

problem is to discover whether there are any circumstances in which this might be true.

A possible answer is suggested by an episode in Thomas Hardy's *Far from the Madding Crowd* in which a flock of sheep become seriously ill after invading a field of clover; the symptoms are vividly described: "The majority of the afflicted animals were lying down and could not be stirred . . . They rolled there—

Swoln with the wind and the rank mist they drew.

Many of them foamed at the mouth, their breathing being quick and short, whilst the bodies of all were fearfully distended."<sup>7</sup> There is a perfectly natural reason for this. Though excellent in the right quantities, the consumption of vetch or other leguminous plants (including clover) in excessive amounts or under particularly unfavorable conditions by cattle or other ruminants can give rise to a condition known as "bloat," a distension of the rumen due to the animal's inability to eructate all the gases formed in the digestive process.<sup>8</sup> Similar symptoms of *cruditās* are described by Columella *RR* 6. 6. 3. He does not suggest that they are especially likely to be produced by feeding on legumina, but elsewhere he and several other ancient writers say that vetch sown in March or autumn (instead of January or February) is indigestible.<sup>9</sup>

7. *Far from the Madding Crowd*, chap. xxi. In this case the cause of the trouble is clover, but one of the bystanders remarks that another farmer's sheep suffered a similar fate after getting into a field of vetch.

8. See A. T. Johns, in *Animal Health, Production and Pasture*, ed. by A. N. Worden, K. C. Sellars, and D. E. Tribe

*Stupere* can be used to describe the symptoms both of mental and physical distress. Examples are: "Ecce rubet quidam, pallet, stupet, oscitat, odit," Martial 6. 60 (61), of a hostile reader of his poems. "Cum hic etiam tum semisomnus stuperet," Cic. *Verr.* 2. 5. 95, of Verres on the morning after a debauch. "Torpescent aconiti tactu stupentque pallentes et vinci se confitentur," Plin. *NH* 27. 2, of scorpions poisoned by aconite. In Ascyrtos' case, the chief cause of his distress is mental, disgust at the antics of Trimalchio and his friends and shock at finding himself the object of Hermeros' abuse. The suffering of the goats is, if my explanation is correct, purely physical. Thus the primary point of the comparison is the alleged visual resemblance between Ascyrtos and a goat rolling on the ground with pain. But there is another factor, though a secondary one, which makes the comparison particularly appropriate. Bloat is a consequence of overeating, and Hermeros has already said (57. 2) that Ascyrtos and his friends were not accustomed to dinners as good as the one given by Trimalchio. The implied sneer at Ascyrtos' inability to cope with his food and drink reinforces an insult which in itself is no different from those which any street urchin would shout at an enemy.

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(London, 1963), chap. xiii. I am indebted to Mr. T. G. Boaz of our School of Agriculture for identifying the condition of Hardy's sheep for me; his help illustrates the advantage of having all disciplines represented in a university.

9. Colum. *RR* 2. 10. 34, Theophr. *HP* 2. 4. 2, Plin. *NH* 18. 38. 139.

### A NOTE ON CATULLUS 103

Aut sodes mihi redde decem sestertia, Silo,  
deinde esto quamuis saeuus et indomitus:  
aut, si te nummi delectant, desine quaeso  
leno esse atque idem saeuus et indomitus.

This is one of a number of Catullan poems to which we have no real key. "Der Anlass," as Riese says, "ist unbekannt." The commentators disagree whether the term *leno* is to be

taken literally (Friedrich, Lenchantin de Gubernatis, Merrill) or figuratively (Kroll, Fordyce). It is difficult to feel certain either that Silo is, or that he is not, a pander. We know only two things about him with any certainty—first that he has ten sestertia which belong, or belonged, to Catullus; second, that he has been acting *saeuus et indomitus*. The word *leno* can perhaps not be elucidated

further, but the phrase *saeuus et indomitus* seems to me to have one clear implication which no commentator on the poem, so far as I know, has mentioned. Catullus is surely implying that Silo's behavior has been that of an animal, a beast, not a man. *Saeuus* alone often carries this connotation. One thinks, for example, of Lucretius' horrifying description of the animals trained for warfare and the men who train them (5. 1308–17); or of Catullus' use of the word as an epithet of the Minotaur twice within the space of ten lines (64. 101 and 110). *Indomitus* is an even more open hint. Kroll cites a phrase from Plautus (*Trin.* 750), "adulescenti . . . indomito, pleno amoris ac lasciviae," which in effect defines the word for us. The *adulescens* is undoubtedly healthier and less unwholesome than our *leno*, but *lasciua* surely suggests the frolicking of an animal,<sup>1</sup> and the description implies not only youthful high spirits but also a definitely animal concupiscence. Plautus speaks also of *equos indomitos* (*Men.* 863), and the adjective turns up naturally among the technical writers on agriculture.<sup>2</sup> More important for the poem in hand is Catullus' description of the Minotaur as an *indomitus taurus*.<sup>3</sup> Catullus, in fact, nowhere uses *indomitus* without the suggestion of animality. He compares Attis to a heifer and describes "her" (63. 31–34):

furibunda simul anhelans uaga uadit animam  
agens  
comitata tympano Attis per opaca nemora dux,  
ueluti iuuenca uitans onus indomita iugi;  
rapidae ducem secuntur Gallae properipedem.

In the first verse quoted, before the simile proper, Catullus prepares the comparison by using words suitable to the behavior of animals, *furibunda*, *anhelans*, *uaga*, *uadit*. In the last verse quoted, with the epithet *properipedem* he makes it clear that Attis does not merely resemble an animal, but has in a sense actually become one and can now best be

described in terms which are better suited to beasts than to men.

When the poet, addressing Laodamia, tells her that love has enslaved her, tamed her who was untamed before, he does not prepare the animal image in advance (68. 117–18): "sed tuus altus amor barathro fuit altior illo, / qui tamen indomitam ferre iugum docuit." Nor does he continue this image; yet the three words *indomitam ferre iugum* could scarcely be clearer. The poet seems to feel that the single word *indomitam* is sufficient preparation for the concept of "bearing the yoke"; a word like *bouem* or *iuuenca* is not necessary.

In the passage in Poem 64 in which a storm (i.e., Theseus) lays low a mighty oak (i.e., the Minotaur),<sup>4</sup> there is no need, I believe, to stress the importance of the wild conflict of natural forces, animate and inanimate. The two other occurrences of *indomitus* in Catullus have less obvious overtones of bestiality, yet they are not, I think, wholly absent. When the poet tells us that (50. 11–12) ". . . toto indomitus furore lecto / uersarer," he is suggesting the animal passion from which he was suffering; and when he describes Ariadne, watching Theseus' distant departing sails, her heart sinking but turbulent (64. 54), "indomitos in corde gerens Ariadna furores," he does not mean for us to forget that the lady is the daughter of Pasiphaë and half sister to the Minotaur. The presence of *furor* in both lines, like *furibunda* in the Attis passage, is in itself sufficient suggestion of nonhuman feelings. The same statement can, I believe, be made with assurance of the collocation of *saeuus* and *indomitus* in Poem 103. Catullus is admonishing Silo either to return the money he owes or else to stop acting like a pander and an inhuman beast.

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1. Such as, e.g., a goat (cf. Verg. *Ecl.* 2. 63–64), a dolphin (Plin. *Ep.* 10. 33. 9), or a fish (Pac. *ap.* Cic. *Diu.* 1. 14. 24).

2. Varr. *RR.* 1. 21. 1, "de indomitis quadripedibus ac pecore," 2. 5. 11, *boues indomitos*; Col. 6. 2. 9, "ex domitis

bubus ualentissimum eundemque placidissimum cum indomito iungimus."

3. Poem 64. 173: "indomito nec dira ferens stipendia tauro."

4. Vss. 105–11.