



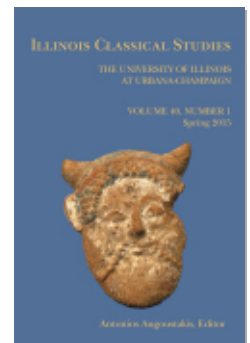
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Bucolica of Petrarch and Boccaccio

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Naples and the Landscape of Virgilian *otium* in the *Carmina Bucolica* of Petrarch and Boccaccio

IAN FIELDING

This article explains how Virgil's traditional association with Naples inspired the fourteenth-century humanist poets Francesco Petrarca and Giovanni Boccaccio to set their own Virgilian eclogues in the same city. Petrarch began his *Bucolicum Carmen* by composing an allegorical eclogue about the death of his patron Robert of Anjou, the King of Naples; and in imitation of this poem, his admiring friend Boccaccio later wrote a series of Neapolitan eclogues depicting the events that followed Robert's death. As Petrarch and Boccaccio each had different relationships with Naples, it will be shown that the city represents their respective ideals of poetic *otium*.

On Easter Sunday, 8 April 1341, Francesco Petrarca became the first poet since antiquity to receive the honor of the laurel crown.¹ The coronation ceremony was held on the Capitoline Hill in Rome but, had Petrarch chosen differently, it might have taken place at the Castel Nuovo in Naples.² It was there that he had spent three days in an oral examination conducted by King Robert of Anjou, "Il Saggio" himself, before being formally recommended for laureation. Petrarch later explained that Robert had tried to persuade him to be crowned in Naples, but he had insisted on traveling to Rome.³ In so doing, he would perhaps have imagined himself following in the footsteps of Virgil, who is attested

1. This article is based on parts of a thesis completed at the University of Warwick under the supervision of Carlo Caruso and Andrew Laird; it was examined by Simon Gilson and Keith Sidwell. I am also grateful to Carlo Vecce, and to the anonymous readers of *ICS*, for their helpful suggestions. Special thanks are due to Carole Newlands for encouraging me to contribute to this collection, her advice on my initial draft, and for all her guidance as my co-editor.

2. Petrarch claims in fact in *Fam.* 4.4 to have received another invitation to be crowned laureate, from the University of Paris, on the very same day as his invitation from the Roman senate (1 September 1340). Kiesewetter (2005) has recently argued that Petrarch invented this story of the two invitations after the fact, and that he "parti per Napoli senza aver mai ricevuto dal senato romano un invito formale per l'incoronazione poetica" (163).

3. *Sen.* 18.1 (Dotti [1978] 884). On Petrarch's relationship with Robert, see Sabatini (1975) 79–80, Kelly (2003) 41–49, and Kiesewetter (2005).

in the ancient biographical tradition to have divided his time as a mature poet between the two cities.⁴ According to the Virgilian career model,⁵ the journey from Naples to Rome was symbolic of the movement up the generic hierarchy, from the *Eclogues* and *Georgics* to the *Aeneid*, and thus of the journey “over the lonely heights of Parnassus” (*Parnasi deserta per ardua*, *G.* 3.291), about which Petrarch speaks in his coronation oration, to the summit of poetic achievement.⁶ For him, therefore, Rome was the proper place for a poet to obtain the laurel, whose evergreen leaves were the classical symbol of immortal fame.

Petrarch might have chosen Rome over Naples as the site for his coronation with the intention of reasserting the city’s status as the capital of the world—but it is clear that the balance of power had shifted between these two centers of ancient culture since the days when poets had last been honored with laurel garlands. The removal of the papacy from Rome to Avignon, and its connections with Robert and the Angevins, meant that political authority in Petrarch’s Italy now resided to the south. But if it is fitting to characterize Petrarch as a “Virgil without a Rome,” then it may also be fitting to call him a “Virgil without a Naples.”⁷ Virgil, in the *sphragis* at the conclusion of his *Georgics* (4.559–66), draws an antithesis between his own pursuit of “inglorious leisure” (*ignobilis oti*, *G.* 4.564) in Parthenope and the military success of “great Caesar” (*Caesar . . . magnus*, *G.* 4.560), thundering in the East.⁸ At the beginning of Petrarch’s *Africa*, however, Virgil’s pastoral Parthenope has become a place of epic “kings and battles”: dedicating the poem to Robert, Petrarch promises one day to celebrate his royal patron’s “mighty deeds” (*tua maxima facta*, *Afr.* 1.57), after which, “great and glorious Parthenope will see me again returning to its walls” (*meque ampla uidebit / inclita Parthenope redeuntem ad menia rursus*, *Afr.* 1.62–63).⁹

4. On Petrarch’s knowledge of the Virgilian biographical tradition, see Stok (1993).

5. On Petrarch’s representation of his own career as following that of Virgil, see Laird (2010).

6. The text of Petrarch’s coronation oration can be found in Godi (1988). For an English translation, see Wilkins (1953).

7. For Petrarch as “a Vergil without a Rome,” see Smarr (1982).

8. *haec super aruorum cultu pecorumque canebam / et super arboribus, Caesar dum magnus ad altum / fulminat Euphraten bello uictorque uolentis / per populos dat iura uiamque adfectat Olympo. / illo Vergilium me tempore dulcis alebat / Parthenope studiis florentem ignobilis oti, / carmina qui lusi pastorum audaxque iuuenta, / Tityre, te patulae cecini sub tegmine fagi* (“I sang these things concerning the care of the fields and flocks, and concerning trees, while great Caesar thunders in war towards the deep Euphrates, and as victor bestows laws upon consenting peoples, and strives after the path to Olympus. At that time sweet Parthenope nourished me, Virgil, flourishing in pursuits of inglorious leisure—I, who composed shepherds’ songs and, bold in the age of youth, sang of you, Tityrus, under the shelter of the spreading beech,” *G.* 4.559–66). The text for Virgil’s works is Mynors (1969); all translations are my own.

9. The text is Festa (1926a); there is an English translation by Bergin and Wilson (1977).

As a locus for poetic activity, Robert's Naples no longer represented a more tranquil alternative to Rome but was instead a distant imitation of the ancient capital.

By the time Petrarch did return to Naples at the end of 1343, the king had died, less than two years after hearing the first completed passages of the *Africa* and asking the poet, once crowned, to dedicate it to him. In a long peroration to the epic, which was only published following Petrarch's own death several decades later, he laments the untimely loss of his patron and wonders where now to turn for support: *non atria luctu / turbida funereo, non dulcia limina quondam / Parthenopea petes* ("you will not make for the halls disturbed by funereal grief, nor the once sweet doorways of Parthenope," *Afr.* 9.427–29).¹⁰ The phrase *dulcia limina* (*Afr.* 9.428), in this metrical *sedes*, recalls Virgil's contrast at the end of *Georgics* 2 between the simple virtue of rustic life and the vicissitudes of the city, where people pursue power and fame at all costs "and exchange their homes and sweet doorways for exile" (*exsilioque domos et dulcia limina mutant*, *G.* 2.511). But as well as identifying Naples with the dystopia that was Rome during the triumviral civil wars, Petrarch also offers a variation on the words of Virgil's shepherd Meliboeus, who leads his "once happy flock" (*felix quondam pecus*, *Ecl.* 1.74) into exile from the "sweet fields" (*dulcia . . . arua*, *Ecl.* 1.3) of his homeland.¹¹ As my reading will show, this depiction of Naples as the lost idyll of Virgil's *Eclogues* is one that Petrarch developed in his own *Bucolicum Carmen*, and thereby influenced his follower, Giovanni Boccaccio.

In the *sphragis* of the *Georgics*, to which I made reference above, Virgil presents himself as a poet of pastoral verse who "sang of you, Tityrus, under the shelter of the spreading beech" (*Tityre, te patulae cecini sub tegmine fagi*, *G.* 4.566). The ambiguous syntax of the line suggests a parallel between Virgil himself, composing the *Eclogues* in the picturesque surroundings of the Bay of Naples, and his poetic persona Tityrus, piping in the shade as he is portrayed in the programmatic *Eclogue* 1.1. Petrarch followed Servius' commentary in taking Tityrus as a representation of the *Eclogues*' author, and the famous frontispiece of his Virgil manuscript, painted by Simone Martini, shows the poet reclining under a tree with a pen in his hand, an open book in his lap, and a garland around his temples.¹² The specific geographical references in the *Eclogues* (e.g., 7.12–13

10. On the protracted publication of the *Africa*, see Festa (1926a) xxv–lxiv. Festa (1926b) 15–17 suggests that these verses of book 9 were composed around the time of Petrarch's second visit to Naples in 1343.

11. Petrarch also alludes to *Ecl.* 1.3 in a note written on the first folio of his Virgil manuscript, where he refers to himself as an exile from the *patria* of Roman history and the *dulcia arua* of literary study: see Baglio, Nebuloni Testa, and Petoletti (2006) 183 nII.

12. On the painting as an indication of Petrarch's approach to Virgil's poetry, see Brink (1977).

and 9.27–28) appear to identify the poems' landscape more closely with Virgil's native Mantua than his adopted Naples, and the annotations on Petrarch's copy of *Eclogue* 1 indicate that he interpreted the dialogue of Tityrus and Meliboeus as occurring between two Mantuans.¹³ As commentators have noted, however, the countryside that Virgil describes in his bucolic poetry bears a strong resemblance to that of Campania,¹⁴ and it seems likely that Petrarch's visit to Naples in 1343 inspired him to a revival of that genre in the years that followed.¹⁵

In a letter (*Fam.* 5.4) written from Naples in November of that year, Petrarch recounts that he managed to escape the stresses of the city to visit Baiiae and other famous ancient sites around the Phlegraean fields, including Lake Avernus and the Sibyl's cave at Cumae, with his friends Giovanni Barrili and Barbato da Sulmona.¹⁶ Petrarch is known to have been skeptical of the traditional legends that attributed the construction of the *crypta Neapolitana*, which extended from Naples to Pozzuoli, to Virgil—who, he remarked, was a poet, not a stonemason.¹⁷ He seems, nonetheless, to have found the area generally evocative of Virgil's presence,¹⁸ and in January 1347 he sent Barbato a Virgilian eclogue that he had composed in Provence the previous summer.¹⁹ Entitled *Argus*, this was to become the second poem of twelve in the *Bucolicum Carmen*, which was eventually published in 1361. The speakers of this eclogue, Petrarch explains, represent himself, Barbato, and Barrili, with whom they had taken their literary tour during his time in Naples about two years earlier. Barrili, a prominent figure in the

13. See e.g., Baglio, Nebuloni Testa, and Petoletti (2006) 184nII, and in addition n13 (on *Ecl.* 1.50), n41 (on *Ecl.* 1.64), and n9 (on *Serv. Ecl. pr.*). On Petrarch's reading of *Eclogue* 1, see Lord (1982).

14. See e.g., Frank (1922) 113–15. Gigante (1984) 18–21 offers a more cautious evaluation of the *Eclogues'* Campanian background, but nonetheless concludes that “nelle *Bucoliche*, allo spirito del poeta si profilava una immagine globale dell'Italia agreste, dell'Italia dei pastori, ma anche dei contadini. Però è solo nelle *Georgiche* che l'Italia . . . si rivela e si scopre unitariamente: questa Italia è, soprattutto, il Mezzogiorno d'Italia” (21).

15. See Canfora (2006) 19–20.

16. In *Gen. Deor. Gent.* 14.19.4 (Zaccaria [1998] 1484), Boccaccio cites Barrili as an authority for the site of Virgil's tomb at Posillipo, suggesting that he was a kind of official guide to sites of antiquarian interest at the Angevin court.

17. *Itin.* 8.21–2 (Paoletta [1993] 82). On the Virgilian legends attached to particular locations around Naples in the Middle Ages, see Comparetti (1997) 253–89. Many of these legends are collected in the *Cronaca di Partenope*, which was probably completed in the late 1340s; see Kelly (2011).

18. Stärk (1995) 37–98 shows how the influence of Virgil's (mainly epic) poetry led to the characterization of the Bay of Naples as a *rus Maronianum* in antiquity.

19. *Var.* 49 = *Disp.* 7 (Pancheri [1994] 34–39). This appears to have been one of the first three eclogues that Petrarch composed when he began his *Bucolicum Carmen* that summer; see Mann (1977) 131–32. On the letter to Barbato, see Charlet (2004) 371–72.

Angevin court, is given the name *Idaeus* in the poem, not because he came from Crete himself, but because of his Jovian influence. *Barbato* is called *Pythias*, with reference to the Pythagorean famous for his friendship with *Damon* at the court of *Dionysius I*.²⁰ Petrarch uses the name *Silvius* for himself.

The eclogue's subject is the death of Robert, the *Argus* of the title, who was proverbial for the vigilance of his hundred eyes—if not (at least in Ovid's account at *Met.* 1.664–723) for his appreciation of bucolic poetry.²¹ Petrarch would have read, again in Servius, that part of Virgil's *intentio* in composing the *Eclogues* was to “give thanks by means of allegory to Augustus or to other nobles” (*per allegoriam agat gratias Augusto uel aliis nobilibus*, *Serv. Ecl.* 1.33–34),²² and in this poem he draws upon a range of pastoral metaphors to represent his relationship with his own patron. The eclogue begins with an ekphrasis by *Idaeus*, first of an idyll, then of a storm:

nec nemorum tantam per secula multa quietem
uiderat ulla dies: passim saturata iacebant
armenta et lenis pastores somnus habebat;
pars teretes baculos, pars nectere sarta canendo
frondea, pars agiles calamos; tum fusca nitentem
obduxit Phebum nubes, precepsque repente
ante expectatum nox affuit; horruit ether
grandine terribili; certatim uentus et imber
seuire et fractis descendere fulmina nimbis.
altior, ethereo penitus conuulsa fragore,
corrui et colles concussit et arua cupressus . . .
. . . pastorum mox turba fugit, quecunque sub illa
per longum segura diem consederat umbra. (*Petr. Buc.* 2.3–13, 20–21)²³

Not for many centuries in the woodlands had any day seen such quiet: the sated flocks were lying here and there, and gentle sleep occupied the shepherds. Others were fashioning smooth staffs, others weaving leafy garlands with song, others engaged with nimble reeds. Then a dark cloud overwhelmed the brilliant light of *Phoebus*, and suddenly, without warning,

20. Val. Max. 4.7.ext.1. Petrarch occasionally (e.g., at *Fam.* 4.2.14, Dotti [1974] 385) uses the name *Dionysius* as an alias for Robert, not in connection with *Dionysius I* but more likely his son *Dionysius II*, Plato's would-be philosopher king.

21. See Barchiesi (2006) 411–13. Petrarch later recalled that the king was much more interested in theology, philosophy, and science than he was in poetry (*Rer. Mem.* 1.37.12, Billanovich [1943] 41). As Simon (2014) 267 points out, the comparison of Robert to *Argus* may have been inspired by Claudian (*De cons. Stil.* 1.309–13), who claims that the Roman general *Stilicho* was even more vigilant than the mythical hundred-eyed custodian.

22. The text is Thilo (1887).

23. The text is from Avena (1906); for an English translation, see Bergin (1974).

rapid night was at hand. The air shook with a terrible storm; the wind and rain raged eagerly and lightning descended from ruptured clouds. The lofty cypress, torn up at the roots by a heavenly crash, fell down and shook the hills and fields . . . and into flight rushed a crowd of shepherds, all of whom had sat for a long time in the peaceful shade beneath it.

Initially, this scene, with “the flocks sated” (*saturata . . . armenta*, 4–5) and the shepherds at leisure to practice simple crafts (5–7), recalls the closing verses of Virgil’s final *Eclogue*: *haec sat erit, diuae, uestrum cecinisse poetam, / dum sedet et gracili fiscellam textit hibisco . . . / ite domum saturae, uenit Hesperus, ite capellae* (“it is enough, goddesses, for your poet to have sung of these things, while he sat and wove a basket of thin marsh-mallow . . . go home, evening is coming, go, my sated she-goats,” *Ecl.* 10.70–71, 77). The geographical region most commonly associated with this poem is, of course, Arcadia—but it is not necessary to assume that the Arcadian landscape described in Gallus’ lament is meant to represent the landscape of the *Eclogues* as a whole.²⁴ As Paul Alpers has commented, this coda is the one place in the collection where Virgil speaks in his own persona as the poet and offers his “fullest representation of himself as a shepherd.”²⁵ Petrarch thus appears to have read it in conjunction with the coda of the *Georgics*, quoted above, as another reference to the *otium* Virgil says he enjoyed while writing these bucolic poems in Parthenope.

This concluding passage—with its wistful observation that “shade tends to be oppressive to singers” (*solet esse grauis cantantibus umbra*, *Ecl.* 10.75)—is generally taken to mark Virgil’s departure from the pastoral genre. At the beginning of Petrarch’s poem, too, the shepherds’ leisure is brought to an end by the onset of darkness—but there, it is an unexpected and violent occurrence. Although the storm that Idaeus recounts is a commonplace of epic, Petrarch appears to be referring more specifically to Virgil’s catalogue of the omens that accompanied the assassination of Julius Caesar from the end of *Georgics* 1.²⁶ His portrayal of the sun’s brilliance overwhelmed by cloud (*fusca nitentem / obduxit Phebum nubes*, *Buc.* 2.7–8) evokes the description at Virg. *G.* 1.467–8 of the eclipse that took place in the year of Caesar’s death: *caput obscura niti-*

24. See Jenkyns (1989) 34–36. Bibliography on Virgil’s Arcadia is obviously vast, but on the interaction of real and imagined landscapes, see in particular Coleman (1977) 22–24, Clausen (1994) xxvi–xxx, and Perutelli (2001) 45–47.

25. Alpers (1979) 238.

26. On the echoes in this passage of Virgil’s description of the storm at the beginning of *Aeneid* 1, see Apostol (2013) 418–19.

dum ferrugine textit / impiaque aeternam timuerunt saecula noctem (“the sun covered his brilliant head with a dark violet gloom, and an impious age was afraid of eternal night”).²⁷ As in the envoi of the *Africa* (9.427–29), Petrarch combines this allusion to the *Georgics*’ reflections on civil strife with another echo of *Eclogue* 1: the cypress felled by lightning at *Buc.* 2.12–13 corresponds to the oaks that Meliboeus recalls being “struck from heaven” (*de caelo tactas . . . quercus*) at *Ecl.* 1.17. It is clear that the tree’s “peaceful shade” (*secura . . . umbra*, *Buc.* 2.21) represents the protection of patronage,²⁸ but it is less clear that the fall of the cypress represents the death of Robert in particular. In this intertextual context, it seems as if Petrarch’s early commentators were justified in interpreting these verses as a reference to the assassination of Robert’s nephew Andrew in 1345, which did result in a civil war of sorts between the Angevin successors in the Kingdom of Naples.²⁹

Annabel Patterson is unconvinced by this suggestion and argues that “it is hard to see how Andrew’s brief and pathetic career could have inspired this *translatio* of Virgil’s resonant and multifoliate shade.”³⁰ It is true that Andrew was not favored very highly by Robert, who agreed for him to be betrothed to his granddaughter Joanna but ultimately named her as the sole heir to his kingdom. After Andrew attempted to usurp Joanna, by appealing directly to Pope Clement VI, he was set upon and killed by a group of her supporters during a hunting trip to Aversa.³¹ Nonetheless, to take the opening of Petrarch’s poem as lamenting Andrew himself would be akin to taking Virgil’s fourth *Eclogue* as celebrating the birth of Asinius Gallus.³² The fact of Andrew’s death, more than his individual identity, indicates the beginning of a new age, in which the peace and stability of Robert’s reign is overturned. In *Buc.* 2, as I will demonstrate, Petrarch reverses the standard allegorical reading of the *Eclogues*, according to

27. Petrarch may also be making reference to a similar omen said to have marked the death of Plato, which he mentions in another letter to Barbato about Robert (*Fam.* 5.1.3, Dotti [1974] 491).

28. As e.g., in the comment of Servius Danielis on *Ecl.* 1.4: *in umbra: allegorice sub tutela Imp. Augusti*.

29. See the comments of Francesco Piendibeni da Montepulciano on *Buc.* 2.12–13 and 2.63–4, preserved in Avena (1906) 254 and 257. Silvius’ account of recent portents—including an eclipse of the moon—at *Buc.* 2.43–53 adds further weight to the suggestion that Petrarch is using Caesar as a parallel for Andrew’s assassination by a group of noble conspirators.

30. Patterson (1988) 51–52.

31. For historical background, see De Frede (1969) 225–40.

32. On Asinius Gallus’ claim to be the unnamed *puer* of *Ecl.* 4.17, see Serv. *Ecl.* 4.11. Petrarch’s annotations to Servius do not suggest that he subscribed to this identification: as will be discussed below, he read this *Eclogue* as a panegyric of Augustus.

which Virgil proclaims the return of prosperity under Augustus following his predecessor's assassination. Thus, in the aftermath of Robert's death, Petrarch reflects that there is now nobody to keep him and his peers from the fate of Virgil's Meliboeus, driven into exile by the turmoil of *discordia* (cf. *Ecl.* 1.71–72).

The rest of Petrarch's poem is modeled more or less explicitly on Virgil's fifth *Eclogue*. In Virgil, however, Menalcas and Mopsus agree to withdraw to a cave for an exchange of songs (*Ecl.* 5.5–7, 19), whereas Pythias and Silvius are said by Idaeus to have taken refuge in "twin caverns" (*geminisque cauernis*, *Buc.* 2.25) after fleeing from the storm. As a result, the dialogue between them is no "pastoral convention," to use Alpers' term; these shepherds cannot come together in observance of "a poetic practice that makes up for a loss, separation, or an absence."³³ Petrarch makes it very clear that Pythias and Silvius can hear each other's voices from their respective sides of the cavern, but rocky crags and foliage block their view (*Buc.* 2.39–40). Unlike Virgil, who Petrarch seems to have thought of as producing his bucolic verse in the company of his fellow poets, he and his friends from the Neapolitan court no longer have anywhere to gather and consult together. His pastoral exchange with Barbato is therefore carried out at a distance, in the form of written correspondence. Barbato, though, does not appear to have composed his own eclogue in reply, as Giovanni del Virgilio did in reply to Dante, and Francesco di Meletto Rossi would to Boccaccio.³⁴

Once Petrarch's shepherds have contemplated the cruelties of fortune, Pythias asks Silvius to sing him a song, "if you have any consolation for a bitter loss" (*si quod habes damni solamen acerbi*, *Buc.* 2.60). Silvius responds by inviting Pythias to sing first: *Daphnis pastoribus olim, / et tibi nunc ingens merito cantabitur Argus* ("Daphnis once was sung by shepherds, and great Argus now will be sung as he deserves by you," *Buc.* 2.63–64). In this way, Petrarch draws a direct parallel between his panegyric of Robert and Virgil's panegyric of Julius Caesar, whose death and apotheosis he saw represented allegorically in the songs of Mopsus and Menalcas about Daphnis.³⁵ While Robert was alive,

33. Alpers (1996) 82–91, quoted at 89.

34. On the development of the epistolary eclogue as a genre in the trecento, see Lorenzini (2011) 3–9.

35. Petrarch's source for this allegory, again, was Servius: see especially *Serv. Ecl.* 5.20. Even when Mopsus calls Daphnis a *puer* at *Ecl.* 5.54, leading Servius to comment that, *Caesar non puer occisus est* ("Caesar was not killed when he was a boy"), Petrarch notes, *nec tamen ideo ab hoc sensu deterreor; quod . . . a nomine pueri non abhorrent, et presertim in sermone pastorio* ("I am not deterred from this reading, because . . . they are not averse to using the word 'boy', and especially in pastoral discourse"; Baglio, Nebuloni Testa, and Petoletti [2006] 519n267).

Petrarch had compared him to Augustus in his patronage of the arts (e.g., *Fam.* 4.7.5–10, Dotti [1974] 414–15). As others have observed, though, Virgil's deified Daphnis shares certain characteristics, especially his love of leisure (*amat bonus otia Daphnis*, *Ecl.* 5.61), with the young Octavian, who is praised as a patron elsewhere in the collection (e.g., *deus nobis haec otia fecit*, *Ecl.* 1.6).³⁶ In *Buc.* 2, Robert is portrayed as a combination of these two Julian rulers. Pythias begins his song by acclaiming Argus as the “glory of the world” (*decus rerum*, *Buc.* 2.69); Mopsus uses a similar phrase in his eulogy of Daphnis (*tu decus omne tuis*, *Ecl.* 5.34), but at *Ecl.* 4.11 the reign of Apollo, who Petrarch understood as an allegory for Augustus, is described as the “glory of the age” (*decus hoc aevi*).³⁷

Moreover, in Pythias' depiction of nature mourning Argus, he says that “flocks will not preserve their fleeces, nor the field its abundant grain” (*servabunt . . . uellera nec pecudes, nec opimas campus aristas*, *Buc.* 2.96–97), reversing the imagery of Virgil's Augustan Golden Age, wherein “the field gradually grows yellow with soft grain” (*molli paulatim flavescent campus arista*, *Ecl.* 4.27), and sheep will change “their own fleeces” (*sua . . . uellera*, *Ecl.* 4.43–44) to shades of purple, saffron, and scarlet. Argus' death is thus shown to have deprived the pastoral world of not only its guardian and civilizing leader, but also its hopes for future security. At *Ecl.* 5.34–39, Mopsus presents a similar picture of the countryside becoming fallow after the death of Daphnis, but Menalcas then at *Ecl.* 5.58–64 describes the landscape rejoicing in the hero's deification. In contrast to the careful balance of Virgil's eclogue, with Mopsus' lament and Menalcas' response each twenty-five verses in length, Petrarch's Silvius has to be coaxed to sing about Argus' arrival in heaven and then much more briefly (fifteen verses) than Pythias had sung before him (34 verses).³⁸ While Silvius asserts that Argus continues to watch over his “forsaken flock” (*uiduum . . . ouile*, *Buc.* 2.120), his only consolation is that “we will all follow you before very long” (*nos te cuncti, mora parua, sequemur*, *Buc.* 2.121). Idaeus, concluding the poem, explains that the two shepherds departed without any further exchange, whereas “I remained alone, grieving on the ruined shore” (*solus ego afflicto merens in litore mansi*, *Buc.* 2.124).

Naples does not appear elsewhere in the allegorical landscape of the *Bucolicum Carmen*, as Petrarch's attention shifts in the other poems to the restoration

36. See e.g., Papanghelis (2006) 376–77.

37. For Petrarch's identification of Augustus with Apollo in his notes on the *Eclogues*, see Baglio, Nebuloni Testa, and Petoletti (2006) 509n216 and 521n277.

38. On the symmetry between the two songs in Virgil *Ecl.* 5, see Coleman (1977) 172. On the more emotional, despairing tone of the songs in *Buc.* 2, see Apostol (2013) 425–26.

of Rome (*Buc.* 5) or corruption in Avignon (*Buc.* 6–8). *Argus* was, nonetheless, one of the first eclogues that Petrarch wrote, and the first that he circulated. For this reason it had the effect of establishing Naples as an important point of reference for the revival of the bucolic genre in this period. A few months after the poem was sent to Barbato, Boccaccio copied it into a notebook containing various other works of Petrarch, as well as the pastoral epistles of Dante and Giovanni del Virgilio.³⁹ Under the influence of the latter, in which Dante defends the vernacular style of his *Commedia*,⁴⁰ Boccaccio had initiated a similar exchange with Checco di Meletto Rossi, with whom he was associated at the court of Francesco degli Ordelaffi at Forlì. In the first of these eclogues, Boccaccio does allude to Petrarch, but seemingly as the epic poet of the *Africa*, rather than as a bucolic poet in his own right (*Ec.* 1.26–28 Lorenzini): *hominumque deumque labores / Mopso relinquamus, cui frontem nectere lauro uidimus* (“let us leave the troubles of men and gods to Mopsus, whose brow we saw bound with laurel”).⁴¹ After reading Petrarch’s *Argus*, however, Boccaccio made his own attempt at treating the theme of *hominum labores* in pastoral allegory.

The third epistolary eclogue that Boccaccio sent to Checco relates to events in Naples in late 1347 and early 1348, when King Ludwig of Hungary led an army into Italy to avenge the assassination of Andrew, his brother.⁴² Boccaccio begins by imitating the idyllic passage from the opening of Petrarch’s bucolic poem (*Buc.* 2.3–7), with a description of a peaceful scene in which “recreation or easy sleep occupied the shepherds” (*pastores ludus habebat / uel sonnus facilis, Ec.* 3.4–5 Lorenzini), and “the pastured goats were lying here and there under tall and spreading oaks” (*paste sub quercubus altis / ac patulis passim recubabant*

39. Boccaccio’s copy of *Argus* is in MS Florence, Laur., Plut. 29.8, 76v–77r. The eclogues of Dante and Del Virgilio can be found in the same manuscript at 67v–72v. Boccaccio probably transcribed these epistles in Naples in 1339; see the analysis of Padoan (1979). The standard edition is Brugnoli and Scarcia (1980). See also Wicksteed and Gardner (1902).

40. See Martellotti (1983) 91–106, Davie (1977) 188–90, Vecce (1993) 441–42. On the issue of the use of the vernacular in the Dante eclogues, and on the differing responses of Petrarch and Boccaccio, see McLaughlin (2005) 612–15.

41. For the two eclogues sent by Boccaccio to Checco, the text is Lorenzini (2011). The name Mopsus, which Boccaccio uses for Petrarch throughout his pastoral *oeuvre*, may be a reference to the singer of Virgil, *Eclogue* 5, but also has associations with the seer of the post-Homeric epic tradition. Dante gives the same name to Del Virgilio in his first eclogue. The phrase *hominum labores* has Virgilian echoes (e.g., *G.* 1.118 and *A.* 2.284) but, as Martellotti (1983) 102 points out, Boccaccio is probably alluding to the description in Dante’s eclogue of Mopsus contemplating *hominum superumque labores* (*Ec.* 2.19, Brugnoli and Scarcia [1980] 32).

42. On the history of the events treated in Boccaccio’s Neapolitan eclogues, see De Frede (1969) 246–58.

... *capelle*, *Ec.* 3.5–7 Lorenzini).⁴³ Here, though, the landscape of pastoral *otium* does not stand for Naples but Forlì, in Emilia-Romagna in northeast Italy, where Boccaccio was residing when his patron Ordelauffi decided to join Ludwig's Neapolitan campaign. In the next section of the eclogue, Ordelauffi, under the name of Faunus, is censured for his reckless wandering by Testilis, a personification of Forlì. Another shepherd, Moeris, then joins Boccaccio's Menalcas, and explains the causes of this dispute. First, he sings a long eulogy of Argus, to whom, he says, "Mopsus and his own Phytias and great Idaeus" (*et Mopsus Phytiasque suus uel magnus Ydeus*, *Ec.* 3.132 Lorenzini) have raised a monument in tribute. Moeris thus presents his song as a kind of sequel to Petrarch's poem for Robert, and from here he gives an account of the troubles that have arisen from the murder of Alexis (Andrew), and the anger of his brother Tityrus (Ludwig).

This was the first of four eclogues that Boccaccio composed on the subject of the Neapolitan wars in 1347–48; they form a distinctive sequence (*Bucc.* 3–6) in the *Buccolicum Carmen* (*sic*), a collection of sixteen pastoral poems that he eventually published ca. 1370.⁴⁴ Unlike Petrarch, who only visited Naples on a few brief occasions, Boccaccio had a strong personal connection with the city.⁴⁵ He had moved there as a teenager with his father, a Florentine banker employed by the Bardi company, which was one of the principal lenders to the Angevin court. Boccaccio therefore spent more than ten of his formative years in the company of Naples' wealthy and educated classes, and in that time he made his first attempts at a literary career. After the collapse of the Bardi resulted in his return to Florence in 1341, he continued to hope that he would be invited back to Naples as a successful man of letters. And, as Virgil had secured the favor of powerful individuals by praising them in his bucolic poetry, Boccaccio seems to have produced his own eclogues with the aim of bringing himself to the attention of potential patrons. In the poem to Checco, as Lorenzini notes, Boccaccio's attitude to the Neapolitan conflict "è senza ombra di dubbio filonungherese."⁴⁶ Following Petrarch, he was initially sympathetic to the murdered

43. When Boccaccio revised this eclogue for publication, he strengthened the link to Petrarch by saying that he was weaving "garlands from fair acanthus" (*serta . . . pulchro . . . acantho*, *Bucc.* 3.16), which he compares to Mopsus' laurel crown (*Bucc.* 3.17–19). For the text, see Bernardi Perini (1994); there is an English translation by Smarr (1987). These verses had appeared in the original version at *Ec.* 3.43–46 Lorenzini. For a detailed analysis of the relationship between the two recensions of this poem, see Lorenzini (2011) 27–43.

44. See Ricci (1985) 50–66; note the variation in spelling from Petrarch's title.

45. See Léonard (1944), Sabatini (1975) 103–15, and Branca (1976) 16–55.

46. Lorenzini (2011) 163; see also Léonard (1944) 34–41.

Andrew, and thus to Ludwig's desire for retribution. As the brutal events of the Hungarian invasion played out, however, his allegiance shifted, and the later eclogues are more supportive of Ludwig's enemies: Joanna; her future husband, Louis of Taranto; and Louis' advisor Niccolò Acciaiuoli, a Florentine friend of Boccaccio.⁴⁷

Although Boccaccio only began to use pastoral as a medium for political commentary under the influence of Petrarch's *Argus*, it is important to observe that he had already started to develop his own approach to the genre independently of Petrarch.⁴⁸ A number of his early vernacular works written in and about Naples, such as the *Caccia di Diana* (1333–34) and *Filocolo* (1336), include pastoral settings and themes, and in his representation of Campanian landscapes he, like Petrarch, emphasizes their connection with the poetry of Virgil. In a letter addressed to Petrarch from 1339, Boccaccio describes an encounter he had with a Muse-like apparition after walking out in the early morning to Virgil's tomb at Posillipo:

pulsus ad fumos stigios rusticorum, semper respiciens lutum agrestium uillicorum, audiendo latratus brunellicos eorundem, degustans ligustrica alimenta, odorans fetida que conturbant, tangendo uepres cuiuspiam ruditatis, uirgiliana teneret Neapolis . . . (Bocc. *Ep.* 2, Massèra [1928] 111)

Driven out to the Stygian fumes of the country folk, always beholding the filth of the rustic farmers, hearing their asinine braying, grazing on leafy fodder, smelling the stinking things that they stir up, brushing against the briars of some wild place, Virgilian Naples held me . . .

This passage may not portray *uirgiliana Neapolis* as an idyllic *locus amoenus*, but it can be noted that *rusticus* and *agrestis* are programmatic terms in the vocabulary of Virgil's bucolic poetics.⁴⁹ Thus Boccaccio, like Dante in his epistle to Del Virgilio, appears here to appropriate the *Eclogues*' humble style for his own mode of composition in the vernacular. After leaving Naples and venturing to produce his first works of Latin verse, he still sought to present himself as a poet of the slender reed. His eclogues, in comparison with Petrarch's, more

47. On Boccaccio's political *volte-face* in the later Neapolitan eclogues, see Branca (1976) 73–76 and now Simon (2014) 255–56.

48. Smarr (2002) 237–46 surveys Boccaccio's early pastoral works, and comments: "il genere pastorale italiano e latino, narrato e cantato, amoroso, morale, religioso, letterario, allegorico e non allegorico, tutto questo il Boccaccio l'aveva sperimentato già prima di conoscere le egloghe di Petrarca" (246).

49. Cf. *Ecl.* 1.10, 3.84, 6.8.

closely imitate the colloquial diction and songlike repetitions that characterize Virgil's style in the *Eclogues*.⁵⁰ Boccaccio explained, once the *Buccolicum Carmen* had been published, that in these poems he had followed Virgil, who "concealed some meaning beneath the bark of his poetry" (*sub cortice nonnullos abscondit sensus*), rather than Petrarch, "who rose a little higher than the usual style (*qui stilum preter solitum paululum sublimauit*, Ep. 23, Massèra [1928] 216) by using the eclogue form as a vehicle for continuous allegory."⁵¹ The first part of my discussion has shown that Petrarch transforms Naples into an almost epic landscape; in the eclogues of Boccaccio, on the other hand, the Neapolitan countryside continues to be depicted as the home of Virgil's rustic Muse.

In fact, Boccaccio develops this characterization of Naples to such an extent that, in *Bucc.* 5, it is represented not simply as a setting for pastoral poetry but even as singing a pastoral song of its own. The poem, entitled *Silua Cadens*, is a lament for the terrible state into which the city had fallen in 1348, after Ludwig's ruthless invasion had sent Joanna and Louis fleeing to Provence. In imitation of Virgil's first *Eclogue*, it begins as a dialogue between Pamphylus and Caliope:

CA: Pamphyle, tu placidos tecum meditaris amores
 Calcidie, uiridi recubans in gramine solus;
 ipsa dolens deflet miseram quas nescio siluas. (Bocc. *Bucc.* 5.1–3)

CA: Pamphylus, reclining alone on the green grass, you muse over the gentle loves of Chalcidia; she, in her grief, weeps for some wretched woodlands.

Virgil, at the opening of his eclogue, stresses the antithesis between the situations of his two speakers, as the sorrowful Meliboeus comes across Tityrus reclining in the shade, teaching the woodlands to echo "beautiful Amaryllis" (*formosam resonare doces Amaryllida siluas*, *Ecl.* 1.5). In the corresponding verses of Boccaccio's poem, though, Pamphylus' *otium* is contrasted with the *dolor* of his beloved Chalcidia—while the woodlands, instead of responding in sympathy to the shepherd's erotic song, have become the subject of a different kind of elegy. Boccaccio seems to pick up on a suggestion contained in

50. See the analysis of Boccaccio's bucolic style, and the comparison with that of Dante and Petrarch, in Lorenzini (2011) 64–76, 81–97. On Virgil's bucolic style, see Nisbet (1991).

51. Petrarch himself provides some corroboration for these comments, when he reveals in a letter to Boccaccio that contemporaries criticized the style of the *Buccolicum Carmen*: *altior in Bucolicis, ut aiunt, stilus est meus quam pastorii carminis poscat humilitas* ("in the *Bucolics*, they say, my style is more lofty than the lowliness of pastoral song demands," *Sen.* 2.1, Dotti [1978] 662).

the Servius commentary, that Tityrus' Amaryllis should be interpreted as an allegory for Rome.⁵² His Chalcidia, whose name derives from a poetic epithet for Cumae (e.g., at Virg. *A.* 6.17), can be understood as a personification of Naples; the image of her, singing plaintively "on Parthenope's shore" (*in litore . . . / Parthenopis*, *Bucc.* 5.26–27), also recalls the aetiological myth of Parthenope herself, the Siren who was buried by the waters of the Bay of Naples.⁵³

This is not an allegory that Boccaccio explains in his letter to Fra Martino da Signa, which summarizes all of the eclogues in the completed *Buccolicum Carmen*. Here, he glosses only the *silua* of the title as referring to the city of Naples and the Greek etymologies of Caliopus and Pamphylus as meaning respectively *bona sonoritas* and *totus amor* in Latin (*Ep.* 23, Massèra [1928] 217). There may be some further significance to these names, however: Pamphylus is a Latinized form of Panfilo, the Florentine lover of the Neapolitan Fiammetta in Boccaccio's *Elegia di Madonna Fiammetta* (1343–1344); while Caliopus is suggestive of Calliope, the most senior of the Muses and, according to Servius (*A.* 5.864), the mother of Parthenope and the Sirens.⁵⁴ Boccaccio reinforces the latter association by alluding to Calliope's narration of the rape of Proserpina in Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 5. Caliopus reveals that, when he heard Chalcidia weeping, he was "wandering by chance through the glades of Sicily and Pelorus' flowering fields" (*Sicilidum saltus et florida rura Pelori / forte pererrabam*, *Bucc.* 5.6–7); "why," he asks, "should I speak of lilies cut down by the sickle, and flowers bent backwards under a harmful sun?" (*quid lilia falce / secta loquar, floresque malo iam sole reflexos?* *Bucc.* 5.9–10). This description evokes the Sicilian grove in which Dis is said by Ovid's Calliope to have snatched Proserpina while she was picking *candida lilia* (*Met.* 5.392). Contemporary readers of Boccaccio's eclogue may have recognized a parallel to Joanna's flight from Naples, as the invading Ludwig had sought to assert his claim to the contested Angevin territory of Sicily.⁵⁵ Commentators on the Proserpina episode of the *Metamorphoses* have shown how Ovid combines epic grandeur with the emotive aspects of other genres, especially elegy—and Boccaccio also maintains an elegiac accent, even as he elevates his lowly pastoral verse to somewhat greater themes.⁵⁶

52. Servius actually rejects the interpretation of Tityrus' song as a *carmen de urbe Roma* (Serv. *Ecl.* 1.5). Elsewhere, though, Tityrus says that he was left by Galatea before being possessed by Amaryllis, and here Servius does take Amaryllis to stand for Rome, and Galatea for Mantua (Serv. *Ecl.* 1.29).

53. See e.g., Serv. *G.* 4.563.

54. On Boccaccio and the mythical Sirens, see Simon (2014) 262.

55. Boccaccio himself refers to Ludwig as *rex Siciliae* in his letter to Fra Martino (*Ep.* 23, Massèra [1928] 217).

56. On the generic ambiguity of Calliope's narrative, see Hinds (1987) 122–34.

Francesco Sabatini has identified “la dominante considerazione della donna” as a key feature of “l’eredità napoletana” in Boccaccio’s vernacular works, and in *Bucc.* 5 as well, the presence of Chalcidia as “narratrice e protagonista” serves to draw attention to the “tragicità di sentimenti.”⁵⁷ Although Chalcidia is modeled in part on Ceres grieving for her lost daughter in Ovid’s epic, her long lament for the decline of the Neapolitan *silua*, which is presented in direct discourse by Caliopos (*Bucc.* 5.28–119), also brings to mind the female singer impersonated by Alpheisiboeus in Virgil’s eighth *Eclogue*. In the first line of Boccaccio’s eclogue, quoted above, Pamphylus is portrayed contemplating Chalcidia’s “gentle loves” (*placidos . . . amores*, *Bucc.* 5.1),⁵⁸ and her song translates Naples’ recent political troubles into the bucolic idiom of erotic suffering. Thus, to refer again to Sabatini’s discussion of Boccaccio’s *napoletaneità*, Chalcidia seems to represent, “l’eco delle canzonette ascoltate dalla bocca delle fanciulle partenopee.”⁵⁹ In the closing verses of her monologue, then, she agonizes over the absence of Alceustus (Louis) and Lycoris (Joanna):

Alceustus trepidans abiit, tremebunda Liquoris
in dubium liquit siluas euecta per altum.
omne decus periit, luctusque laborque supersunt.
plangite, siluani ueteres, heu, plangite mecum.
silua decus nostrum periit, pereamus et ipsi. (Bocc. *Bucc.* 5.113–17)

Anxious Alceustus has departed; trembling Lycoris has left the woods in doubt, borne off across the sea. All our glory has perished, and sorrow and trouble remain. Lament, you ancient men of the woods, lament with me, alas! The woodland our glory has perished, and let us perish too.

The penultimate line of this passage (*plangite, siluani ueteres, heu, plangite mecum*, *Bucc.* 5.116) also appears earlier in the poem, at *Bucc.* 5.77. The verse is perhaps not regular enough to be called a refrain, but the repetition of the plural imperative verb in the first foot of the hexameter, and in the fifth foot after a bucolic diaeresis, does echo the distinctive refrain from the song of Alpheisiboeus’ enchantress: *ducite ab urbe domum, mea carmina, ducite Daphnin* (“lead Daphnis home from the city, my spells, lead him home,” *Ecl.* 8.68).⁶⁰ A similar resonance is created in Chalcidia’s final line (*silua decus nostrum periit, pereamus et ipsi*, *Bucc.* 5.117), which alludes to an even more elegiac model for her pastoral lament. Here, the polyptoton of *pereo*, with the first-person

57. Sabatini (1975) 111.

58. The phrase is elegiac: cf. Tib. 2.1.80.

59. Sabatini (1975) 112.

60. On Boccaccio’s use of the pastoral refrain, see Smarr (1987) xliii–xliv.

plural verb in the present subjunctive after a strong caesura in the fourth foot, is clearly patterned after the epigrammatic conclusion to Gallus' speech at *Ecl.* 10.69: *omnia uincit Amor: et nos cedamus Amori* ("Love conquers everything, and let us surrender to Love").⁶¹ The fact that Joanna is called Lycoris, after Gallus' mistress, emphasizes the thematic link to Virgil's poem, in which Gallus, the founder of Roman erotic elegy, is left "dying of love" (*amore peribat*, *Ecl.* 10.10), "in the arms of cruel Mars" (*duri . . . Martis in armis*, *Ecl.* 10.44), after his beloved has gone to accompany another man across "Alpine snows" (*Alpinas . . . niues*, *Ecl.* 10.47).

Accordingly, when Chalcidia complains that the Neapolitan shepherds have been scattered "throughout the squalid haunts of wild beasts" (*per sordida lustra ferarum*, *Bucc.* 5.111), she draws again on the example of Gallus, suffering from erotic passion "among the dens of wild beasts" (*inter spelaea ferarum*, *Ecl.* 10.52) in the Arcadian wilderness. This emotional connection to the harsh and wintry landscape of Virgil's tenth *Eclogue* is carried over by Boccaccio into the beginning of his next poem, *Alcestus*, which celebrates the return of Louis, newly married to Joanna, in the summer of 1348, after the spread of plague across Europe had forced Ludwig to withdraw from Naples. In the opening verses, Amintas describes the celebrations of the shepherds, "delighted that the snow and chill have passed" (*pastores transisse niues et frigora leti*, *Bucc.* 6.1), with the phrase *niues et frigora* occupying the same metrical *sedes* as at *Ecl.* 10.47. Here too, then, the frigid environment appears to be transformed in response to the presence of the desired individual. But as in the other poems in this cycle, developments in Naples are reported from a distance: and so Melibeus, the archetypal exile of Virgilian pastoral, continues to weep for the "fallen woodland" of the previous poem, until Amintas informs him of Alcestus' return. The countryside, Amintas assures him, is flourishing; recalling the praise of Campania's fertile soil in Virgil (*G.* 2.217–25), he tells him that "fair Vesuvius renews the vines in its vineyards, and Falernus now provides its hills with elms" (*pulcherque Veseuus / innouat arbustis uites, stauratque Falernus / ulmis iam colles*, *Bucc.* 6.19–21).⁶²

All of the Neapolitan eclogues emphasize Boccaccio's isolation from these events in the north of Italy, but in his panegyric of *Alcestus*, he seems to draw a

61. Conte (1986) 124n27 has observed that this hexameter possesses the balanced structure favored by the Roman elegists, suggesting that Virgil may have adapted it from the elegiac poetry of Gallus himself (cf. Serv. *Ecl.* 10.46).

62. Cf. *illa tibi laetis intexet uitibus ulmos . . . / talem diues arat Capua et uicina Vesaeuo / ora iugo* ("for you that soil will interweave the elms with happy vines . . . such rich soil does wealthy Capua plow, and the country close to Vesuvius' summit," *G.* 2.221, 224–25).

parallel between himself and Virgil, his fellow northerner, who was transported south to Naples under the influence of Augustan patronage. Melibeus begins by invoking Apollo and Pales, the patron deities of pastoral life who, according to Virgil's Mopsus, had departed the fields after the death of Daphnis (*Ecl.* 5.35). In so doing, he signals his response not only to the fifth *Eclogue* but also, perhaps, to Petrarch's portrayal of the desperate state of Naples after Robert's death in *Argus*. Virgil also names Apollo and Pales as the dedicatees of *Georgics* 3, and the proem of that book is another important source in the next section of Boccaccio's eclogue:

erige propter aquas nobis altaria, Phorba,
et lauro et sertis hedere mirtoque corona;
inde et ydumeas fer palmas, postque bidentes
in sacrum niueas deduc ac omnia serua. (Bocc. *Bucc.* 6.50–53)

You raise the altars for us by the water, Phorba, and wreath them with
garlands of laurel, ivy, and myrtle; then bring Idumaeans palms, lead down
the snowy sheep for sacrifice, and see to everything.

The altars that Melibeus calls for here can be equated with those that Menalcas dedicates to the deified Daphnis and Apollo at *Ecl.* 5.66—a line that Petrarch, for one, interpreted as an allusion to the divine honors granted to Julius Caesar and his adopted son.⁶³ At *Ecl.* 1.43, moreover, Tityrus says that his altars will smoke twelve times every year in thanksgiving to the young god who has allowed him to keep his land. More conspicuous than either of these, though, is the link to *G.* 3.12, where Virgil pledges to bring exotic *Idumaeas* . . . *palmas* to his hometown of Mantua and to set up a temple for Augustus “by the water” (*propter aquam*, *G.* 3.14; cf. *propter aquas Bucc.* 6.50) of the river Mincius.⁶⁴ I have already demonstrated how Petrarch introduces references to the *Georgics* to his bucolic poetry as warnings of impending civil war in Naples, and correspondingly Boccaccio uses this passage of Virgil's poem to identify the returning Louis with Augustus triumphant after Actium. The temple described by Virgil is commonly thought to represent the forthcoming *Aeneid*, and even though he takes the opportunity to pay tribute to Mantua, his birthplace, Boccaccio knew that Naples was where Virgil's poetic monuments had really been composed.⁶⁵ His own pastoral offering is much less grand than the epic temple promised by Virgil but still carries the suggestion that his own literary career could follow

63. See Baglio, Nebuloni Testa, and Petoletti (2006) 521n277.

64. The name of Idumaea, a place in Palestine, appears here in Latin for the first time; see Thomas (1988) 2:40–41.

65. See *Gen. Deor. Gent.* 14.19.4 (Zaccaria [1998] 1484).

a similar trajectory, so he might one day look back nostalgically to the north, rather than to the south.

Boccaccio was eventually asked to come back to Naples by Louis' influential counselor, Niccolò Acciaiuoli, in 1355, but the outcome left him bitterly disappointed; the eighth eclogue of the *Buccolicum Carmen*, entitled *Midas*, is usually interpreted as a satire against Acciaiuoli.⁶⁶ Although he, as well as his friend and mentor Petrarch, remained in close contact with the Neapolitan literati until shortly before his death in 1375, after that experience he seems to have been disabused of his hope of returning there to a life of real pastoral *otium*.⁶⁷ This is a hope that Petrarch may once have held for himself: in the eclogue *Argus*, the death of Robert of Anjou is shown to have deprived him of the freedom and security that Virgil had obtained under an enlightened patron in Naples. But whereas Petrarch came to the bucolic genre with his crowning epic work already in progress, his younger associate sought to present himself as a different kind of Virgilian successor. For Boccaccio, then, Naples represents not just an ideal of intellectual seclusion, but an aesthetic ideal as well. His imitation of Virgil's *Eclogues* aims to achieve a synthesis of highly allusive literary technique and an informal poetic style meant to be evocative of real popular song.⁶⁸ Thus, in medieval Naples, Virgil's poetry could still be heard to echo beyond the halls of the Angevin court, in even the more rustic parts of the landscape.

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66. Léonard (1944) 69–78 offers something of an apology for Acciaiuoli; see also Branca (1976) 103–7. Boccaccio endured another frustrating visit to Naples with the same Acciaiuoli shortly after Louis' death in 1362; see, again, Léonard (1944) 84–121 and Branca (1976) 133–37.

67. On the Neapolitan circle of friends shared by Petrarch and Boccaccio in the 1370s, see Bilanovich (1996) 459–524.

68. In this way, the pastoral poems offer something of a bridge between Boccaccio's humanistic and vernacular works, whose receptions were particularly dichotomous in Naples, as Sabatini (1975) 115 has observed.

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