

VIRGIL'S *ECLOGUES*: AN EXPERIENCE OF POETIC TRANSLATION*

Prof. Raimundo Carvalho
Doutor em Comunicação e Semiótica, Pontifícia Universidade Católica de São Paulo
Universidade Federal do Espírito Santo

Translation by Lillian DePaula

Abstract: The following text exposes the process undergone in translating Virgil's *Eclogue* into contemporary Brazilian Portuguese. By analyzing the procedure adopted by other translators, Paul Valéry's French version and the translations by the Brazilians Odorico Mendes and Péricles Eugênio da Silva Ramos, strategies for more successfully overcoming the space within poetic translation as a place where two poets will debate, measure forces and carry on the process of construing and expanding the poetic sign is herein presented and discussed.

Key words: Translation; Poetics; Classical poetry.

Resumo: O presente texto expõe o processo percorrido durante a tradução das écloas de Virgílio para o português contemporâneo do Brasil. Ao analisar o procedimento adotado por outros tradutores, o francês Paul Valéry e os brasileiros Odorico Mendes e Péricles Eugênio da Silva Ramos, evidenciam-se estratégias para melhor perceber o espaço da tradução como um lugar, no qual dois poetas irão debater, medir forças e levar adiante o processo de construção e expansão do signo poético.

Palavras-chave: Tradução; Poética; Poesia Clássica.

Space within translation, far from being a neutral field, is the stage of a true battle, for, just as in an *amabeu* song or in a competition among troubadours, in which each of the fighters must carry on the theme launched by the adversary, the space within poetic translation is the place where two poets will debate, measure forces and carry on the process of construing and expanding the poetic sign.

* Cf. VIRGÍLIO. *Bucólicas*. Tradução e comentário de Raimundo Carvalho. Belo Horizonte: Crisálida, 2005.

In this millenary confrontation, the final verdict is almost always unfavorable for the poet-translator since, among other reasons, in these days of desacralization, days in which artistic objects have lost their aura, I believe that modern and industrial society, in a regressive and ideologizing attitude, still reserves poetry an aura of sacralization that attempts to erase its effects and to remove it from human labor, understood as an act of transformation and critique.

Poetic translation brings poetry to the realm of men, in an attitude that edges with the profane and, for that reason, deserves to, if not receive absolute condemnation, to ultimately allow room for prior mistrust, in that the translation critic, a attentive customs official, will be occupied in blocking the passage of whatever spurious material not in accordance with the original.

Translation has not, nevertheless, always been seen as such. In Rome, before and during Virgil's days, there was no difference between a translator and a poet (ROCHETTE, 1995, p. 251) and it was through great efforts in translation, through direct and intense contact with Greek culture and literature, that Roman literature became what it was. In a wider sense, the virgilian eclogues themselves represent a moment of the luminosity of this kind of translation enterprise. In his *Eclogue*, Virgil quotes, corrects and translates Theocritus, mingling and melting other authors, in the making of a mosaic and, in the mist of so many other voices, he establishes his own very personal voice.

Therefore, translating the *Eclogue*, for me, meant a new staging of an original battle within the text itself and, as its translator, I had no other choice but that of facing the virgilian text as a provocation from one poet to another. So that this claim does not generate misunderstandings, nor seem as an illegitimate self elevation to a position of power, I'd like to clarify that when referring to a **poet**, I rely on the etymological sense of the word meaning **creator**. In this sense, the creation of a poet-creator is a controlled creation, but nonetheless not less creative and autonomous. Translation and poetics unite in an effort of construing a new and autonomous object which is, after all, the result of every artistic action. For Valéry, whose translation of the *Eclogue* is considered, in itself,

a masterpiece, there would be no novelty in presenting the modern reader with an eclogue by Virgil, but not so with eclogues come upon through different procedures from those of the first century, those which might readily invite novelty (VALÉRY, 1957, p. 1455). Just as Valéry, it was in the classical Alexander verse that I was to find a meter that might substitute the Portuguese dactylic hexameter of the Latin text. Besides mirroring with Valéry's translation, my translation places itself within a space created by the decasyllable introduced by Odorico Mendes, translator from the 19th century of the complete works by Homer and Virgil, and the archaic alexandrine verses by Péricles Eugênio da Silva Ramos.

Once the equivalent metric measure was found, whenever possible I tried to recover the varied alliterative schemes of the original. Alliteration, being not only a characteristic of Virgil's poetry but of Latin poetry as a whole, within my own text, I tried to maintain the marks of this procedure, which are above all rhythmic marks, and highlight the images of the poem.

Enrico de Lorenzo described, with an abundance of examples, the complex alliterative structure of Virgil's verses which I schematically reproduce here so as to give an idea of the complexity of this matter, and also to provide the reader of the *Eclogues* a possible key to a parallel reading of the translation alongside the original, in case one wishes to adventure into that terrain: (1) bimember alliterations; (2) trimember alliterations: without the insertion of non alliterative vocabulary, with one insertion, or two or more insertions; (3) quadrimember alliterations with insertions; (4) quintuple alliterations with insertions; (5) complex alliterative structures: aa bb, ab ab, ab ba, aa bbb, ababa, aabbba, abacbc, abcddca/ad with *enjambment* (LORENZO, 1988, p. 13-48).

To have an idea of the dimension of the alliteration structures in the *Eclogues*, one needs to know that from its 830 verses, 230 contain one of the alliterative schemes mentioned. And that is so if we decide to consider alliteration only the sonorous occurrences in the beginning of the words, as it is usually done. But, if we take alliteration as the conjunction of similar sounds, consonants or vowels, not only in the beginning, but also

in the middle and in the end, as Michenaud (1953, p. 343-378) will have it, the incidence of alliteration will expand itself throughout the text and it will then be better that we speak, not of alliteration, but instead of paronomasia so as to comprehend the sonorous texture of the work.

In spite of its rigid conceptual schemes, I used Enrico de Lorenzo's book as a map. Thanks to his work, I was especially attentive to the alliterative schemes pointed out and could try to redo them in Portuguese, either within the same verses as in the original, or through an almost natural process of reflowering, as a compensation, in other places of the text.

I must also confess that this triggered within me a ludic attitude not only in the reading of the Latin text as also in the manipulation of the words in Portuguese, during the act of translation, as if I were making the venerable dead language vibrate in the live body of our tongue, in a kind of ecstatic moving of signs.

It is important to make it clear that I understand alliteration or paronomasia as an element which is part of a more ample structure, which is that of rhythm, be it musical or visual. Alliteration rests on the fact that the sounds may have an expressive value, but this value is not autonomous, for sound does not exist as an independent unit. The expressive value of a sound must be perceived within its sonorous ambiance. That way, operating the notion of verbal musicality in a more organic form, instead of letting myself be taken by the flow of an easy and redundant melody, I pursued, in the verses I created, that Virgil might speak with some enchantment our language, in a melody which privileges concision, rupture, dissonance and contrast in sounds.

I find it a waste to typify these structural marks, those of alliteration, comparing them to phenomena of nature, as prefer some naturalizing critics, who will capture the melody of the verses as a redundancy in relation to the apparent meaning of the words and not as new information, an opening to new possibilities of meanings or the irradiation or expansion of a sign beyond the cloister of a meaning that a rigid syntax may determine.

Intending to keep, whenever possible, the repetitions, anaphors, chiasmus, besides resorting to hyperbates, I was also attentive to the syntactic structure of the verses. According to a rhetoric tradition which dates back to Quintilian, the placement of the words within a Latin sentence obeys an imperative of a musical nature. Testing this hypothesis in Portuguese, without causing damage towards meaning, opened the field of action for this translator, allowing me to rearrange the verses with more liberty, distant from the narrow limits of our language's logic of ordination and, consequently, it also helped me to maintain the order of the appearance of the images in the verses.

As for the plan of content itself, I tried to remain within the semantic field of the poem, not adding anything that might disfigure its original intention, nor avoiding to translate, in its integrity, those elements which compose the cultural sphere in which the poem finds its full signification. But one should not expect my translation to present canine loyalty to the literal meaning of the original. My concern was, more than anything else, to recreate the effect triggered by the original, its musical and visual rhythm.

A minimally equipped poet translator will find no great difficulty in carrying out the task of refunctionalizing the poetic text, without significant losses or unnecessary additions, as long as he/she pursues a converging translation and avoids the short cuts of layering over the material, a kind of empty dysfunctional beautification that does not consider the poem's process of signification.

A translation, as an original piece, is made of losses and gains. There are no perfect translations, just as there are no perfect opuses. If the poetic work were not so idealized and discouraged, we might have many and good translations of classical poetry. For such, there is no ready recipe. An imperfect knowledge of Latin should not hold the neophyte back, for this lack in knowledge will not come except through the confrontation of the text itself. Besides, there are excellent critical and commented editions in other modern languages which will help and save time. There is no reason to break one's head over already solved problems. Translators do not lack problems, but they are, above all,

problems related to the poetic structure of the material. The rest is a question of availability and research.

But let us move on to the *Eclogues*. Yet, before I examine one of the first I chose for a brief textual comparison between the original and its translation, it might be reasonable to enquire: why the *Eclogues*? Simply because this work is the fountain from which all the lyricism in the West comes, and it is good to return to the source whenever we can. By returning to the origin, we may better trace the path tradition has taken up to our days. An additional and not less important motive is that the *Eclogues* are witness to the eloquence of thought prior to the rise of Christianity, and they impress us through the naturalness with which they deal with the amorous options of their characters, through the vision of an exuberant nature, breathing close to the gods, through the direct dealings with political issues, through the intriguing metapoetical play, and through the construction of a utopian space, Arcadia, which led the poet to dream of another Golden epoch in a world of peace.

In the first eclogue, Melibeu and Titiro, two shepherds, one who had been looted, and the other saved from having his lands confiscated in favor of civil war veterans, talk about each other's fortunes. Melibeu is about to leave his land, a land with which he relates beyond the utilitarian and profane.

The first five verses of the poem already contain all the formal characteristics of the entire work. A voiceless dental lingual consonant /t/ in an alliterating sequence, skillfully distributed, in the first four verses, alternating with a bilabial /m/, compose the musical prelude, in which the *tenui auena/ **tenuis flute***, not only is referred to verbally, but is also made heard through words, performing a *siluestrem musam/ **sylvan song***, in an iconic configuration of the entire work. Melibeu's fifth verse introduces the idea of the propagation of sounds in nature, words and lamentations of poets, which will be permanently retaken, in a process of repetition similar to the musical technique of *leitmotiv*. This mystical solidarity between humankind and nature, expressed in musical terms, is one of the keys to understanding the *Eclogues*.

Still within the first stanza, the parallelism between verses 1 and 4, 2 and 5, 3 and 4, iconizing the structure in echoes, as if reinforcing the idea of nature in solidarity and reverberation, also stands out. The quiasmo *Tityre, tu...nos/nos...tu*, *Tityre* highlighting the contrast between the destiny of each shepherd is also observed.

On the other hand, Tityro, who was granted the right to maintain the ownership of his land, exalts and deifies the emperor in his song, in a discreet and allusive manner, drawing focus on the sacredness of the imperial function. The situation of antagonism between the two shepherds is not an obstacle for solidarity.

Tityro's first intervention reproduces the usual language structure for religious supplication, be it with the vocative introduced by the interjection *o*, which brings solemnity to the supplication, be it with the use of liturgy language technique which consists, in this case, of the triple repetition of the pronoun *ille*, when referring to a god (FIDELI, 1972, p. 276).

In Melibeus' resigned lament, nature is evoked as a never ending source of divine manifestation, either when foretelling his disgrace, with lightning striking his oak tree, Jupiter's (FRAZER, 1994, p. 197) sacred tree, or through nature's solidarity to Tityro and Amarilis' love, by echoing the sound of the flute for lovers or for the call of the loved one.

Tityro's second line, as if trying to avoid answering Melibeus' question directly, solemnly presents the city of Rome. In spite of the solemn and formulaic *Urbem quam dicunt Romam*, Rome's grandiosity is translated into pastoral language terms. When speaking of Rome, Tityro does so using elements from his daily labor, the animals and the trees. Tityro's god is a god among men, and Rome is his Olympus. Virgil relies on the retarding epic narrative technique, introducing Rome as a fabulous city, distant and diverse from the shepherds' smaller cities (GIGANTE, 1988, p. 45).

In Titiro's third intervention, the use of the retarding technique is also noted. Titiro does not answer Melibeu's question directly. He begins his line with *Libertas*, which more than an abstract notion, is the personification of a goddess. The verbal form *repexit*, for which *Libertas* is the subject, confirms the hypothesis. The verb *respicio* is part of the religious vocabulary and expresses the attention granted mortals by the gods. The quiasmo *tamen respexit* (v. I, 27) and *respexit tamen* (v. I, 29), which I have kept in my translation, emphasizes divine action (FIDELI, 1972, p. 281-282).

One may also observe, in Melibeu's words (v. 36-39), the use of a procedure (quite strange for the modern reader of the eclogues) from religious language: Amarilis, though absent from scene, is evoked in the second person of the singular, as if she were present. The triple emphatic use of the pronoun *ipse* and the repetition of the name Titiro are also observed, as if injecting pathos to the appeal for return.

In fact, forgetting his sad situation, Melibeu applies the same technique of retarding, in order to evoke, while making use of the traveling theme proposed by Titiro, his absence and his lover's suffering, as well as nature's solidarity to human drama (FIDELI, 1972, p. 282).

Following that, Titiro (v. 40-45) exposes his state of servitude prior to his voyage, his encounter with his god and protector and the answer he is given to his plea. The formula *tam praesentis divos*, in which *praesens* does not simply mean appropriate, but also unites the meaning of present, actual and efficient, belongs to religious language and is already found in authors as Cicero and Livio.

Considered obscure, *iuuenis'* reply was conceived as the concise and ambiguous reply of an oracle (FIDELI, 1972, p. 282-283). In my translation, I condensed the two Latin verbal forms *pascite* and *submittite* in one, "tangei", without bringing any greater loss to the meaning of this stretch, I believe.

The long stretch which goes from verses 46-59, presents Melibeu praising Titiro and may be divided in two parts, both beginning with the evocative *Fortunate senex* (**Velho da sorte**/ fortune's senex/old man, in my translation), first hemistiquio of verses 46 and 51. The first part is full of realism in the description of Titiro's rural property, in contraposition to the idealized painting in the second part.

For Marcelo Gigante, when commenting Saint-Denis' article on the *variações* by Valéry, "the evocation on Titiro's terrains is a stanza which 'sings', one of the evidences of Virgil's 'audio imagination': the play on alliteration confirms Valéry's intuitive precision, one which discovered within the *Eclogues a force chantante*, an expansion of the musical resources of the Latin language" (GIGANTE, 1988, p. 71-72). In the translation of this stretch I was also watchful for the series of anaphors, as also for the alliterations, trying to recapture in Portuguese, approximately, the intriguing system of resonances and echoes in Virgilian poetry.

In verses 59-63, Titiro expresses gratitude to his benefactor, through a series of similes of the hyperbolic type, which consists of listing and comparing the events impossible to concretely see realize. The first two points to the confusion of natural phenomena, the other two may be defined as political or geographical. In the first, the earth animals (deers) are transposed to the heights; in the second, the water animals (fish) to the land; in the third, the **partas**, enemies to the Romanas in the East, drink water in the western river (**Árara**); and, finally, the Germanic, enemies to the Romans from the West, drink water from the river in the East (**Tigre**).

The *iuuenis* whose semblance will remain intact within Titiro's heart is *god*, capable of intervening within both terrains, that of nature and that of politics, assuring an order that does not only fall into the chaos, because of its presence and force. The theme for justice is, therefore, essential to mythical thought, for which any form of unbalance in the social order represents a threat to the cosmic order, since "the social order is nothing but the aspect with which men assume the order of nature" (TORRANO, 1992, p. 37).

In this direction, it is worth reconsidering the indications of emperor cult in this eclogue, many times seen as flatteries with the goal of obtaining personal favors, so as to include them in the mystical scheme for administrating justice, of which the governors, through the adequate and precise use of the word, “collaborate towards the maintaining the cosmic order, with which the community’s balance, opulence and prospering future is assured” (TORRANO, 1992, p. 37).

Melibeu’s last intervention (v.64-78) is loaded with emphasis, not only in the tone as in the special images. The three first verses bring a catalogue of the geographical points that will mark his exile the exile of those, as himself, that did not have the same fortune as Titiro. What for Titiro were similes of prayer and joyfulness, become ones of damnation for Melibeu, for whom the impossible had already occurred. His world and future were crushed with the confiscation of his lands and his only resource is to imagine an improbable return in a remote future (v. I, 67-69) (NIELSEN, 1972, p. 158-159).

He disregards as *impius* and *barbarus* the veteran that gathers the fruit of his labor. *Impius* and *barbarus* are very strong words and are strengthened by occupying the verses initial position. Verse 73 may be read as a parody for verse 45, which contains *god’s* answer to Titiro (FREDRICKSMEYER, 1969, p. 213). Melibeu’s song ends with the statement that he will no longer sing. The symmetry between the world of the shepherds and that of music is torn by an event (the civil war) which transcends this world and crushes him. Melibeu’s muteness is the maximum sign of his world’s annihilation. The pain and indignation that he feels is not only for himself but for all those who have been expropriated.

In the eclogues’ final verses, Titiro invites Melibeu to spend the night with him, on the **verde capim** (green grass), he lists the food available and describes the twilight that announces the evening. For Marcelo Gigante, “the sequence of /l/ (*procul, uillarum, culmina*) and especially of the /u/ (*summa procul uillarum culmina fumant...cadunt...montibus*) darkens the atmosphere of the moment” (GIGANTE, 1988, p. 102-103). The poem ends with the night’s shade covering everything.

The dramas represented by Virgil, whether political or amorous, are transplanted to scenery which is apart, densely figuring gods and an exuberant nature, Arcadia, a parallel world, where shepherds sing and come into contact with the divine. Naturally this kingdom of utopia encloses contradictions, “dissonances between human suffering and the environment supernaturally perfect”. As we argued, Virgil does not erase the conflicts. They are toned by the “twilight sadness” and by ecstasy. “In the end of Virgil’s *Eclogues*, we feel the evening quietly falling over the world” (PANOFSKY, 1979, p. 383).

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APÊNDICE¹

BVCOLICAE I

Meliboeus:

Tityre, tu patulae recubans sub tegmine fagi
siluestrem tenui musam meditaris auena;
nos patriae finis et dulcia linquimus arua;
nos patriam fugimus; tu, Tityre, lentus in umbra,
5 formosam resonare doces Amaryllida siluas.

Tityrus:

O Meliboee, deus nobis haec otia fecit:
namque erit ille mihi semper deus; illius aram
saepe tener nostris ab ouilibus imbuet agnus.
Ille meas errare boues, ut cernis, et ipsum
10 ludere quae uellem calamo permisit agresti.

Meliboeus:

Non equidem inuideo, miror magis: undique totis
usque adeo turbatur agris! En ipse capellas
protinus aeger ago; hanc etiam uix, Tityre, duco:
hic inter densas corylos modo namque gemellos,
15 spem gregis, a! silice in nuda conixa reliquit.
Saepe malum hoc nobis, si mens non laeua fuisset,
de caelo tactas memini praedicere quercus.
Sed tamen iste deus qui sit, da, Tityre, nobis.

Tityrus:

Vrbem quam dicunt Romam, Meliboee, putau
20 stultus ego huic nostrae similem, quo saepe solemus
pastores ouium teneros depellere fetus.
Sic canibus catulos similes, sic matribus haedos
noram, sic paruis componere magna solebam.
Verum haec tantum alias inter caput extulit urbes
25 quantum lenta solent inter uiburna cupressi.

¹ VIRGÍLIO. *Bucólicas*. Tradução e comentário de Raimundo Carvalho. Belo Horizonte: Crisálida, 2005. p. 12-19.

Meliboeus:

Et quae tanta fuit Romam tibi causa uidendi?

Tityrus:

Libertas, quae sera tamen respexit inertem,
candidior postquam tondenti barba cadebat;
respexit tamen, et longo post tempore uenit,
30 postquam nos Amaryllis habet, Galatea reliquit.
Namque, fatebor enim, dum me Galatea tenebat,
nec spes libertatis erat, nec cura peculi.
Quamuis multa meis exiret uictima saeptis,
pinguis et ingratae premeretur caseus urbi,
35 non umquam grauis aere domum mihi dextra redibat.

Meliboeus:

Mirabar quid maesta deos, Amarylli, uocares,
cui pendere sua patereris in arbore poma:
Tityrus hinc aberat. Ipsae te, Tityre, pinus,
ipsi te fontes, ipsa haec arbusta uocabant.

Tityrus:

40 Quid facerem? Neque seruitio me exire licebat,
nec tam praesentis alibi cognoscere diuos.
Hic illum uidi iuuenem, Meliboeae, quotannis
bis senos cui nostra dies altaria fumant.
Hic mihi responsum primus dedit ille petenti:
45 “Pascite, ut ante, boues, pueri, submitte tauros.”

Meliboeus:

Fortunate senex, ergo tua rura manebunt!
Et tibi magna satis, quamuis lapis omnia nudus
limosoque palus obducat pascua iunco;
non insueta grauis temptabunt pabula fetas,
50 nec mala uicini pecoris contagia laedent.
Fortunate senex, hic inter flumina nota
et fontis sacros frigus captabis opacum.
Hinc tibi, quae semper, uicino ab limite saepes
Hyblaeis apibus florem depasta salicti
55 saepe leui somnum suadebit inire susurro;
hinc alta sub rupe canet frondator ad auras;
nec tamen interea raucae, tua cura, palumbes,
nec gemere aerea cessabit turtur ab ulmo.

Tityrus:

Ante leues ergo pascentur in aethere cerui,
60 et freta destituent nudos in litore piscis,

ante pererratis amborum finibus exsul
aut Ararim Parthus bibet aut Germania Tigrim,
quam nostro illius labatur pectore uoltus.

Meliboeus:

At nos hinc alii sitientis ibimus Afros,
65 pars Scythiam et rapidum cretae uenimus Oaxen
et penitus toto diuisos orbe Britannos.
En unquam patrios longo post tempore finis,
pauperis et tuguri congestum caespite culmen,
post aliquot, mea regna uidens, mirabor aristas?
70 Impius haec tam culta noualia miles habebit,
Barbarus has segetes? En quo discordia ciuis
produxit miseros! His nos consequimur agros!
Inserere nunc, Meliboe, puros, pone ordine uitis!
Ite meae, felix quondam pecus, ite capellae:
75 non ego uos posthac uiridi proiectus in antro,
dumosa pendere procul de rupe uidebo;
carmina nulla canam; non, me pascente, capellae,
floretem cytisum et salices carpetis amaras.

Tityrus:

Hic tamen hanc mecum poteris requiescere noctem
80 fronde super uiridi. Sunt nobis mitia poma,
castaneae molles et pressi copia lactis;
et iam summa procul uillarum culmina fumant,
maioresque cadunt altis de montibus umbrae.

BUCÓLICAS I

Melibeu:

Títiro, tu, sentado embaixo da ampla faia,
tocas na tênue flauta uma canção silvestre;
nós deixamos a pátria e estas doces pastagens;
nós fugimos, e tu, tranqüilo à sombra, Títiro,
levas selva a ecoar Amarílis formosa. 5

Títiro:

Ó Melibeu, um deus, a nós, este ócio fez:
Ele sempre será meu deus; que o altar dele,
tenra ovelha de nosso aprisco sempre embeba.
Bem vês, ele deixou meu rebanho pastar
e eu tocar o que bem quiser em flauta agreste. 10

Melibeu:

Não te invejo, porém, me espanto: em toda parte,
o campo é perturbado! Eu mesmo as minhas cabras
triste tanjo; esta, a custo, ó Títiro, conduzo:
ainda agora, sob densa aveleira, gêmeos,
esperança da grei, pariu na pedra nua. 15
Há muito, um infortúnio assim, se bem me lembro,
carvalhos, pelo céu fulminados, previram.
Mas seja tal deus quem for, dize-me, então, Títiro.

Títiro:

A cidade de Roma, ó Melibeu, julguei,
estulto, igual a esta, onde nós costumávamos, 20
pastores, apartar de ovelhas os filhotes.
Tal o cão o cãozinho e qual cabra o cabrito
achava; ao grande opor o parvo, costumava.
Esta cidade ergueu a cabeça entre as outras
como os ciprestes entre os viburnos flexíveis. 25

Melibeu:

E qual foi a razão que te levou a Roma?

Títiro:

Liberdade que tarde, então, me viu inerte,
quando, cortando, branca a barba me caía;
viu-me, então, e, depois de um longo tempo, veio,

dês que Amarílís amo e se foi Galatéia. 30
Enquanto Galatéia era minha, confesso,
nada de liberdade e nada de pecúlio.
Embora em meus currais criasse muita vítimas,
grassos queijos levasse à ingrata cidade,
nunca voltava à casa a mão cheia de cobre. 35

Melibeu:

Amarílís, te vi, triste, a chamar os deuses,
Deixando-lhes alguns pomos em cada planta:
Títiro estava longe. Até pinheiros, Títiro,
até fontes, até arbustos te chamavam.

Títiro:

Que fazer? Nem fugir da servidão podia, 40
Nem conhecer lá longe os deuses tão propícios.
Lá vi o jovem para o qual todos os anos
nosso altar, Melibeu, fumega doze dias.
Lá ele respondeu-me o pedido, primeiro:
“Como antes, tangei bois, touros jungi, rapazes”. 45

Melibeu:

Velho de sorte, pois manterás os teus campos!
E são de bom tamanho, embora pedra e pântano
de junco e limo toda a pastagem obstruam;
as fêmeas prenhes não provarão pasto alheio,
e jamais sofrerão contágio de outro gado. 50
Velho de sorte, aqui, entre rios famosos,
fontes sacras, terás o frescor de uma sombra.
De um lado, dos confins vizinhos, sempre a sebe,
ao sugarem salgueiro as abelhas do Hibla,
saiba ao sono levar-te em um leve sussurro; 55
de outro, em penedo cante ao vento o podador;
jamais hão de calar o gemido no olmeiro,
as roucas pombas, teus amores, nem a rola.

Títiro:

Antes, cervos no céu céleres pastarão,
e vagas deixarão peixe à vista na praia; 60
antes, distantes, cada um banido da pátria,
beberá no Árar parta ou germano no Tigre,
até que em nosso peito aquele deus se apague.

Melibeu:

Mas partiremos, uns para a árida África
ou a Cítia, através das torrentes do Oaxe, 65

outros até os bretões isolados do mundo.
Algum dia, depois de longo tempo, a pátria
e meu pobre casebre entre a relva revendo,
com espanto verei no meu reino uma espiga?
Um ímpio militar possuirá estas glebas? 70
Um bárbaro a seara? Onde a guerra lançou
miseros cidadãos! Para outros semeamos!
Enxerta, Melibeu, a pêra, apara as vides!
Ide, gado feliz outrora, ide, cabritas:
depois não vos verei, deitado em verde gruta, 75
longe, pendidas sobre um rochedo entre sarças;
eu não cantarei mais, nem guiando-vos, cabritas,
comereis o codesso e os salgueiros amargos.

Títiro:

Podes ficar, contudo, esta noite comigo
sobre o verde capim. Temos frutos macios, 80
castanha bem madura e queijo em abundância;
já fumegam ao longe as chaminés das casas,
e tombam da montanha umas tamanhas sombras.