable but important.
[162] One example of agriculture being specifically destructive comes at 1.77-8, when the farmer is told to burn weeds and poppies for the benefit of the soil.
[163] 'Agriculture, through the metaphor, might re-validate soldiering'- Powell (2008), 245. Powell also argues convincingly that Vergil's presentation of soldiering and farming as 'kindred pursuits' has a more specific purpose: to reassure the Roman populace that the soldiers whom Octavian settled on Italian land after the civil wars will succeed as farmers, and provide Rome with the food which she was so deprived of by Sextus Pompeius' blockades in the early 30s BCE (2008: 263).
[164] In the *sphragis* at the end of Book 4, Octavian is engaged in foreign warfare, bringing laws to receptive peoples: '*victorque volentis / per populos dat iura*' (4.561-2).
[165] Gale (2000), 240.

The farmer's engagement in a war with nature is not questioned on moral grounds in the *Georgics* because it is essential to the survival of the human race- something Vergil never suggests is undesirable. Even when the farmer begins to take part in civil war, his status as the moral superior of the statesman is unaffected. At the end of Book 2, the life of the farmer is praised by contrast with that of the city-dweller (2.458-540); the countryside is a more morally upstanding environment because it was the last place to feel the footsteps of Justice as she left the Earth (2.473-4). If even the farmer, paragon of human existence, who daily practises the creative destruction of agriculture, is sometimes forced to engage in civil conflict, then it is conceivable that this too can be a violent pursuit with no less positive consequences. His agricultural warmongering legitimises the use of civil war to achieve productive ends, reflecting positively upon Octavian's previous function as perpetrator of the Roman civil wars.

ii) Deadwood

The *labores* of the farmer encompass many different kinds of activity, part of a concerted military campaign to achieve dominance over the natural world. Often it is the deeds he must perform in preparation for agriculture which are the most apparently unsavoury. Lines 207-11 of Book 2 provide a powerful illustration of the cost of agricultural progress:

> *aut unde iratus silvam devexit arator*
> *et nemora evertit multos ignava per annos,*
> *antiquasque domos avium cum stirpibus imis*
> *eruit; illae altum nidis petiere relictis,*
> *at rudis enituit impulso vomere campus.*

Vergil is discussing the qualities of different types of land and soil when he offers this image of a ploughman tearing up trees from his land to make more room for arable farming.[166] The ploughman is 'indignant' ('*iratus*'), because he feels that the trees have left his land in a sluggish and unproductive state for too long ('*nemora…multos*

[166] Nappa (2005, 87) emphasises that the farmer's selection of this land to develop is not simply arbitrary, but motivated by the fact (stated earlier by Vergil) that different crops require different types of land to flourish.

ignava per annos').[167] In taking action to prevent a perceived idleness, the ploughman emulates Jupiter, who, in Book 1's theodicy, instituted *labor* to put an end to the idleness of Golden Age mankind.[168] His actions are those of clearing away in preparation for a new start, just like the similarly angry king of the gods in the Deucalion myth, when he purges the Earth by flood. The drastic, violent nature of the ploughman's efforts is emphasised by the pathos of Vergil's mention of the birds, whose ancestral homes ('*antiquasque domos*') the ploughman destroys without remorse.[169] Vergil offers two contrasting perspectives on the results of the ploughman's actions; the first sees the birds forced to leave their nests behind and take to the skies- for them an unmitigated disaster.[170] To the farmer, however, there is only the benefit of new and fertile land, which, although rough and yet to be worked ('*rudis…campus*'),[171] begins to gleam ('*enituit*') with promise under the plough's weight. The initial destruction is not matched by the creation which results from it; from the birds' point of view, it would be difficult to see the ploughman's destruction as having prompted any sort of creation. In the ploughman's eyes, however, he has merely destroyed the clutter of trees which were causing his land to lie idle, and created new, fertile land, bringing promise of an increased crop yield. Here, as in the case of *bugonia*, that which is lost and that which is created are not the same: trees are replaced by fields, just as cattle are replaced by bees.[172]

This vignette encapsulates perfectly the creative destruction of the farmer's *labor*: the ploughman destroys trees, and the life that they support, in order to create new and fertile land for farming. From a political perspective, the episode has a familiar allegorical function, confirming the sense of renewal after civil war. The ploughman's assimilation to Jupiter invites further comparison with Octavian, clearing away the deadwood of the Republic in order to renovate Roman affairs. The price of his success is impressed upon the audience by the suffering of the birds,

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[167] The limited benefits offered by trees grown from fallen seed, i.e. without human cultivation, are discussed a little earlier at 2.57-60. They grow slowly, providing shade only after a very long time, and their fruit loses its initial sweetness ('*pomaque degenerant*'- 2.59) and is ultimately fit only for birds. It is precisely their lack of exposure to human *cultus* which causes these trees to degenerate; to uproot them entails no great loss to the ploughman. See Thomas (1988), 167; Mynors (1990), 108.
[168] See especially 1.121-4.
[169] The enjambment of '*eruit*' foregrounds the destructive act. For this particular verb, cf. '*ruit imbriferum ver*' (1.313); '*in furias ignemque ruunt*' (3.244).
[170] Mynors (1990, *ad* 209-10) suggests that '*nidis*' here means 'nestlings', rather than nests. The birds' loss of their young would add an even greater tragic pathos to the scene.
[171] Mynors (1990, *ad* 211) translates '*rudis*' as 'that has so much to learn'.
[172] In *Aeneid* 6 (180-2), Aeneas and the Trojans fell many trees in the sacred woods of Avernus in search of the Golden Bough. From their point of view, this destruction is a means to an end.

whose homes are destroyed in the ploughman's blinkered pursuit of progress. Their loss is a clear reference to the confiscations enacted by Octavian in order to settle and appease his soldiers after the civil wars, which are alluded to just a few lines earlier, when Vergil laments bitterly the loss of land in his native Mantua (2.198):[173]

et qualem infelix amisit Mantua campum

Vergil stresses the fact that he too has paid a price for Octavian's success in order to strike a conciliatory chord:[174] if he, who feels the pain of loss, can see the ultimate benefit which Octavian and the civil wars can offer Rome, perhaps the long-suffering people of Roman Italy can do the same. The metaphorical replacement of woods with fields is an honest assessment of the state of Rome. The trees stood visible, their benefits obvious, while the created land looks bare and unpromising. The Republic has seemingly been replaced by a vacuum, but it is up to the Roman people, under Vergil's guidance, to see the potential in the bare earth and make it gleam again.[175]

iii) Nourishing the earth

The bulk of the farmer's *labor* in the *Georgics* consists in encouraging the earth to deliver food and all manner of plant life, since it stopped providing these things of its own accord when Jupiter brought an end to the Golden Age. The peripheral act of *bugonia* witnesses the creation of life, of bees, from the dead flesh of cattle. This motif of propagation by flesh recurs in the *Georgics*' treatment of arable farming. At the end of Book 1, in his lament at the decline into civil war following the murder of Julius Caesar, Vergil suggests that the soil of the civil war battlefield can be enriched by human, specifically Roman, blood:

nec fuit indignum superis bis sanguine nostro

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[173] Nappa (2005, 87): the fact that '[the birds'] loss has been the farmer's gain' suggests that the confiscations did have a positive outcome, albeit not from the point of view of the despoiled Mantuans. Nappa argues that the confiscations prevented further civil conflict by settling potentially mutinous soldiers 'schooled in civil war'.

[174] Although Vergil's personal reprieve during the confiscations was famous: see *Ecl.* 1.

[175] The idea that the Republic could be represented by a tree or trees is suggested elsewhere in the *Georgics*. At 4.43-4, bees, latterly 'little Romans', are seen living in the hollow of a rotten tree ('*exesaeque arboris antro*'). It is certainly attractive to see a figure for the diseased Republic in this rotten trunk, especially since the bees are here seen acting peculiarly like Romans: '*fovere larem*' (4.43).

Emathiam et latos Haemi pinguescere campos.
1.491-2.

Vergil exercises his poetic licence to suggest that the civil war battle of Philippi happened in the same place as the earlier battle of Pharsalus, by his reference to Emathia and the 'plains of Haemus'. The soil of these plains has been enriched ('*pinguescere*') by its double-helping of Roman blood ('*bis sanguine nostro*').[176] The implications are at once literal and metaphorical: in a mundane sense, the soil has been churned up, thickened by its saturation with human blood, but more importantly it has been fertilised. The results of the fertilisation of the soil by blood are reaped by the farmer:

scilicet et tempus veniet, cum finibus illis
agricola incurvo terram molitus aratro
exesa inveniet scabra robigine pila,
aut gravibus rastris galeas pulsabit inanis
grandiaque effossis mirabitur ossa sepulcris.
1.493-7.

Vergil imagines a farmer in the future, working the fields at Philippi and Pharsalus, yielding a perverse crop of rusty javelins and empty helmets.[177] The farmer marvels at the uncovered bones of warriors, which seem huge to him, much as the men of the heroic age were imagined to have been much larger than their descendants in classical Greece and Rome.[178]

The harvest of bone and rusty metal seems to imply that the suggestion that soil can be fertilised by flesh and blood is bitterly ironic, but, as the *Georgics* develops, this theme is revisited in such a way that it gains a symbolic truth. In Book 4, Orpheus meets his death at the hands of revelling Bacchantes, who tear him apart and scatter his limbs across the fields:

spretae Ciconum quo munere matres
inter sacra deum nocturnique orgia Bacchi
discerptum latos iuvenem sparsere per agros.
4.520-2.

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[176] Vergil's use of the name Haemus must be a pun on the Greek word for blood, αἷμα.
[177] Mynors (1990), 96: that the *pila* is 'the characteristic weapon of the Roman legionary' emphasises the fact that the warriors on both sides in each battle were Roman. There is notable promise in the projected endurance of agriculture long into the future, and the contrast between the 'heavy hoes' ('*gravibus rastris*') and 'empty helmets' ('*galeas...inanis*'): see Gale (2000), 34; Nappa (2005), 61-2.
[178] Gale (2000), 35.

Although its results are unseen, this act represents a ritual promoting growth in the fields.[179] Orpheus' murder is a sacrifice, carried out as part of the Bacchantes '*sacra deum*'; it is their *munus*, an angry response either to the endless *munus* he offers to Eurydice, or to his failure to offer them any such tribute ('*quo munere*').[180] This kind of ritual was an established component of Dionysiac mystery cult, whose initiation rites involved symbolic death and rebirth; it was a crucial part of the process that the "rebirth" as an initiate could not come without the "death" which preceded it.[181] The sacrifice of Orpheus is 'an agrarian rite of spring', as his body is scattered like 'seed' specifically onto '*agros*'.[182] The agricultural purpose of his sacrifice is confirmed by his assimilation to the nightingale, at 511-15.

> *qualis populea maerens philomela sub umbra*
> *amissos queritur fetus, quos durus arator*
> *observans nido implumis detraxit; at illa*
> *flet noctem, ramoque sedens miserabile carmen*
> *integrat, et maestis late loca questibus implet.*

This simile revisits the scene of 2.207-11, where the angry ploughman ('*iratus...arator*') tore down the trees on his land in order to create more space for arable farming, thus destroying the homes of birds, and separating them from their nestlings.[183] The nightingale is a victim of agricultural progress, and, by his transformation into fertiliser for the fields, so too is Orpheus.[184] The manner of Orpheus' death also recalls the fate of Glaucus, torn apart and subsequently eaten by his mares (3.267-8). Glaucus too meets his end in spring ('*vere*'- 3.272), as it is his

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[179] Miles (1980), 280: this is 'an acknowledged ritual of creation'.

[180] The meaning of the phrase '*spretae...quo munere*' continues to trouble *Georgics* readers. Mynors (1990, *ad* 4.520) discusses the possibilities, questioning whether the orthodox interpretation of 'slighted by this tribute to Eurydice' is sustained by the Latin.
At 4.534 Cyrene tells Aristaeus to offer '*munera*' to appease the deities who took his bees from him, suggesting that the *munus* at 520 could refer to the insufficient tribute paid by Orpheus to the Bacchantes. However 520 is interpreted, the word's religious connotations serve certainly to highlight the ritualistic aspect of the Bacchantes' behaviour.

[181] See Morgan (1999), 188-200. Dionysiac rites consisted of 'ritual pseudo-death by dismemberment' (1999: 195), since Dionysus too suffered dismemberment (1999: 188). Morgan draws a number of parallels between Orpheus and Dionysus, who also experienced *katabasis*, when he went to the Underworld to retrieve Semele (1999: 188).

[182] Morgan (1999), 198.

[183] Powell (2008), 266: (of 2.207-11) 'when, at the poem's end, the audience met another nest-destroying ploughman, neither his motives nor his utility needed to be questioned'.

[184] See Morgan (1999), 199. Farrell (1991: 323) identifies 4.511-15 as an allusion to *Odyssey* 19.518-23, where Penelope narrates an *aetion* of the nightingale's song to a disguised Odysseus. Apart from in *Georgics* 4.511, the word *philomela* is never used in Latin to refer to one other than the mythical character, Philomela, who, in the Homeric account, unwittingly killed her own son; the normal word for nightingale is *luscinia*. The intertextual connection with the mythical Philomela adds to the Vergilian simile an element of guilt: Orpheus, too, is responsible for the death of a loved one, Eurydice.

mares' *amor* which incites them to murder him. Since this *amor* is the spur behind animal reproduction, Glaucus is a further casualty of spring creation.

Glaucus' death, like Orpheus', 'stands for the violence which is a prerequisite of that agricultural life which is the topic of the whole poem'.[185] The prominence of creative destruction in this agricultural life reflects its vital role in the political life of Rome. The evidence of the soil at Pharsalus and Philippi being fertilised by Roman blood boldly testifies to the necessity of the civil wars for securing the progress and renewal of the Roman state.[186] Just as Orpheus, Glaucus, and the nightingale are sacrificed for the benefit of agricultural productivity, the dead of the civil wars are *munera* offered in exchange for a positive future for Rome.

E. Retrospective: Symbols of Sacrifice in Augustan Rome

Sacrifice as an act is a paradigm of creative destruction: a tribute is paid at considerable cost to the donor, in order to secure some worthwhile gain.[187] This dynamic is vital to the *Georgics*' symbolism, as is illustrated by its prominence at the poem's conclusion, in the *bugonia* enacted by Aristaeus. His sacrifice is presented as an allegory for the Roman civil wars of the middle of the first century BCE; these wars were a blood tribute paid in order to secure a new and positive era in Rome.[188] Vergil's symbolic use of sacrifice was appropriate to his audience, who respected the rituals of Roman religion handed down to them by their ancestors, and maintained their key role in everyday life.[189] Sacrifice was an important way of establishing a sense of community, as everyone who took part in the ritual was entitled to share in the sacrificial meat, which in many cases supplemented an otherwise vegetarian diet. It also confirmed the hierarchies not only between gods and men, but also between

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[185] Morgan (1999), 200.

[186] James (1995) has argued convincingly that Vergil's use of the verb *condere* in the *Aeneid* stresses the human cost of Roman imperial expansion. As well as using the verb in its traditional sense, 'to found', Vergil adds to its semantic range the meaning 'to stab', 'to bury (the sword)': 'the new meaning of *condere* underscores and tightens the connection between the establishment of empire and the loss of Italian lives...In linking the slow founding of Rome with the swift stabbing of Turnus, Vergil suggests that the former rests on the latter' (1995: 624).

[187] 'While sacrifice held out a promise of divine blessing and fruitfulness and life, it simultaneously denied or at least undermined these benefits by the death and blood-spilling and skulls through which man approached god'- Elsner (1991), 52.

[188] 'Could it be that the bugonia represents on some level the rebirth of Roman society from the perverse sacrifices of civil war, *insincerus cruor*?'- Dyson (1996), 281.

[189] 'It is hard to overestimate the significance of sacrifice in Roman culture as a whole'- Elsner (1991), 50.

different classes of men, which were reflected in the types of sacrificial meat apportioned to each group.[190] In this respect, sacrifice was crucial to Roman identity: in 249/50CE, the emperor Decius, battling against the growth of Christianity among his subjects, demanded that all Roman citizens sacrifice to the gods: 'sacrifice (not particular gods or festivals) here delimited and paraded the true subjects of Rome'.[191]

At the beginning of Empire, the motif of sacrifice would be critical to the manner in which the Augustan age would present itself. Under Augustus, there were many new festivals invented, each with its own unique rituals and specific sacrifices. In 17BCE, ten years after taking the title of 'Augustus', the *princeps* officially opened a new era for Rome at the *Ludi Saeculares*. These games were marked by a series of sacrificial offerings, of animals or of cakes, several of which were carried out by Augustus himself.[192] In addition, the iconography of the period reflected the prominent place sacrifice held within the conception of the Augustan era:

> 'There is hardly a single monument or building that does not include in its decorative scheme the skulls of sacrificial animals, offering bowls...even when the structure itself is purely secular. These images recalling sacrifice, which had in the past merely served as conventional ornament, now became meaningful symbols'.[193]

In his portraiture, Augustus was very often depicted as veiled for ritual purposes, emphasising his religious role as *pontifex maximus*.[194] The presence of sacrificial imagery even in secular surroundings illustrates the eagerness of the Augustan image-makers to exploit its symbolic potential.

The Ara Pacis Augustae is the supreme illustration of the symbolic function of sacrifice in the Augustan era. Its unrivalled importance within the Augustan iconographical scheme was highlighted by the fact that the shadow of the Horologium Augusti reached out to it annually on the birthday of the *princeps*. The Ara Pacis was,

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[190] Beard, North, Price (1998), 361: 'Maintenance of the social order was seen by the Romans to be dependant on maintenance of the agreed set of symbolic structures, which assigned a role to people at all levels'; 'Sacrifices...were concerned with defining and establishing relationships of power. Not to place oneself within the set of relationships between emperor, gods, elite and people was effectively to place oneself outside the mainstream of the whole world'.

[191] Beard, North, Price (1998), 239. This measure was repeated in 303 by the emperor Diocletian (1998: 242).

[192] See, Feeney (1998), 28-31; Zanker (1988), 169; Favro (1996), 120. In each case, the number of animals or cakes offered was a multiple of three: nine lambs, nine kids, 27 cakes. When the *Carmen Saeculare* was sung on the final day of the games, the choir consisted of 27 boys and 27 girls. This can be compared with the nine animals sacrificed by Aristaeus in the *Georgics* (eight cattle and a sheep), although we are to assume that he also sacrificed a tenth- a female calf- after the narrative ends.

[193] Zanker (1988), 116.

[194] See Appendix I, Fig. 9. Also, Zanker (1988), 127.

at its core, a sacrificial altar.[195] Crucially, though, the altar's function can only have been symbolic: it was too small for blood sacrifices to have taken place upon it, the enclosure cut it off from view, and fire, critical to sacrifice, would have damaged the pristine marble.[196] The altar's symbolic function is emphasised by the decoration of its enclosure, which is dominated by images denoting sacrifice and its positive results.[197] The large, processional friezes on the exterior depict the imperial family, veiled, with Augustus either preparing for, or actually performing a sacrifice. Aeneas, too, is shown sacrificing, with Ascanius and another youth in the frieze dressed as sacrificial attendants.[198] The lower panels on the exterior of the enclosure are covered mostly with acanthus patterns: acanthus was associated with funerary rites. On the interior of the enclosure, there are twelve garlands of fruits and flowers hanging from *bucrania*, the skulls of sacrificed oxen.[199] These garlands imply that death and new life are intertwined, that natural fertility is literally "dependent" upon the slaughter of sacrifice.[200] The twelve garlands can allude to the cyclical passage of time: in Stoic cosmology there were said to be twelve *saecula*, followed by destruction and regeneration;[201] since the reign of Numa Pompilius, the months of the year were also twelve in number. The permanence of these cycles of destruction and creation, death and life, are guaranteed by their being captured in stone.[202]

The location of the Ara Pacis enhanced its symbolic purpose; placing an altar of peace on the plains of the war god, Mars- the Campus Martius- might have seemed paradoxical, but it was a meaningful and appropriate choice.[203] The Augustan peace had been imposed in war by Augustus: 'for the Romans, "peace" really meant pacification...Peace and war are thus complementary, not diametrically opposed,

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[195] Favro (1996), 129.
[196] Rehak (2006), 103.
[197] Elsner (1991: 60) argues that even the symbols of abundance on the Pax/Italia/Tellus relief denote sacrifice: 'every image on the relief...whatever their meanings...none of this can be separated from the death by which this fantasy of perfection is to be bought'.
[198] Zanker (1988), 204. See also, Holliday (1990), 551: 'both Aeneas and Augustus are laureate and veiled in their roles as participants in sacrificial rites, and both are accompanied by family members and liturgical attendants with sacramental implements'. Both men are ushering in a new *aetas*.
[199] See Appendix I, Figs. 5 and 6. 'The garlands present a wealth of vegetation that connects the seasons with the fertility of nature'- Rehak (2006), 103.
[200] Elsner (1991), 58: 'the fruitfulness of life bought at the ritual cost of death'. See also, Castriota (1995), 29: 'the notion of multiple fruits or plants connoted far more than abundance or prosperity to the ancient imagination; it was an imagery that impinged directly upon the religious beliefs and observances instituted to petition the gods for the cyclic renewal of earthly bounty'.
[201] Holliday (1990), 545: 'the alternation of bull's skulls with swags of fruit alludes to cycles of decay and regeneration, the opposite poles in the fearful Roman conception of temporality'.
[202] Rehak (2006), 104: 'death and decay have been transformed into immortality'.
[203] Holliday (1990), 557.

concepts'.[204] The Ara Pacis promised everlasting happiness and material prosperity, while acknowledging the brutal steps taken to underwrite this success. In this respect, the *Georgics* was the literary forerunner of the Ara Pacis, adapting and developing the vocabulary of sacrifice and of creative destruction for symbolic use in an Augustan context: the *Georgics* promised a return on the human sacrifices made in battle at Philippi and elsewhere.

[204] Rehak (2006), 134. See also, Holliday (1990), 555: 'the wars, the destruction, the sufferings of history were no longer the premonitory warnings of a transition from one age to another; rather they were themselves the signs of that transition'.

Conclusion: ***At rudis enituit impulso vomere campus***

This thesis has advanced an interpretation of the *Georgics* which views it as a work with a political agenda. It is a poem which seeks to advance the cause of Octavian, future emperor of Rome, with whom its author was personally connected through the patronage of Maecenas. The *Georgics* treats an Octavian whose image had already suffered greatly as a result of his involvement in the bloody and protracted civil wars of the late 40s and 30s BCE, during which he had ordered the deaths of many Roman citizens, and deprived many more of their lands in order to appease his veterans. Vergil was aware that so enormous a blot on Octavian's record could never be forgotten by the *Georgics*' readership, whose elite ranks had suffered directly from his proscriptions of senators. Although, at the time of the *Georgics*' publication, Octavian was only two years away from becoming Augustus, his past remained a threat to his future success. In the *Georgics*, therefore, Vergil deliberately raises the issue of Octavian's involvement in the civil wars in order to attempt to diminish the damaging effect which they had had on his reputation. The *Georgics* teaches its readers to accept the civil wars as a necessary precursor to a revival of the Roman *res publica*, the inevitable cataclysm which must precede any fresh start. Their agent, Octavian, is the only man capable of bringing them to a close and ushering in a new era.

Chapter One focused principally upon another of the flaws in Octavian's public image, namely his youth, but the spectre of civil war was never far away. The young Octavian had been ridiculed widely in his early career for being, among other things, a mere boy. His treatment at the hands of his elder peers was consistent with literary trends dating back to Aristotle, which viewed young men (νέοι, *iuvenes*) as destructive, heedless creatures, whose behaviour was dictated by their excessive sexual desires; their defining characteristic was their *ferocitas*. The Roman *res publica* sought to protect itself from the interests of young men by instituting legal checks on their power and influence. Faced with the fact of Octavian's ill-perceived youth, and the tradition of untrustworthy, destructive *iuvenes*, Vergil could have glossed over the issue of his subject's age. On the contrary, Vergil refers to Octavian explicitly as a youth, '*illum...iuvenem*' (1.500), and populates the *Georgics* with other *iuvenes* whose fates are almost identical in their misfortune, and whose actions are consistent with the negative depiction of young men in literary history. The poem's

high-profile youths, Orpheus, Aristaeus, and Leander, are all equally vulnerable to *amor*, which causes them to act without foresight, with destructive consequences; each of these young men causes the death of another person, and in the cases of Orpheus and Leander, the *iuvenis* himself also dies prematurely. Young men are not without their positive aspects, however, since their energy and single-mindedness can make them uniquely effective human beings: Orpheus almost manages to retrieve his dead wife, Eurydice, from the Underworld, and Aristaeus forces the seer, Proteus, to tell him how to regain his lost bees. In order for this power to be harnessed creatively, it must be allied to an element of control; since *iuvenes* lack self-control, this guidance must be externally imposed by another.

Vergil's portrayal of youth has broad implications for the *Georgics*' aim to promote the cause of Octavian. On one level, it problematises the *princeps*' tactic of emphasising his youthfulness in public portraits; the *Georgics* insists that this characteristic is unlikely to be received positively, in view of the uniformly negative depiction of young men in literature. The character of Aristaeus, as an analogue for Octavian, adds to this protreptic aspect; his lack of remorse for his role in Eurydice's death, and the perfunctory nature of his religious observance, can act as a warning to Octavian to acknowledge his past wrongs, and to atone for them through acts of high-profile piety, cementing his position as subservient to the gods. More importantly, however, Vergil's foregrounding of the issue of Octavian's youth can fulfil an ingenious role in his handling of the civil war issue: the poet mobilises this minor flaw of Octavian's against the major one that was his responsibility for the civil wars. In this reading, the *Georgics* fosters and augments the literary convention of viewing *iuvenes* as destructive, even deadly creatures, in order to stress the inevitability of destructive youthful behaviour. Since Octavian was a *iuvenis* when he was involved in the civil wars, he cannot fully be held responsible for his role in them; his conduct was dictated by forces beyond his control. The *Georgics*' wider audience is invited to forgive Octavian for his misdeeds, and, with the poet, to help shape him into the benevolent ruler who can secure Rome's future. The receptiveness of the youth to external guidance stresses the need for this outside influence, and the evidence of rash *iuvenes* growing into effective *viri* suggests the potential fruitfulness of this endeavour.

The juvenile stage in a man's life was seen, in Chapter Two, as thematically connected with the spring season in the literary tradition; just as spring heralds

fertility in nature, youth signals man's burgeoning sexual maturity. It is this transition which is of primary concern to Vergil in his depiction of spring in the *Georgics*. His preoccupation with the season is exemplified by the existence of a passage dedicated to the praise of spring (*laus veris*), and the absence of similar set-pieces focusing on the other seasons. This privileging of spring was seen to be unusual from a literary-historical standpoint: Vergil's literary precursors often did not consider spring to be a season in its own right, and those who did usually regarded summer and winter- the extremes of heat and cold- as the more important seasons. Throughout the *Georgics*, Vergil focuses all aspects of creation in nature within the spring season, often in defiance of the orthodoxy in agricultural treatises. Thus, the *amor* passage in Book 3 (242-83) stresses the idea that the sexual urge which underpins animal reproduction is a feature of spring alone ('*tempore non alio*'- 3.245). The *laus veris* passage in Book 2 (319-45) emphasises the universality of the spring creative surge, while the season's role in *bugonia* and the impregnation of mares by the West wind (3.271-7) testifies to its status as a miracle-worker. Vergil makes spring a powerful symbol for all creation, similar to the figure of Venus in the proem to Lucretius' *De Rerum Natura*, a goddess who is ultimately subsumed into *natura creatrix*.

Spring's role as a symbol of creation leads to its association with beginnings, in nature and beyond; it was in spring that the universe was created, and it is in spring that the *Georgics* begins. The juxtaposition of spring life with the death brought by winter insists upon spring as part of a cycle of beginning and ending: *ex nihilo* beginning is not possible. The spring event of *bugonia* is characterised by the same dynamic, that of life issuing from death: bees, elsewhere assimilated to Romans, are created from slaughtered oxen. *Bugonia* expresses in miniature the purpose of Vergil's symbolic spring as a whole: it represents the creation of a new Rome from the dying Republic. Vergil borrows from the Greek literary tradition the notion of a direct correspondence between politics and nature: just rule is matched by natural abundance. A place at the head of state is thus reserved for Octavian, through whose leadership Rome will enter a new and fertile Golden Age.

By demonstrating the propagandist potential of spring, and its concomitant abundance in nature, as symbols, Vergil provided early impetus for the regenerative movement which would produce works of official Augustan art, both visual and literary, and thus set the tone for the new era. The Ara Pacis Augustae and the *Carmen Saeculare* promote the same motif of political stability being attended by

natural fertility. Through the visual art and architecture of the Augustan period, Vergil's affecting vision of all-encompassing creativity reached a wider audience than any work of literature could.

Vergil's conception of spring creativity was found, in Chapter Three, to be rather more problematic than it had first appeared. On closer inspection, the *Georgics*' spring reveals a more destructive, ambivalent aspect, which is eclipsed on first reading by its exclusively creative facade. In Book 1, the evidence of stormy weather in spring suggests a season not always amenable to man and his endeavours, but the role of Jupiter as storm-bringer invites comparison with the theodicy of *labor*; storm, like *labor*, is a tool employed by Jupiter to harden and improve mankind. Even the cataclysmic storm of the Deucalion myth can have a constructive purpose, paving the way for a better human race. Octavian's imitation of Jupiter in the *Georgics*, even in his role as Thunderer (4.561), suggests that he has power over terrestrial *tempestates*, the human equivalent of Jupiter's ethereal *tempestates*. On Earth, these storms manifest themselves in such destructive events as civil war. The notion of providence inherent to Jupiter's institution of *labor*, and of storms, allows for a similarly productive purpose behind Octavian's warmongering.

The crux of this chapter rested upon the Vergilian depiction of *amor*. This spring urge was seen in Chapter Two as the force behind animal reproduction, but here it was revealed as a spur to violent, heedless behaviour in all creatures. It is *amor* which dictates the portrayal both of the *iuvenis* and of spring in the *Georgics*. The youth is governed by *amor* in his every action: he is a slave to his sexual desires, and is therefore prone to acting violently and without regard for anything else. Spring is the season when *amor* takes hold of the natural world: it causes wild behaviour and mutual antagonism among animals, but, crucially, it is absolutely necessary to reproduction, whose creative outcome is unquestioned. It is for this reason that *amor*, like the *tempestas*, was divinely ordained: the phrase '*amor omnibus idem*' (3.244) recalls the theodicy of *labor*'s '*labor omnia vicit*' (1.145); both *labor* and *amor* cause mankind hardship, but their suffering is of ultimate benefit. This suffering is once again linked with civil war, as the battle of the bulls (3.215-41) compares the conflict between Octavian and Antony with the spring sparring of animals.

A further spring act, the miraculous *bugonia*, is further assimilated to civil war. Its cost in terms of animal suffering is exemplified, but so too is its wondrous outcome. As in Chapter Two, the birth of new bees is considered a metaphor for the

birth of a new Rome. This revival has come at the expense of many Roman citizens, killed in the civil wars, but it could have come in no other way: the principle of *bugonia* is one of exchange- of death for life- the latter cannot exist without the former. Thus, the blood of civil war dead enriches the soil at Philippi (1.491-2). This brutal truth is reiterated throughout the *Georgics*, as the principle of **creative destruction** is seen to underpin agricultural *labor*. Most prominently, the metaphor of farming as warfare highlights the violence inherent to creation. The subjective, contingent nature of progress is expressed in the cutting down of woods for the creation of new land for the plough (2.207-11): for the birds this means a loss of their homes, and of their offspring, while the farmer sees only the opportunity for greater productivity. Vergil acknowledges the sacrifices made by many Romans in order for Octavian to reach his current position of power, and concedes the fact that the new Rome which this second Caesar will bring will not be the same as the old, idealised Republic; he insists that it is a matter of seeing the possibilities, focusing not on the lost trees, but on the fresh, untilled soil.

Vergil's prominent use of the motif of creative destruction appealed directly to popular Roman conceptions of sacrifice, a practice which likewise sees the exchange of death for life. Vergil's adoption of the mechanics of sacrifice for an apologetic purpose- to promote the cause of Octavian- is complemented by the visual art of the Augustan period. The vernal abundance of the Ara Pacis Augustae is punctuated with intimations of the means by which it has been gained: the skulls of sacrificial animals, and the figures of men such as Octavian himself, veiled for the performance of religious rites. The sacrifice of Roman citizens exacted by Octavian in the civil wars was a debt paid to the gods in order to secure a Roman revival.

Appendix I: Plates

Fig. 1. Early portrait type of Octavian- this copy ca. 30BCE. (Source: Zanker (1988), Fig. 33)

Fig. 2. Head of Prima Porta Augustus, after an original dated 27BCE. (Source: Zanker (1988), Fig. 83)

Fig. 3. Ara Pacis Augustae. Vine clusters on lower external wall of enclosure. (Source: Zanker (1988), Fig. 140)

Fig. 4. Ara Pacis Augustae. 'Pax' relief. Seated goddess with symbols of fertility. (Source: Zanker (1988), Fig. 136)

Fig. 5. Ara Pacis Augustae. Interior. Garland frieze. (Source: Castriota (1995), Fig. 41)

Fig. 6. Marble statue base from sanctuary of Hercules on the Tiber, Augustan. Museum Delle Terme. (Source: Zanker (1988), Fig. 97)

Fig. 7. Cuirass detail of statue of Augustus from the Villa of Livia at Prima Porta. After 20BCE. (Source: Zanker (1988), Fig. 148b)

Fig. 8. Denarius of Octavian, before 31BCE. Obverse: Octavian with laurel wreath. Reverse: Nude statue of Octavian atop *columna rostrata*. (Source: Zanker (1988), Figs. 32a and 32b)

Fig. 9. Statue of Augustus in *toga* with veiled head. (Source: Zanker (1988), Fig. 104)

Appendix II: The Two Accounts of *Bugonia*

Exiguus primum atque ipsos contractus in usus
eligitur locus; hunc angustique imbrice tecti
parietibusque premunt artis, et quattuor addunt
quattuor a ventis obliqua luce fenestras.
Tum vitulus bima curvans iam cornua fronte
quaeritur; huic geminae nares et spiritus oris
multa reluctanti obstruitur, plagisque perempto
tunsa per integram solvuntur viscera pellem.
Sic positum in clauso linquunt et ramea costis
subiciunt fragmenta, thymum casiasque recentes.
Hoc geritur Zephyris primum impellentibus undas,
ante novis rubeant quam prata coloribus, ante
garrula quam tignis nidum suspendat hirundo.
4.295-307.

' tu munera supplex
tende petens pacem et facilis venerare Napaeas;
namque dabunt veniam votis, irasque remittent.
Sed modus orandi qui sit, prius ordine dicam:
quattuor eximios praestanti corpore tauros,
qui tibi nunc viridis depascunt summa Lycaei,
delige, et intacta totidem cervice iuvencas.
Quattuor his aras alta ad delubra dearum
constitue, et sacrum iugulis demitte cruorem,
corporaque ipsa boum frondoso desere luco.
Post, ubi nona suos Aurora ostenderit ortus,
inferias Orphei Lethaea papavera mittes
et nigram mactabis ovem, lucumque revises:
placatam Eurydicen vitula venerabere caesa.'
4.534-47.

Although the two versions of *bugonia* presented in *Georgics* 4 are very often conflated in scholarly treatments of the poem as a whole, their differences are worthy of consideration. The former is a scientific procedure (4.295-314), with no explicit implication of any divine or supernatural element:[1] the audience witnesses the formation of new bees in the putrefying carcass of the calf.[2] The latter description (4.538-47), detailed to Aristaeus by Cyrene, and repeated in the narrative of his subsequent actions, is strictly a sacrificial practice,[3] and on a much larger scale: Aristaeus slaughters eight cattle- four cows and four bulls- a single black sheep, and a female calf.[4] This sacrifice is carried out according to Roman custom, as the cattle are bled to death through slit throats: '*sacrum iugulis demitte cruorem*' (4.542).[5] This is in pointed contrast with the earlier description, where the calf is to beaten to death,

[1] Reference to the Zephyr (4.305) could imply divine involvement, since the supernatural power of this wind is highlighted elsewhere, as in Book 3, where it impregnates mares (3.271-7).
[2] Nappa (2005), 191: 'the bees can be seen as a reconfiguration of the living matter of the cattle. The pulverizing of the vital organs kills the individual bullock but reconfigures it into a community of bees'. Perkell (1989: 77) envisages a rather more spiritual process: the stuffing of the calf's nostrils (4.300) prevents its soul from escaping, and allows it to pass to the bees.
[3] Mynors (1990), 321: 'ancient theorists seem to have distinguished a kind of sacrifice called *animalis hostia*, in which only the victim's life (*anima*) was offered to the deity, from the more familiar kind in which the entrails were inspected and the carcase subsequently burnt'. See also, Miles (1980: 284) on *bugonia* as sacrifice.
[4] The calf ('*vitula*'- 547) is mentioned in Cyrene's prescription to Aristaeus, but not in the narrative of his subsequent sacrifices. Thomas (1988: *ad* 4.547) suggests that this is simply because it is a 'thank-offering after the success of the *bugonia*', to be paid to Eurydice, and therefore 'would belong logically after 558', but was omitted because Vergil 'clearly wished to end the section with the appearance of the bees'.
[5] Miles (1980: 287) finds similarities between Aristaeus' sacrifice and the rites of the Roman *parentalia*; Vergil is 'returning the focus of the poem from a general to a specifically Roman context'.

and its hide is explicitly not punctured ('*integram...pellem*'- 4.302). The fact that there is no blood-letting, along with the clear indication that the victim is unwilling to die ('*multa reluctanti*'- 4.301), and also that it takes multiple blows to kill the calf ('*plagisque perempto*- 4.301) excludes the possibility that this *bugonia* is a sacrifice in any Roman sense.[6]

There are also issues of time and place: Aristaeus' *bugonia* is probably carried out in the middle of summer, since his assault upon Proteus takes place when the Dog Star, Sirius, is at its height: '*iam rapidus torrens sitientis Sirius Indos / ardebat caelo*' (425-6). In the earlier account, the process is apparently to be carried out in the spring, as is indicated in 305-7:[7]

> *Hoc geritur Zephyris primum impellentibus undas,*
> *ante novis rubeant quam prata coloribus, ante*
> *garrula quam tignis nidum suspendat hirundo.*

Meanwhile, the Egyptian setting of the first account of *bugonia* is not compatible with Aristaeus' profoundly Roman sacrifice.[8]

The differences between the two accounts of *bugonia* in *Georgics* 4 cannot escape notice; most scholarly treatments of the poem mention their disparity, but no comprehensive solution has so far been provided.[9] James O'Hara's work on *Inconsistency in Roman Epic* might suggest that no explanation is needed, not least because, in the *Aeneid* especially, 'Vergil follows the precedent of Hellenistic poetry and Catullus 64...by alluding to, or, in a more challenging practice, actually following

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[6] See Beard, North, Price (1998: 36-7), on the rules governing Roman sacrifice, among them: 'the victim had to be killed by a single blow'; 'the victim escaping or struggling ...would have been very inauspicious'. See also Nappa (2005: 191) for the first *bugonia* as non-sacrificial.

[7] Miles (1980: 285) suggests that the two descriptions of *bugonia* imply a different duration for the process of bee-formation- the latter being nine days (the length of Roman funeral rites), and the former seeing bees appear '*mox*' (4.310). While Vergil is clearly more specific with regard to Aristaeus' sacrifice, the initial *bugonia* is not necessarily any quicker. The elaborate setting for the procedure suggests that the carcass is to be left just as long, if not longer, and '*mox*', in 310, does not imply that the bees appear soon after the death of the calf, but that they begin to become whole soon after the appearance of '*trunca*' and '*pedum*'.

[8] It has been suggested that, by locating his scientific description in Egypt, Vergil implies its untruth: Thomas (1988), 197: 'V. has entered the world of the sowing of dragons' teeth and harvests of warriors'. See Chapter Three (p. 163) of this thesis for more discussion of the Egyptian setting for the modern *bugonia*.

[9] See, for example, Thomas (1988), *ad* 4.538-58: 'the *bugonia*, ostensibly a scientific procedure at 281-314, has now become a religious function- whose details, moreover, differ fundamentally from the previous description'. Thomas does not proffer a reason for this, other than that 'this removes it even further from the realities of the poem'. This implies that the rest of the *Georgics* is more deliberately consistent with 'the real world of the Italian farmer' (196), than it truly is. See Chapter Three, 'Spring and ambivalence' (pp. 157-9), for a discussion of Thomas, Ross, and 'reality' in the *Georgics*.

contradictory mythological variants'.[10] In this case, however, the mythological variant which makes Aristaeus the discoverer of *bugonia* is believed to have been Vergil's own invention;[11] this would mean that he had complete control over its compatibility, or lack thereof, with his description of the modern, Egyptian *bugonia*. While it may be that it was simply Vergil's aim to 'produce ambiguity or indeterminacy',[12] before surrendering to this conclusion it is worth considering some other possible explanations for this particular Vergilian inconsistency.

There is perhaps an initial clue to interpretation provided in the introduction to the Aristaeus *aetion*. In 286, Vergil vows to tell the story of *bugonia* from its very origins:

> *expediam prima repetens ab origine famam.*

After describing the practice itself at 295-314, he asks the Muses to explain these origins:

> *quis deus hanc, Musae, quis nobis extudit artem?*
> *unde nova ingressus hominum experientia cepit?*
> 4.315-6

In 315, Aristaeus is alluded to as the inventor of exactly the practice described in 295-314 ('*hanc...artem*'). The phrase '*extudit artem*' forms an intratextual link back to the theodicy section of Book 1, where Vergil explains Jupiter's decision to bring to an end the Golden Age, in order to force mankind to 'hammer out' the *artes*: '*ut varias usus meditando* ***extunderet artis /*** *paulatim*' (1.133-4). The resulting implication is that *bugonia* was one such *ars*, developed gradually by arduous human *labor*. This intratextual link highlights the shared trials of Aristaeus and Iron Age humanity. In spite of his divine parentage, as son of Apollo and the nymph, Cyrene, Aristaeus, too, has had to 'hammer out' his agricultural *artes* by repetitive hard work:

> *en etiam hunc ipsum vitae mortalis honorem,*
> *quem mihi vix frugum et pecudum custodia sollers*
> *omnia temptanti* ***extuderat****, te matre relinquo.*
> 4.326-8.

[10] O'Hara (2007), 85.
[11] See, for example, Thomas (1988), 202: 'the role of Aristaeus, along with his connections with *bugonia* and with Proteus, is clearly original to V[ergil]'.
[12] O'Hara (2007), 142.

He is also subject to the will of the gods like any other mortal: just as Iron Age man has had fire and the Earth's spontaneous bounty taken away from him by Jupiter, Aristaeus has had his bees taken away by Orpheus. The comparison ends there though, since Aristaeus' success in regaining his bees is essentially a divine gift; the verb '*extudit*' (4.315) is certainly no reflection of his actions in the epyllion: for all his efforts in grappling with Proteus, his reward comes swiftly, without any need for repetition.[13]

Ultimately, a further question in line 316 clarifies matters: 'what started men's experiments on this new line?', '*experientia*' denoting the same kind of 'trial and error' inherent to '*extudit*'.[14] While Aristaeus was responsible for discovering the practice by which bees could be created from ox carcasses, it was subsequent human experimentation which developed this into the *bugonia* described in 295-314. For this reason, it is not necessary for the *bugonia* of the epyllion to resemble with any precision the practice at 295-314; what matters is simply that the issue of bees following Aristaeus' sacrifice matches the outcome of the "Egyptian" *bugonia* which it spawned.[15] In this vein, Mynors argues that, 'if there are important differences between 295-314 and 538-43, they are only a measure of the improvements to which so many of man's greatest discoveries have been subjected in course of time-particularly in a country with the technical skill of ancient Egypt'.[16] This explanation seems initially satisfactory, since it is permissible that the methods and apparatus involved in carrying out *bugonia* should have been adapted in this way. It is a legitimate sign of progress that the *bugonia* at 295-314 came to require the slaughter of one animal, as opposed to ten; also, the practice described at 295-314 may bear fruit more quickly, since there is no mention of the nine day wait required for Aristaeus' *bugonia*. However, it seems likely that such an improvement would have been mentioned, and there is no sense in the text that the *bugonia* at 295-314 is

[13] It is possible that Vergil's *aetion* is incomplete: it is not necessary to assume that Aristaeus' sacrifice is in fact the first performance of the practice which comes to be known as *bugonia*. It could be that, by appeasing the wronged gods through sacrifice, Aristaeus gains knowledge of the scientific procedure to which the audience is introduced at 295-314.
[14] Mynors (1990), *ad* 4.315-16.
[15] There is, in fact, no reason to assume that Vergil will indeed provide the *aetion* for *bugonia* which he promises. His reference in Book 1 (60-3) to the Deucalion myth was intended as an *aetion* for regional variation in agricultural production, a function which it patently fails to fulfil.
[16] Mynors (1990), 321. Servius, in his note on 4.533 agrees that the process was '*melior facta per industriam*'.

especially quick, nor that its yield is any greater than in Aristaeus' performance. If, in fact, the speed or productivity of *bugonia* has not been enhanced, it is difficult to explain the justification behind the design of a specific structure for the procedure (295-8), which complicates the logistics without visible reward. Finally, it is not possible to reconcile the shift from slitting the animal's throat to leaving the skin unbroken with any gradual process of development- this is an absolute u-turn, and remains an anomaly.

There is a further possible explanation for the difference between the two descriptions of *bugonia* which has so far not received treatment in *Georgics* scholarship. Although it still fails to solve the problem of blood-letting (to exsanguinate, or not to exsanguinate), it could be considered that the two accounts of *bugonia* represent contrasting perspectives on the same practice, each focalised in a different way. The first version, at 295-314, is still within the confines of the agricultural exposition of much of the *Georgics*, and is accordingly scientific in its aspect.[17] From line 315 the poem shifts mode to epyllion, where the mythical and the divine have a more prominent role to play in the nature of things.[18] After Aristaeus' sacrifice, bees form from the ox carcasses, just as they do in the first account of *bugonia*, but they do so in the absence of human witnesses. In lines 554-8, Aristaeus, on his return to the site of sacrifice after nine days, sees the bees swarming around the remains of the cattle; there is no indication of how the bees got there, since it is understood to be a divine action, and therefore beyond explanation. By contrast, in 295-314 there is a strong sense of autopsy: the audience witnesses ('*visenda*'- 309) the formation of the bees from the cattle, as they grow from limbless trunks to winged creatures (309-10). The disparity between the two passages in this way necessarily evokes Lucretius, although it is unclear whether Vergil is fostering or rejecting Epicurean philosophy. In the scientific account, the manner of the formation of bees from the calf appears to allude to Epicurean atomic theory, as 'a reconfiguration of the living matter of the cattle'.[19] In light of this, the scientific account of *bugonia* can be seen as an Epicurean-style debunking of the *bugonia* in the epyllion, paring away

[17] *Pace* Thomas (1988), 196: 'The plausible, technical material of the *Georgics* ends at 282, with the death of the hive'. *Bugonia* is by no means 'plausible', but that does not prevent Vergil's initial description of it from being genuinely 'technical'.
[18] 'We are...in a world of fiction'- Ross (1987), 216.
[19] Nappa (2005), 191.

the divine machinery to leave a purely scientific process.[20] The order is somewhat irregular though, as Aristaeus' *bugonia* comes second, and gets pride of place at the end of the work, leaving the earlier account with no chance to "correct" it. Such ambiguous engagement with Lucretian subject matter is extremely common in the *Georgics*, as Vergil frequently pits the world views of Lucretius, Hesiod, and the Stoic, Aratus, against one another, presenting no obvious winner.[21] The pride of place granted to the mythical version of *bugonia* could privilege it over the pseudo-scientific version, which could itself be seen as more parodic than earnest: it is unknowable whether Lucretius would have considered *bugonia* scientifically possible, but Vergil's double-quick bullock-to-bees transformation seems from one perspective like a crude oversimplification of Epicurean atomism.

[20] *Bugonia* is 'a *fama* totally without any practical basis in scientific agriculture...and yet it is given an explanation by Virgil that uses the terms of science, an explanation so clearly intended to be rationalizing'- Ross (1987), 218.
[21] See Gale (2000), especially 15: 'I read the *Georgics* as challenging Lucretius' world-view...by bringing it into conflict with those of other didactic intertexts'; also 58.

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