'*Tomando, ora la espada, ora la pluma*': Emulation and
Imitation in Garcilaso de la Vega's Eclogue III

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Garcilaso de la Vega forms much of his Eclogue III, and poetic voice in general, out of scraps from the past. He subtly refers to poets from Homer and Theocritus to Petrarch and Sannazaro in the pastoral work. Although one could try to write off the intertextual references as merely ornamental, it becomes difficult to deny their importance in the interpretation of the poem when Garcilaso translates several verses from Virgil's Eclogue 7 to end his composition. The poet displays his poetic inheritance and figures himself as a worthy inheritor in two ways by using this intertextual referencing. First, he creates his own "myth of origins," to use Greene's term, in order to justify and lend authority to his own poetic voice. Second, Garcilaso reuses Virgil's verses to challenge the Mantuan's classical model and prove his worthiness as he brings a new level of meaning to the words of his predecessor. This paper intends to show how Garcilaso employs intertextual referencing, or *imitatio*, to justify his own poetic existence in Eclogue III.

The Renaissance practice of *imitatio*, the imitation of admirable earlier authors, can provide a lens through which the critic can view works of the period. Modern critical studies of *imitatio* help to define the relationship between

the source text and the imitator and determine the Renaissance author's intention when using another author's images, style, or words. When using *imitatio*, Renaissance authors position themselves in relation to great literary figures of the past by including intertextual references to those figures in their work. Modern critics have analyzed Garcilaso's imitative practice in Eclogue III, but they have said little about references to Virgil in Garcilaso's poem, in spite of the many early commentators who have noted the relationship.[1] In my opinion, Garcilaso constructs a complex Eclogue that ends with translations from Virgil's *Bucolica* in order to establish the criteria of comparison and then compete with Virgil as a poet.

Although many critics have written about Eclogue III, few deal with the entire composition or look for commonality among the heterogeneous parts. Most articles discard the shepherds' song or the dedicatory introduction, or both, in favor of a discussion of the seemingly more

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[1] The first commentator whose work survives, Francisco Sánchez de las Brozas, or El Brocense, indicated the prominence of Virgil as early as 1574. In 1580, Fernando de Herrera adds many names to the list of imitated poets and thinkers but insists on Virgil's influence. Tomás Tamayo de Vargas affirms in 1622, "es imitación particular de la 2 y 7 de Virgilio, cuyos lugares compone bien Sánchez [el Brocense]" (Garcilaso y sus comentaristas 651). The early commentators agree on the dominant influence of Virgil's poems on Garcilaso's Eclogue III, but more recent critics have tended to favor Ovid and Sannazaro, as we will see below.

cohesive nymphs' tapestries.[2] Few critics have attempted a universal interpretation of the Eclogue since Elias Rivers' essay, "The Pastoral Paradox of Natural Art." In his essay, Rivers adeptly lays out the formal aspects of the entire Eclogue, identifying general themes such as art, nature, grief, and beauty. More recently, Mary Barnard has contributed two essays that push the envelope of studies on Eclogue III by approaching the poem through the critical lens of modern *imitatio* studies. In one essay, she connects portions of the Eclogue relating to the Orpheus myth and voice to show Garcilaso's appropriation of Orpheus' poetic power (Barnard, "Poetics of Subversion"). Barnard's approach asks important questions about Garcilaso's imitative practice, but she does not comment on theuse of Virgil in the shepherds' song, verses Garcilaso translates almost verbatim. In the second essay, published five years later, she engages the whole composition, but it gives a critical study of stylistic concerns more than imitative practice (Barnard, "Correcting the Classics"). Anne Cruz's book on imitation and transformation in Garcilaso provides the most recent interpretation of the

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[2] Two critical articles that analyze small portions of Eclogue III are Alberto Porqueras-Mayo's "La ninfa degollada de Garcilaso (Egloga III, versos 225-232)." and Leo Spitzer's "Garcilaso, Third Eclogue, Lines 265-271." These articles each look deeply at one stanza of the Eclogue.

entire Eclogue. She focuses on the tapestries and Garcilaso's relation to Ovid and Petrarch more than the importance of the shepherds' song and Virgil's influence. I argue that the parts of Eclogue III are more thematically coherent and that the role of Virgil is more prominent than Cruz states in her book. Through the use of current studies on Renaissance *imitatio*, this essay analyzes all parts of Eclogue III, including the shepherds' song, in light of Garcilaso's use of source texts.

Rivers argues that the Eclogue's structure consists of three sections: the dedicatory introduction and description of the bower, the description of the nymphs' tapestries, and the singing contest of the passing shepherds.[3] References to imitation and borrowing appear early in the composition when Garcilaso writes in the dedicatory introduction, "hurté de tiempo aquesta breve suma,/ tomando, ora la espada, ora la pluma" (v. 39-40).[4] With this statement, our poet creates a double entendre. On the literal level, he says that he managed to get away from warfare enough to write the Eclogue, but still had to write it intermittently because of battlefield interruptions. For

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Although they help to interpret that section admirably, at times they can achieve it at the cost of a more global view of the Eclogue.

[3] See Rivers (131-132) for a comprehensive explanation of the mathematical structure of the Eclogue.

this reason, this passage is one of the usual sources of the characterization of Garcilaso as a warrior poet. Nevertheless, this literal interpretation requires a figurative understanding of the word *hurtar*. He did not "steal" from time as the term suggests, but "found" or "made" time.

If the reader understands the word *hurtar* literally, Garcilaso is stealing his *summa* from time, that is, he is stealing his own work from the poets who came before him. When he takes up the pen and the sword alternately in this context, he is recording with the pen (i.e., imitating models) and challenging with the sword (i.e., emulating models) in his poem. To make the double entendre more prominent, he blurs the intended interpretation by choosing the word *hurtar,* which needs to be translated figuratively in the "literal" understanding, and literally in the "figurative" understanding. He steals with two intentions, to write and to fight. Through a brilliant *concepto,* Garcilaso has thus spelled out his agenda for *imitatio* in this eclogue.

To constitute a large part of Garcilaso's imitative agenda, he uses ecphrastic description and a pastoral

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[4] All quotes of Garcilaso's text are from the Consuelo Burell edition of Garcilaso's *Poesía castellana completa.*

singing contest to refer to traditional thematic material, which conceals intertextual references. In order to demonstrate how Garcilaso imitates his predecessors, it is first necessary to look at current theories on Renaissance *imitatio* and the structure of the poem. Garcilaso uses his dedicatory introduction to plan out the rest of the Eclogue, uniting all three sections in an act of literary imitation.

Thomas Greene's book, *The Light in Troy*, indicates four types of *imitatio*: reproductive (or "sacramental"), eclectic, heuristic, and dialectical. Eclectic imitation and dialectical imitation are the most important for this essay. Eclectic imitations borrow from many sources without one clear source text. Greene provides much of Petrarch's verse as an example "where quite simply allusions, echoes, phrases, and images from a large number of authors jostle each other indifferently" (39). As this essay will demonstrate below, Garcilaso uses this type of imitation to present his poetic pedigree through the use of thematic elements borrowed from other poets. For Greene, heuristic imitations are acts of literary resuscitation. He points to the use of resuscitative metaphors in Renaissance texts to show the necromantic relationship

between the Renaissance author and the imitated source's author. The exaggeration of heuristic imitations yields competition, which is the true hallmark of dialectical imitations. "[The imitating text] had to expose the vulnerability of the subtext while exposing itself to the subtext's potential aggression" (45). For the sake of using manageable terms, this essay refers to the act of eclectic imitation and any other types that simply report previous texts as "imitation." When the new text intends to compete with and surpass the source text, as in dialectical imitations, this essay will use the term "emulation."[5]

As a reader may construe from Garcilaso's introduction, he takes up the pen to imitate and the sword to emulate after adopting the voice of a pastoral speaking subject. Indeed, the second and third parts of the Eclogue encompass traditional settings of imitation and emulation in pastoral poetry. As Haber indicates, one of the primary concerns of the pastoral genre is "the self-conscious focus on the interrelations that exist between 'new' poets and their literary models, between present exigencies and the pressures and promises of the past" (12). The use of both imitation and emulation is Garcilaso's mode of operation in Eclogue III.

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[5] Pigman's study of Renaissance *imitatio* provides these useful terms.

In the second section of the Eclogue, the four sisters sit by the Tagus River and each weaves a tapestry. The first nymph, Filódoce, depicts the myth of Orpheus and Euridice. The second, Dinámene, figures the Apollo and Daphne myth. The third sister, Climene, weaves the death of Adonis in her tapestry. Nise, the most beautiful, weaves a scene of wood nymphs mourning the displayed body of Elisa, not a mythological scene at all, but rather one of Garcilaso's own invention. Anne Cruz rightly states that the four tapestries illustrate Garcilaso's technique of eclectic imitation (106). This portion of Eclogue III imitates other authors thematically and stylistically to demonstrate the poetic commonplace of beauty and mortality. In order to view the development of this idea, it will be necessary to analyze how Garcilaso accomplishes the imitation.

The description of the nymphs' tapestries is an example of ecphrasis, or description of physical art objects, common in compositions of the pastoral genre. Farrell explains how ecphrastic descriptions achieve this. The description of the embossed cup in Virgil's Eclogue 3 is a clear reference to an embossed cup in Theocritus' *Idyll* 1, which has its origins in the description of the

shield in *Iliad* 18 (226-7). The continuation of this relationship into Garcilaso is probably most clear in the descriptive summary of the nymphs' work on the tapestries:

> las cuales, [...]
>
> mostraban a los ojos relevadas
>
> las cosas y figuras que eran llanas;
>
> tanto que, al parecer, el cuerpo vano
>
> pudiera ser tomado con la mano. (v. 267-272)

Although the tapestries are flat, they give the effect of relief work typical of the other ecphrastic descriptions. The fact that they are tapestries and not embossed objects could be a subtle reference to Theocritus' *Idyll* 15 in which two women, Gorgo and Praxinoa, admire tapestries in Ptolemy's palace during the festival of Adonis (104). Garcilaso's description of the tapestries could also result from imitation of Sannazaro's Prosa 12 from his *Arcadia*. In it, sister nymphs are weaving tapestries and the speaking subject is saddened by a depiction of the Orpheus and Euridice myth (135-6). In Sannazaro's Prosa 12, this is the only myth mentioned explicitly, but it may have been the inspiration for Garcilaso's adaptation of other Ovidian myths in tapestries. Through this chain of references, one can link the description of art objects to the technique of

intertextual referencing, Farrell's term for *imitatio*. Garcilaso is placing himself at the end of a historical pedigree. He has constructed a poetic paternity for himself by choosing to focus on ecphrastic description.

Garcilaso has referenced Homer, Theocritus, Virgil, and Sannazaro in his choice to present the nymphs' stories ecphrastically. The mythological stories themselves refer more closely to Ovid's *Metamorphosis* or Sannazaro's *Arcadia*. Lapesa covers the origins of the nymphs' names:

> Los nombres helénicos de las ninfas no proceden todos del canto XVIII de la Ilíada, ni todos de la copiosa enumeración inserta en el libro IV de las *Geórgicas*; Dinámene es unicamente homérico; Filódoce, sólo virgiliano; Nise y Climene aparecen en los dos poemas. (171)

Due to Garcilaso's eclectic sources in the middle section of the Eclogue, it would be very difficult to determine one privileged, imitated source. Eclecticism is employed as a technique to dissimulate any clear model.[6] It is precisely the choice of using eclectic imitation to spell out a poetic commonplace that is important in the second section. Garcilaso uses the pen in this second part of the Eclogue.

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[6] Pigman provides the best discussion of dissimulative practice of the critics who write on Renaissance *imitatio* mentioned in this essay.

He is not competing with the sources he uses, but rather demonstrating his poetic prowess by melding them together in a beautiful whole. How exactly, though, does he make a coherent whole out of these eclectic sources?

With the pieces of other authors, Garcilaso constructs four tapestries that spell out a poetic commonplace of both Early Modern literature and the pastoral genre. All of the tapestries portray scenes of beauty and mortality, a commonplace normally represented by the rose in emblems.[7] The rose is beautiful but ephemeral, just like the mourned lovers who appear in the nymphs' tapestries. The message that pervades the four tapestries is that all that is beautiful will one day die. This concept shows a certain deceit present in the rose and all earthly examples of beauty. The Spanish Renaissance was very conscious of this deceptive quality, often called *engaño*, and its counterpart and opposite, *desengaño*. *Engaño* tricks the viewer into only seeing something as an example of beauty and goodness.

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[7] Emblem 103 in Covarrubias' *Emblemas morales* shows a snake biting its own tail with a rose in the center. It reads:
    La beldad, hermosura, y loçania,
    de la mas linda dama, es de manera,
    que como el prado pierde su alegria,
    en passando la dulce primavera:
    y como rosa alegre y fresca oy dia,
    mañana es fuerça, q[ue] marchita muera.
In the explanation on the following page, the comment reads:
    La Fresca rosa es apazible a la vista, y da de si suaue olor,
    cuya fragra[n]cia conforta los sentidos, pero en breue tiempo se

Desengaño disenchants the viewer with the reminder that although beauty and goodness may be eternal, their examples and those who appreciate them are not. This combination of beauty and mortality thus speaks to the reader about the ephemeral object admired and, by extension, the ephemeral admirer.

These same themes of beauty and mortality appear throughout the nymphs' tapestries. The color adjectives green, white, and gold weave together throughout the descriptions of the tapestries. These colors appear repeatedly in the nymphs' tales, physically constituting the individual stories embroidered by the nymphs and metaphorically linking them all together. They use the same threads derived from the same sources to figure four scenes of the same, repeatedly emphasized content. The threads themselves are beautiful and precious, much like the human beauties that they will come to recreate. The green leaves are reduced to white silk and the golden thread is from the gold of the Tagus. (v. 109-112)

Metaphorically, the green thread will constitute something consciously ephemeral where it is used. It will also denote the place where mortality is proven and

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passa ésta su hermosura, porque el vie[n]to la deshoja, el mesmo sol que la ha criado, la marchita.

desengaño revealed. All green will turn brown with the changing of the seasons, converting fertile life into fallow death, and green in the descriptions of the beloveds and their settings denotes their mortality. In the first tapestry, Euridice stands in the green meadow when bitten by a snake (v. 124-132). Just as the landscape composed by the green is mortal, so too is Orpheus' lover. In the second, Daphne turns into a tree, proving her own mortality and incorporating the green in the same scene of the tapestry (v. 161-168). In the Venus and Adonis myth, the background, a great mountain "iba de hayas [...] de robles y de peñas variando" (v. 171-172). In the fourth tapestry, the wood nymphs enter into the scene through the "espesura," in what seems to be a bower much like the one in which the nymphs are weaving. The beloved was in the grass, decapitated, just like a swan "cuando pierde / la dulce vida entre la hierba verde" (v. 217-232).

White and gold are used to constitute the beautiful, young people and images in the tapestries. In the first tapestry, the snake strikes Euridice on her white foot. In the second, white is used for Daphne's feet, and her hair is gold. Adonis is shown with golden hair and his blood taints white roses that grow near his dying body, a clear

allusion to his impending death, just like the beautiful rose in emblems. In the fourth tapestry, the beloved appears already dead and the circumstances of her death are not shown. The roses that the nymphs "derraman," spill like blood, onto the dead nymph's body appear in white baskets and these flowers are the same red as those colored by Adonis' blood while he lays bleeding to death. The encroachment of the red upon the white metaphorically shows the inevitable decline of the beautiful person, in this case, achieved; the rose's fate has come to pass and the veil of death has conquered beauty. All of these colors describe the lost beloveds: Euridice, Daphne, Adonis, and Elisa. The speaking subject never refers with colors to the mourning lovers: Orpheus, Apollo, Venus, or the absent Nemoroso. The green, white, and gold threads are woven throughout the four panels that demonstrate beauty and its mortality to associate each lost beloved with the next.

Orpheus, Apollo, and Venus all suffer because they are victims of *engaño*. Orpheus refused to believe in the mortality of Euridice and, so close to escaping the underworld with her, was proven wrong. Apollo and Venus set their immortal hearts on mortal beings. Nemoroso's tale is told as if it were written in the perfect tense.

The reader never encounters Elisa alive, only "degollada." All of the action in the scene has passed, and all that remains is to mourn the results. Nevertheless, the inscription in the tree tells us that Nemoroso "se aflige [...] y llama Elisa" (v. 244-5). The reader presumes that he, too, is a victim of *engaño*, which was accompanied by its constant companion, disenchantment. All of the mythological tapestries play on the tension between *engaño* and *desengaño* to dramatize stories all too familiar to the cultured Renaissance reader. It is the combination of the two opposites that evokes so much *pathos* in the first three tapestries. The fourth tapestry serves as a transition between the mythological tapestries and the shepherds' song. In the tapestry of Garcilaso's invention, one never sees the state of *engaño*, only its inevitable companion. The two composite parts of beauty and mortality's progression begin to separate. When Nemoroso mourns, he is a victim of disenchantment, which tacitly carries a past enchantment with it. Garcilaso begins to exploit this relationship here and carries it to its full extent in the shepherds' song.

Eleanor Lincoln refers to "the great elemental cycles— the mystery of spring and birth, the inevitability of

winter and death" and identifies them as pastoral conventions and organizing factors (3). The idea of ephemeral beauty is not new in Garcilaso's *Eclogue*. Garcilaso imitates multiple sources without any one source taking precedence in order to re-express a poetic commonplace that has been expressed many times before. The commonplace of ephemeral beauty established in the nymphs' tapestries serves as the point of comparison for Garcilaso's own ideas when the singing contest begins. Garcilaso answers the statement made here by the poetic past by "correcting the classics," as Mary Barnard might say. He shows his own poetic prowess by using parts of Virgil's Eclogue 7 to make his own statement with emulation.

Two shepherds approach after the descriptions of the tapestries and sing four pairs of call and response stanzas. The first shepherd, Tirreno, sings about the beauty and gentility of his beloved, Flérida. Then Alcino uses the same images or ideas to sing of his beloved, Filis.

The singing contest, like ecphrastic descriptions, is a traditional way for pastoral poets to engage other poets' texts. When Pigman examines metaphors that refer to

emulation, he finds that one common metaphor for competing with the source text, or emulation, is a competition between two figures. Indeed, this pattern appears in the history of the singing contest as a thematic commonplace. Theocritus' singing contest in *Idyll* 5 establishes a model for Amoebean contests that reappears in Virgil's Eclogues 3 and 7.

To explain one intertextual connection of the singing contest motif, one can begin with Theocritus. Theocritus intended his *Idylls* to provide an alternative model to the epic one. He agreed with Callimachus that the value of a poem was not to be judged quantitatively, but qualitatively. Homer's model had been all but exhausted by Greek imitators and Theocritus' *Idylls*, in which singing contests are introduced to pastoral compositions, can be seen as a competing model (Haber 12-13). Virgil's Eclogue 3 makes specific reference to different Theocritean *Idylls*, even citing the first two lines of *Idyll* 4 in translation to begin his first Eclogue with a singing contest (Segal, 237). Virgil responds to Theocritus' concern about heroism with regards to the epic, exploiting what Haber describes as one of the pastoral's many self-contradictions. She writes:

Virgil clearly understood the paradoxical ironies at
the heart of the *Idylls*; he invokes it, for example,
at the end of Eclogue 7. Corydon, the more perfectly
"bucolic" of a pair of herdsmen competing in a song-
contest, triumphs over his pseudo-historic partner; he
becomes, as a result, the self-defining hero of
pastoral song. (36)

In the Eclogue 3, Virgil also includes an embossed cup as a
proposed prize, invoking the chain of references related to
ecphrastic description. The singing contest does the same
thing in Garcilaso as it did in Virgil. It engages his
predecessors in an effort to surpass them.

Just as Virgil translates the first two lines of
Theocritus' *Idyll* 4 to begin his Eclogue 3, Garcilaso
translates two of the last three stanzas of Virgil's
Eclogue 7 to the same place in his own Eclogue, at the end
of the singing contest.

Garcilaso's Eclogue III:

El álamo de Alcides escogido

fue siempre, y el laurel del rojo Apolo;

de la hermosa Venus fue tenido

en precio y en estima el mirto solo;

el verde sauz de Flérida es querido,

> y por suyo entre todos escogiólo;
>
> doquiera que de hoy más sauces se hallen,
>
> el álamo, el laurel y el mirto callen. (v. 353-360)

The stanza that follows the one cited above is a translation also, but this one serves to demonstrate the high fidelity of the copy.

> Virgil's Eclogue 7:
>
> Populus Alcidae grattisima, uitis Iaccho,
>
> formosae myrtus Veneri, sua laurea Phoebo;
>
> Phyllis amat corylos: illas dum Phyllis amabit,
>
> nec myrtus vincet corylos, nec laurea Phoebi. (Virgil 58)
>
> [The poplar is most pleasing to Alcides, the vine to Bacchus; Apollo loves the laurel, and Venus the myrtle. While Phyllis loves the hazel, neither the myrtle that Venus loves nor Apollo's Laurel outdoes the hazel that Phyllis loves. (Virgil 59)]

This close translation is clearly a decision meant to reference Virgil explicitly. As part of his criteria for emulation, Pigman calls it "an open struggle with the model for preeminence, a struggle in which the model must be recognized to assure the text's victory" (4). There is no

clearer indication of the presence of a model text than this nearly exact translation.

Virgil's third and seventh Eclogues contain the singing contests on which Garcilaso's is based. Eclogue 3 begins by quoting Theocritus' *Idyll* 4 and could be considered Virgil's emulation of his Bucolic model. Menalcas berates Damoetas for poorly caring for Aegon's sheep and the two decide that there is an unsettled score between them. Damoetas proposes a singing contest and stakes a cow. Menalcas accepts and stakes two unused, embossed cups. Palaemon moderates the contest and chooses Damoetas to begin. In his couplets, Damoetas sings about his loves with several lovers. He offers each assertion that awaits Menalcas' reply in the amoebean contest. Menalcas answers in the style's fashion, trying to best Damoetas or contradict him. He, too, refers to many lovers and Palaemon declares the duel a draw. He says, "You both deserve to win the prize, and so do all who have experienced the sweet and bitter of love" (27). The two shepherds are evenly matched and express the same opinions with regard to love. What does a draw in a contest that metaphorizes emulation mean? Farrell comments on the result, "After such an ominous prelude, the contest itself

ends in a draw. The eclogue can thus be read metapoetically as at least a moral victory for the imitative poet" (232).

Virgil's Eclogue 7 is told by Meliboeus, who watches Corydon and Thyrsis compete with responding songs. Although they both begin with promises and invocations to gods and poets, Corydon generally uses spring and summer imagery to talk about his flock and loves: Galatea, Phyllis, and Alexis. His speech is ripe with the abundance of nature and the fertility of his poetic landscape. "The buds begin to swell and cluster on the spreading vines. [...] We've juniper trees and chestnut trees, and such abundance that the ground is covered with what falls from the loaded boughs" (57). The summer is oppressive, too, in the words of Corydon, "Protect my flock from the scorching heat of noon" (57). Thyrsis plays the role of the answering poet. He must outdo or contradict the assertions of Corydon. His contradictions reverse one element in Corydon's formula to state his case. His winter is not necessarily bothersome or bleak. "We have a hearth with a fire that's always going, fed with resiny pinelogs from the woods; doorposts black with soot; we're bothered by the winter cold no more than wolves by sheep" (57). Thyrsis also points out the

summer's drought. At the end of the contest, Meliboeus, as narrator, returns to say, "I remember how the contest went, how Thyrsis, striving to win, was the loser" (59). The reader does not know who adjudicated the contest, but Corydon has become the hero. From a metapoetic standpoint, the victor was the model, not the competitor. Although Haber clearly thinks that Virgil is referencing Theocritus' (contradictory) intent to write without heroes, he may be acknowledging his inability to best his predecessor (12-13).

In Virgil's singing contest, the emphasis is not on a cohesive progression, but rather on the beauty that each stanza can create. Corydon, for example, sings of three different loves and Thyrsis sings of two. Thyrsis, in his capacity as the poet who responds, jumps between comfortable winter (quoted above) and torturous drought in successive stanzas. Virgil's shepherds do not each create a narration, but rather, disconnected photographs.

This is one area in which Garcilaso will change the tone of the singing contest, making it more cohesive, with one love each and clear progressions in the stanzas. The second major amendment that Garcilaso brings to the Virgilian singing contest is achieved through its placement

opposite the nymphs' tapestries. The stories woven by the nymphs establish the circular pattern of beauty and death, *engaño* and *desengaño*.

The singing contest in Garcilaso's Eclogue III responds to the poetic commonplace by separating the two moments of *engaño* and *desengaño* in his two shepherds' voices.[8] He uses Virgil's words and ideas to constitute his message, emulating his model and hoping to best him by resetting his words. Tirreno's song presents the *engaño* of beauty with constantly beautiful spring and summer imagery directed to one beloved, Flérida. Alcino's song presents the *desengaño* of beauty with consistently harsh autumn and winter imagery directed to one beloved, Filis.[9] Garcilaso adapts the amoebean conventions to create his own statement about the nature of beauty.

Tirreno's beloved is the epitome of beauty, fertility, and ripeness. Like food, she is sweet and savory, compared

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[8] The separation of *engaño* from *desengaño* is also well-expressed by Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz's sonnet "En que da moral censura a una rosa…." Sor Juana refers to the idea of life and death present in the same object, "en cuyo sér unió naturaleza / la cuna alegre y triste sepultura." Then, she masterfully separates the two moments *engaño* and *desengaño*, in the final tercet. She writes, "con docta muerte y necia vida,/ viviendo engañas y muriendo enseñas" (278). The verb "enseñas" could easily be replaced by "desengañas" in this context. For Sor Juana, the beauty of the rose is intimately related to its short life span and it interacts with the viewer, deceiving and teaching through its life and death.

to fruit and milk (v. 305-312). She is the spring breeze that returns flowers to the riverbank and youth to the shepherd (v. 321-328). She is the protector of abundance and fecundity (v. 337-344). He hopes that her willow may take precedence over even the trees of the gods (v. 353-360). Throughout this description, Garcilaso phases in more and more Virgilian references until the final stanza of Tirreno's singing is a rather faithful translation of a stanza from the Mantuan's Eclogue 7 (cited above). Appropriating progressively more of Virgil's work in each stanza, Garcilaso brings new meaning to Corydon's song. In Garcilaso, it is not the song of a shepherd who is simply competing with summer imagery, but the presentation of an embodiment of deluded bliss. Tirreno never admits that all that he sees will one day disintegrate, even though all of the imagery surrounding his Filis is ephemeral: fruit, milk, flowers, etc.

Alcino, on the other hand, never admits that there is a deluded state associated with beauty. As the representative of *desengaño*, he sees the imminent decline in all things, including his beloved. Where Tirreno's Flérida was sweet, Alcino desires bitterness for Filis and

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[9] I agree with Ricardo Padrón's assertion that the voices of the shepherds represent *engaño* and *desengaño*, expressed in a conversation

to be rid of her (v. 313-320). Where Tirreno's beloved was a soft breeze, Alcino's beloved is harsher than the mountain wind that uproots pines and oaks (v. 329-336). To match Tirreno's abundance and fertility, Alcino sees sterility and oppressive nature (v. 345-352). In his final stanza, mostly adapted from Virgil, Alcino adds harshness to the beauty that Thyrsis notes when comparing his beloved to ash and pine trees. His beloved may be beautiful, but she is equally harsh.

Virgil's Eclogue 7:

Fraxinus in siluis pulcherrima, pinus in hortis,

populus in fluuis, abies in montibus altis:

saepius at si me, Lycida formose, reuisas,

fraxinus in siluis cedat tibi, pinus in hortis. (58)

[The ash tree is the most beautiful in the woods, the pine tree in gardens, the poplar by the river, the fir tree high in the mountains, but Lycidas, if you return, the ash tree in the woods, the pine tree, all, yield precedence to you. (59)]

Garcilaso's Eclogue III:

El fresno por la selva en hermosura

sabemos ya que sobre todos vaya,

y en aspereza y monte de espesura

---

in the Fall of 2002 in response to an earlier draft of this essay.

se aventaja la verde y alta haya,

mas el que la beldad de tu figura

dondequiera mirado, Filis, haya,

al fresno y a la haya en su aspereza

confesará que vence tu belleza. (v. 361-368)

As Alcino incorporates increasing amounts of Thyrsis' song from Virgil, he responds point by point to Tirreno's deluded bliss, connecting his beloved's beauty with inevitable decline.

With their tapestries, the nymphs call upon the readers to reflect on the universal pattern of ephemeral beauty. The shepherds respond with analyses of that pattern, dividing the two moments of *engaño* and *desengaño* for the readers to consider in isolation. The shape of the nymphs' universal pattern of beauty and loss is both circular and linear. Elisa's death is both a repetition of the other three tales and a modern successor to them. In much the same way, Garcilaso's singing contest is a repetition of Virgil's contests that employs Virgil's words and ideas. It is also a successor to them by shaping them, polarizing them, and making them follow clear ideological lines. Garcilaso has competed with Virgil in a traditional way within a traditional metaphor for emulation by adding

clear universal import to Virgil's words. What was a singing contest displaying the lyrical prowess of two shepherd-poets in Virgil has become a discussion of the nature of beauty and death in Garcilaso.

Garcilaso's Eclogue III can be understood as a prism in relation to its source material. In the nymphs' tapestries, he has imitated many sources and made them converge into one voice that contains and represents all of its constituent parts. This convergence allows him to refract the inherited concept in order to show its constituent parts in the singing contest between Tirreno and Alcino. In this refraction, he has used Virgil's words to compare his own ingenuity to his model's in an attempt to emulate, and therefore, best that model. Garcilaso employs imitation and emulation to both reproduce the voices of the past and contest them.

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