Bucolic Irony: A Close Reading of Theocritus *Idyll* One

by

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Preface

It has been nearly forty years since the first major attempt to find general consistency within the corpus of Theocritus was undertaken. David Halperin's *Before Pastoral: Theocritus and the Tradition of Bucolic Poetry* (1983) has undoubtedly seen its fair share of criticism since its release, yet the idea of a "bucolic genre" has remained tantalizing for some. Using Halperin as inspiration, in addition to much more recent scholarship surrounding especially the etymology and usage of the Greek word, βουκολέω, "I cowherd" and interpretations provided by Kathryn Gutzwiller, I propose that from a careful analysis it is possible to define in a very loose and overarching way the various styles in which Theocritus wrote. The fact that debate has raged for so many years over how to understand the poetry of Theocritus is all too fitting for the elusive and mysterious Hellenistic poet. It may be, perhaps unsatisfyingly so, that no one interpretation or understanding can be gleaned, but it certainly *feels* like something connects his poems together; I cannot help but guess that this was intentional.

Regardless of whether a unifying whole can be given to the corpus of Theocritus, through a reading of the first poem there is a detectable irony that at least certainly belongs to the pastorals (i.e., *Idylls* 1, 3-11). In undertaking this study, I had originally hoped to prove this irony widespread in the corpus of both Theocritus and Virgil's *Eclogues*; this scope then narrowed to just Theocritus, then just Theocritus' pastorals and finally just *Idyll* One. The outline of terminology provided in the first two chapters was thus originally intended to be broadly applicable to all the poems, but a close reading of the programmatic *Idyll* One yields a satisfying result, nonetheless.

It is my hope that my ambition was not too great in undertaking this project and I do not necessarily consider this thesis to be my final word on the topic. To use what is, as far as I can

tell, the fairly infrequent term “bucolic irony” and to argue it is this phenomenon that underpins a genre notoriously difficult to pin down certainly *is* ambitious. Nevertheless, it seemed necessary to describe my interpretation of Theocritus’ first poem. In the future, there will hopefully be more opportunity to for me to continue to explore this phenomenon.

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Abstract

Irony, like many abstract Greek nouns, is difficult to pin down to a single definition. Through his sonorous hexameters, Theocritus immediately recalls the Greek oral poetic tradition. In addition to archaic epic traditions, Theocritus incorporates the recent trends of urban poetry, coming mostly out of Alexandria, to aid in his initiation of a "faux" tradition. The terms bucolic and pastoral do not seem to be synonyms, translated from Greek (βουκολικός) into Latin (*pastoralis*). What it is exactly Theocritus initiated can be explored through a careful analysis of the surfeit of traditions present in his poetry. The result of this analysis has yielded an understanding of *Idyll* One that, due to the programmatic nature of that poem, can serve as a starting point for future research into Theocritus and ancient pastoral or bucolic poetry.

In *Idyll* One, Thyrsis and the goatherd seem to abide by a set of rules that gives the lines a palpable irony: it is as if two competing Homeric singers suddenly started singing about the countryside and Pan as a way to compete and argue contemporary poetics. The weaving of traditions, in addition to multiple opportunities for simultaneously complex and simple interpretations, initiates the phenomenon of *bucolic irony*; this phenomenon both unites the Greek bucolicists and differentiates them from later pastoralists. The approach to irony offered is based largely on Aristotle, but also a modern theory of humour, taking "irony" to mean, most basically, "a misrepresentation of understanding". Through the evolution of ancient conceptions surrounding both the words βουκολέω and εἴρων, the term *bucolic irony* is outlined in the first two chapters, followed by four chapters dedicated to a close reading of *Idyll* One.

Contents

General Introduction

Writing in the 270s B.C.,[1] Theocritus could hardly have avoided interacting with the by then established Greek literary tradition. His corpus is infamously difficult to interpret as an integrated, organic whole. For example, there seem to be clear differences in the contextual and surface-level elements between his "pastorals" and epyllia. Nevertheless, there have been attempts to piece together his peculiar style as encompassing a single experiment, and it is in this vein that I have undertaken this thesis.[2] Beneath the surface of what I suspect to be the majority of Theocritus' poems as well as Virgil's *Eclogues*, there is a palpable irony that runs through the core of the "genre". Though the scope of this thesis only provided space for a close reading of the first *Idyll*, the programmatic nature of that poem serves as a strong argument in favor of such irony being widespread, at least in the "pastorals" (i.e., *Idylls* 1, 3-11). It is a *bucolic* irony that can categorize Theocritus' poetry under one umbrella, felt most strongly in his "pastorals", which a reading of *Idyll* One shall prove.

While there certainly has been research into the unification of the corpus of Theocritus, as is much discussed in my second chapter, this has nevertheless resulted in little consensus.[3] It is with this in mind that I sought out a way simply to describe what we see in Theocritus' corpus and, having explored an incongruity-interpretation of comedy from a recent publication,[4] I felt that an analysis of Theocritus under this framework would be fruitful. Theocritus' corpus is, and has forever been, rather striking to any reader ignorant of the pastoral tradition that developed

[1] See the information summarized by Gow 1952: xv-xxix. The term "bucolic irony" is mentioned by Hunter 1999: 12 "…bucolic irony deserves a brief note. Idylls 7, 10, and 11, at least, self-consciously exploit their scripted rusticity, and to some extent this is an ironic mode…". However, his treatment is brief and my interpretation of the term's application to *Idyll* One is my own. My thanks to Dr. Carbon for drawing my attention to this passage.
[2] The most significant being Halperin 1983.
[3] See the article by Scafoglio 2017.
[4] McGowan 2017.

out of him. An unravelling of the scroll greets the eye immediately with many strange things. We see them called εἰδύλλια, "little types",[5] the diminutive illuminating their short-form nature; then, a glance at the first line of the first *Idyll* informs us we are reading a hexameter poem, in literary Doric with Homeric words sprinkled in, about a goatherd. What we are perhaps signalled to expect immediately, then, is certainly a surfeit of traditions, and this interplay is what runs through the core of what I call bucolic irony.

While the immediate scope of this thesis is only the first *Idyll*, it is my intention that the first two chapters provide terminology applicable to the whole corpus of Theocritus. I undertook this research, as it seemed necessary to gather a full understanding of what I had in mind to incorporate in the close reading. Accordingly, I have organized the thesis into three parts: Part I, terminology; Part II, the opening of the frame and ecphrasis; Part III, the *Sorrows of Daphnis* and the closing of the frame. In chapter one, I outline my understanding of the term "irony" as based on Greek authors and evidence. Aristotle, as is usual for Greek understandings of what is mostly a literary phenomenon, serves as a basis for the observation that irony includes a misrepresentation of understanding. In a later chapter (3.5.1), I expand upon his idea that *pathos* and *ēthos* are prevalent in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, respectively. In addition to this, I also take up the idea that *pathos* and *ēthos* are similarly demonstrable in the stage genres of tragedy and comedy. This research greatly helps represent the appropriation of the different traditional styles by Theocritus in this poem. After delineating an understanding of the term irony mostly from

[5] This meaning was rejected by Gow 1952: lxxi-lxxii (see his summary there) but Gutzwiller 1996: 129-33 summarizes: "the use of a term like εἰδύλλιον that emphasizes diversity over unity, brevity over length, and self-mocking playfulness over seriousness is typical of poetry collections from the early third century" (133). Hunter 1999: 3 n. 12 agrees. The uncertainty of the meaning of the term likely stems from the fact that Pliny uses it simply to mean "hendecasyllable" (or just shorter poems, *Epist.* 4.14.9). It is likely here that there is a straightforward etymology and that initially, as Gow argues (ibid.), the term could not be applied to a single poem, but over time the word came to be misunderstood as a generic title and so the singular form served as the title of individual poems. Gutzillwer convincingly argued it was in the Platonic sense of εἰδή as "narrative, dramatic, and mixed", Gutzwiller 1996: 129-33.

Aristotle, I seek out evidence from the Greek tradition and arrive at the conclusion that irony is indeed a misrepresentation of knowledge, but intention and context are vital in determining if a given misrepresentation is ironic. I conclude by discussing an incongruity-theory of comedy, which not only serves as a framework for critical analysis of humour but also shows how situations themselves can be ironic.

Proceeding into the second half of the first Part, I turn to the terminology of "pastoral" and "bucolic" as well as delineate the difference between "mode" and "genre" and why they fit the former two terms respectively. Theocritus largely can be understood to have experimented with Alexandrian or Hellenistic interpretations of the genre of *epos*. The creation of a genre is difficult to ascribe to a single author, as genre is inherently historical. In categorizing the works of literature of the past, it is necessary to situate the author in the historical context of the development of the authors' genres. Theocritus scales down epic onto a diminutive scale where he portrays naïve poets sentimentally, to use Schiller's terminology. Pastoral on the other hand, cannot really be reduced to a specific genre, while there is perhaps an *eclogue* genre, pastoral is rather a mode, and the genres of elegy, fable, novel, romance etc. have often been written in the pastoral mode. The historical usage of the term βουκολέω, "I cowherd", is useful in understanding why Theocritus chose to apply the term to at least his pastorals. Beginning from a literal meaning, and gaining metaphorical significance as time goes on, the term comes by Theocritus' era to mean something along the lines of "trick" or "beguile". The word is fitting for what Theocritus demonstrates especially through his herdsmen.

The second part of this thesis is where I begin my close reading of *Idyll* One. In the first chapter, Chapter Three, the opening exchange between the herdsmen serves as an appropriate introduction to both Theocritus' literary program as well as my close reading. The first eleven

lines initiate many features, and incorporate many key terms, that serve to represent his experiment as a whole. What is most obvious is that these lines are highly sophisticated and put contemporary interpretations of third century Greek poetics into the mouths of traditionally marginal and lowly herdsmen. In the first few lines the poetic traditions of Alexandria and archaic epic are mingled to create a new genre which pretends this style of poetry has existed since time immemorial. The defining feature, then, seems to be that this "faux" agonistic tradition of herdsmen competing or exchanging hexameters is cast ironically as traditional and as belonging properly to *epos*, but in reality approaches the opposite of the genre it so heavily relies on.

The fourth chapter begins my analysis of what is the bulk of the first half of the poem. The goatherd seems to stand in as an interpreter for the cup intermediary between the poet and his readers and offers what can only be a reaction rather than a true description. It is unclear whether the goatherd experiences some religious miracle in a realm where such a miracle is possible or if he is being entirely allegorical; the answer is that both things are true. The cup is clearly imitative of the *Shield of Achilles* from the *Iliad* as that is a godlike shield for a godlike hero, so we have a godlike cup for a godlike herdsman. The images on the cup themselves are most representative of the irony inherent in Theocritus' program, with two erotic and psychological scenes of everyday characters surrounding a highly realistic description of the physical toil of a fisherman, reminiscent of the Hellenistic visual arts. In the first scene, there is a typical hexametric contest in which two men compete for the attention of a woman; in the third, a boy in a Dionysiac setting weaves an insect cage or trap, and his absorption in weaving serves as a metaphor for a "childlike" viewpoint as to the larger "goals" or "point" of poetry. Each

scene, and the first two in particular, are clearly bucolic appropriations of scenes from the archaic shield-ecphrases of Homer and Pseudo-Hesiod.

In the third and final part of this thesis, I devote two more chapters to the latter half of the poem, which details Thyrsis' song *The Sorrows of Daphnis* and closes the frame to the poem. Immediately upon beginning his song, like Theocritus himself, Thyrsis signals to his audience what type of poetry he will provide. He invokes the Muses and certainly seems to sing a "remembered" song, however, he calls on them via a refrain and places a *sphragis* on his song. Thyrsis too will be combining different traditions into his own version of a lament. All throughout his song we see a continued concern for both euphony and traditional heroic mythology. Daphnis remains stubbornly silent to his cast of visitors, except for Aphrodite with whom he engages in a dialogue. Hermes, Priapus and the herdsmen are the first visitors, and their understandings do not seem to elucidate Daphnis' situation much. Aphrodite's interaction does in fact give clues as to Daphnis' affliction. In this interaction Daphnis reproaches the goddess with reference to Diomedes and seems to include himself among her herdsmen lovers, Adonis and Anchises. The fact is that Daphnis is prevented from fulfilling his desire, his attitude towards the goddess and reference to Adonis and Anchises make it seem like he is attempting to ensure a dignified fate for himself different from what those other herdsmen suffered.

In the final chapter of my close reading both the poem and the body of my thesis come to a simultaneous conclusion. Daphnis cries out in a similarly heroic vein as Ajax does at the end of his tragedy and he twice writes his epitaph like some Homeric hero. Even in his final words he cannot help but attempt to delight his audience in the proverbial sweetness that surrounds his verses. After dedicating his pipe to pan, he cries out an *adunaton* stating that nothing will be the same once Daphnis has died. In his last breath he continues to lay out his understanding of poetry

and argues for its potential as a *pharmakon*. He was true to his commitment to a life of song and music until the bitter end. The owl and nightingale are representative of the fusion of the two core traditions that Theocritus borrows from. His poems are comic (the owl) and tragic (the nightingale) and since those two traditions are ultimately derived from the Homeric epics, where the difference, Aristotle argues, is that the *Odyssey* represents a concern for *ēthos*, while the *Iliad* a concern for *pathos*. In Theocritus we see the programmatic combination of the disparate traditions initiated in a deceitfully ironic "genre" that elevates typically marginal characters of *epos* to the highest level of poetic skill and ingenuity.

Part I: Terminology and Definitions

Chapter I: Greek Irony and a Theory of Humour

1.1.1 Introduction

The most straightforward definition of irony could be along the lines of "saying one thing and meaning the opposite". More specifically, however, it is usually expressed through overstatement or understatement. The word irony seems to have contained a sense of intellectual misrepresentation, such as Socrates is often said to have engaged in.[6] Εἴρων is possibly a substantivized form of the Greek verb εἴρω ("I speak" and its Ionic middle ἔρομαι, "I ask") and may come from the role of the εἴρων as someone who, through asking plain questions, pokes holes in a sophisticated but specious argument.[7] We can perhaps, cautiously, begin with the understanding that irony in ancient Greece had something to do with the English understanding of "dissembler" as *ironists* dissemble (i.e. conceal their understanding) themselves through asking questions and feigning ignorance. The characters of Theocritus will not be seen to be questioning *ironists*, as Socrates might be understood in that role, but as still deeply engaged in a game of ironic misrepresentation and deception that penetrates the core of the genre.

[6] This Socratic understanding endured into the Roman era. Cic. *Brut.* 292 *Ego… ironiam illam quam in Socrate dicunt fuisse, qua ille in Platonis et Xenophontis et Aeschini libris utitur, facetam et elegantem puto. Est enim et minime inepti hominis et eiusdem etiam faceti cum de sapientia disceptetur… Socrates in caelum effert laudibus Protagoram Hippiam Prodicum Gorgiam ceteros, se autem omnium rerum inscium fingit et rudem.* "I [i.e. Brutus] consider that *ironia* which they say was within Socrates, which he employed in the books of Plato, Xenophon and Aeschines, as facetious and elegant. For, when an argument about wisdom arises, he is both the most tactless man and yet the same one who is facetious… Socrates extolls to the sky Protagoras, Hippias, Prodicus, Gorgias and the others, yet considers himself unknowledgeable and ignorant of everything".

[7] As does Strepsiades in Aristophanes' *Clouds* or Socrates in many Platonic dialogues. See 1.1.3 in this thesis. For a contrary understanding, as well as an overview of the evolution of the term, from its origins in Aristophanes to its use in the Roman era see Markantonatos 1975: 16–21.

1.1.2 Aristotle's *Εἴρων*

A glimpse into the Aristotelian understanding of the εἴρων is provided in his *Nicomachean Ethics* (1127a), where in opposition to the boaster (ἀλαζών), he writes (1127a20) ὁ δὲ εἴρων ἀνάπαλιν ἀρνεῖσθαι τὰ ὑπάρχοντα ἢ ἐλάττω ποιεῖν, "the *ironist*, on the other hand, denies what he has or makes [what he has] lesser". The role of deception seems key in this ancient understanding. The Greek τὰ ὑπάρχοντα "the things [belonging to one that are] in existence", in Aristotle's logic are the "subsistence of qualities in a subject"[8] and so by denying the existence of qualities in a subject the εἴρων conceals his understanding of them, giving the εἴρων an intellectual role. Still, it is difficult to discern Aristotle's true understanding of the term. When discussing anger in his *Rhetoric* (1379b), he says in response to why one would be angry with another person's employment of irony καταφρονητικὸν γὰρ ἡ εἰρωνεία, "for irony is something contemptuous. However, later in the book (1419b) he understands εἰρωνεία as a type of humour that befits a gentleman more than buffoonery ἔστι δ᾽ ἡ εἰρωνεία τῆς βωμολοχίας ἐλευθεριώτερον, "irony more befits a freeman than buffoonery". So far, Aristotle seems to suggest the potential for irony to concern concealment, arouse anger in one's adversaries, and be intellectually humourous to an audience willing to be entertained.[9]

Whether or not we are certain Aristotle wrote *Magna Moralia*, the author's statement on truth being between two extremes of irony and boastfulness is useful (1193a.29-34). ἀλήθει δέ ἐστιν μεταξὺ εἰρωνείας καὶ ἀλαζονείας… ἐπικρυπτόμενος τὸ εἰδέναι ὁ δὲ ἀληθὴς οὐδέτερον τούτων ποιήσει, "truthfulness is between irony and boastfulness…[the *ironist* is one who] conceal[s] what he knows, the truthful man will not do either of these things". In this

[8] LSJ ad loc. s.v. III.3

[9] Shortly after, he gives advice to close a speech with something ironic (1420a). Pavlovskis 1968: 23 writes "if irony is a joke… will it provoke his listeners to animosity… ? It is perhaps more likely that they will laugh at him and… he will dispose them favorably toward the rest of his discourse".

interpretation, it is clear enough that irony details the concealment of one's knowledge; perhaps, since boastfulness is clearly overstating what one has, we can begin to approach irony as containing a form of understatement, as Aristotle certainly seems to do.[10] The εἴρων keeps hidden his understanding of the truth and so lies, whether directly or by omission, through displaying himself as knowing or understanding less than he actually does, thus understating his intelligence.

Shortly after the first passage in the *Nicomachean Ethics* mentioned above, Aristotle admits that when understatement is taken to its extreme, it is also paradoxically boastful (*Eth. Nic.*1127b).[11] Still, right before this passage, he permits the great-hearted man to partake in irony on occasion (*Nicomachean Ethics* 1124b). According to Thomas Deman on these passages, Aristotle seems to have Socrates in mind when he sees the potential for irony to be present in a great-hearted man due to its occasional function as a method of inquiry.[12] Socrates aside, it seems that the εἴρων conceals what he knows more often for malicious gain, either to embarrass his adversaries through mocking them or to manipulate them. Aristotle applies the term φιλοψευδής "lover of lies" (*Eth. Eud.* 1234a3) to both the boastful and ironic person alike, significantly blurring the distinction between the two. The ironist seems to lie in a rather clever way, one that has the potential to both devastate and amuse.

The ancient *ironist* is clearly someone who is not truthful, for whatever reason. He practices deception and conceals his capabilities through the use of understatement.[13] The herdsmen of pastoral, in their multifaceted game of deception, will be seen instead to engage in overstatement to conceal what they must truly know. When they speak or sing their songs, they

[10] οἱ δ᾽ εἴρωνες ἐπὶ τὸ ἔλαττον λέγοντες χαριέστεροι μὲν τὰ ἤθη φαίνονται "ironists, when using understatement, appear to have a more graceful character" (*Eth. Nic.* 1127b).
[11] Ar. *Nub.* 449 Strepsiades (to be discussed below) calls Socrates both εἴρων and ἀλαζών.
[12] Deman, 1942: 69.
[13] Pavlovskis 1968: 25.

are not being portrayed as true countrymen (who would be invariably out of touch with the latest poetic trends of the city), so they deceive. The verses of the herdsmen can be seen as an overstatement, since such persons are capable of producing them only in a fictitious ideal world;[14] their intelligence and skill, on the other hand, is understated through their rustic status. The herdsmen are understated in the sense that, if someone encountering the pastoral *Idylls* for the first time read a passage excerpted from them, he would be surprised and amused when told the speaker was a goatherd, due to the quality of the poetry combined with the fact such people are usually not up to date on urban poetic trends. The role that such incongruity can play in understanding irony will be explored later this chapter in section 1.1.4.

[14] Ideal in the sense that, even without an urban education or awareness, the herdsmen are still capable of composing trendy verses.

1.1.3 Ancient Irony in Action

First, a few ancient examples will elucidate the potential for the εἴρων to abuse an intellectual adversary while at the same time producing a humourous or beguiling effect. I shall begin with the Greek hero most known for his deception, Odysseus, and consider the role that deception takes when discussing an ironic subject. Moving onto literature from the classical period, I take up the type of Socratic irony that existed in the popular image of the man, concluding that excessive understatement is not necessarily boastful as Aristotle claims. Finally, I will consider Strepsiades and Socrates from Aristophanes' famous comedy *Clouds*, where the rustic Strepsiades will be seen to be an εἴρων in the sense that he asks down-to-earth questions, but also since the two characters represent the clash of traditional education versus the "new learning" taking place in the cities. This treatment should provide a more nuanced understanding of how and when deceit is ironic, along with strong support that overstatement could also create a humourous irony in the ancient world.

Odysseus' "lying tales" in the second half of the *Odyssey* are clear evidence that he is willing to lie boldly in order to advance his interests.[15] In fact, they are enough to cast doubt on all the tales Odysseus tells in his epic. The narrator of the *Odyssey* is our only source for confirmable "fictional fact" in the epic,[16] and Odysseus clearly demonstrates that he does not always tell the truth. Might his famous *Apologue* in Books 9-12 then be the prime example of intellectual and literary deception (some events it narrates can be confirmed in the narrative, while others cannot)?

A surprising fact is that within the episodes where Odysseus clearly lies, in the latter half of the poem, there are no monsters or other-worldly beasts mentioned. Might it be then that

[15] Most obvious are his false autobiographies to Athena 13.256-86, Eumaeus 14.199-359, a suitor 18.125-68, Penelope 19.173-204, and Laertes 24.302-15.
[16] Along with, to some degree, the gods (see Richardson 1996: 396).

Odysseus positioned his narrative in accordance with the supernatural experiences which the Phaeacians seemed to be accustomed?[17] Then, when dealing with people of his own land (and world), he resolves simply to portray himself as a shipwrecked Cretan? In addition to deceiving through lies, Odysseus also deceives through understatement in his performance as a beggar in his own palace (Books 20-21).[18] Odysseus both deceives and downplays his abilities, for example, by pretending to have no business being able to string the great bow of the king of Ithaca. But the larger question remains: can Odysseus' false autobiographies and stories to the Phaeacians be seen as an example of irony as ancients or even moderns would understand it?

Upon consideration it seems that Odysseus, far from proving that deception in itself is a sufficient condition for irony, is a healthy reminder that there is more to any understanding of irony. In the case of his deceptions to those whom he meets in books 13-24, Odysseus aims to deceive, and he lies outright. In order for irony to be apparent to an audience, Odysseus would have to be telling other characters something that is potentially true either in or outside the narrative. For example, if there really was a pre-epic Cretan background of the *Odyssey* in which Odysseus killed the son of Idomeneus, then having Odysseus detail it in the actual text would be ironic (13.256-86).[19] The deception involved in both ancient and modern irony also requires a sort of "plausible deniability" against an accusation of misrepresenting the truth. Odysseus lies and leaves us with no choice but to conclude that he is lying, whereas our herdsmen, we will see, provide hints that they are deceiving without making it obvious through a reading of the text alone.

[17] Burrows 1965: 36.
[18] Important to note here is that his understatement is not literally a statement of any kind, see the next section of this thesis.
[19] West 2003: 304.

There is still potential, outside of the times when he is clearly lying, for Odysseus' speech to be seen as ironic. If we are to understand that he is not always to be trusted and use this information in reading his tales told in books 9-12, might some be ironic? When Odysseus tells his outlandish tales, the Phaeacians are unaware of their potential to be false, only the audience of the epic knows Odysseus as the scheming sort, and if we do not believe everything he says some of his stories might invoke a cerebral smile (though nothing more). In addition to this "plausible deniability", it is perhaps useful to add a dimension of "pretending", as does Gregory Vlastos when he squeezes the modern understanding of irony out of the ancient in his book *Socrates: Ironist and Moral Philosopher*.[20] By "pretending" Vlastos does not mean deception, but rather "pretend" in the sense that we "suspend disbelief" when viewing or reading fiction. In the example above, if the epic poet's audience were aware of an older story where Odysseus does kill Idomeneus' son, then by "making up" a story that he actually did in this text, he is really pretending to lie, which would be ironic. It could or could not be perceived as the truth by the poet's audience.

As will be explored shortly, Aristophanes is the first to use the term and in his plays it very much seems like a term of abuse. Given the surviving texts of Aristotle it is difficult to come to a single conclusion on his understanding of the term, but he emphasizes that there is deception at play. The growth in popularity of the image of Socrates seems to have driven a shift in the understanding of the word.[21] Aristotle resisted the new meaning and attempted to reconcile what he theorized with the fact that it seemed to many that Socrates was *the* quintessential ironist. Due to the large influence that the afterlife of this peculiar "Socratic irony" played, it is worth now considering the man himself and how his embodiment of the term led to its

[20] Vlastos 2007: 27.
[21] Ibid.: 29.

development into the rhetorical device vaguely understood in English as "saying one thing but meaning another".

In addition to pointing out the importance of understanding the word "pretend" deep within the word "irony", Vlastos makes a shrewd yet basic observation that words do not only mean one thing.[22] A word such as irony, which is undoubtedly somewhat complicated to explain, need not only encompass a single phenomenon. The meaning of the Greek word *hubris* is difficult to pin down to a single concept as well.[23] Aristotle's understanding can be paraphrased as being disingenuous in a humourous way perhaps, but not necessarily at the expense of another. The modern understanding is fairly solidified by the time Cicero writes of the concept,[24] *urbana etiam dissimulatio est, cum alia dicuntur ac sentias* (*De Oratore* 2.67) "dissimulation is refined when what is said is different than [what] you might understand".[25] Meanings of such abstract words undoubtedly shift not only between individuals but between cultures of varying ages. The sly and deceptive aspect of Aristotle's definition need not apply indiscriminately, and there is no better example than Socrates.

When Socrates is engaging in the so-called "Socratic method" he is being ironic in only one strict sense of the word, that of being a questioner. Modern society does not see asking leading questions as ironic, because it is now so common a pedagogical strategy that it seems to be its own distinct phenomenon. Socrates certainly seems to know the answers to his own questions, but his ultimate belief is that you must come upon an understanding of a topic

[22] Vlastos 2007: 25.
[23] Hesiod identifies it abstractly as being opposed to Justice (Hesiod *Op.* 217) and Homer applied it to the behavior of the suitors especially (*Od.* 15.329, 17.565). Going from these two examples alone, the modern sense of arrogance does not seem far off, but the word at its most basic level means "violence" or "wanton violence" which extends to "outrage" leading back to the epic flavour of arrogance. Something similar is going on here with the word "irony".
[24] For *dissimulatio* meaning *ironia,* see n. 6 and L&S s.v. I.B. That gives "Socratic εἰρωνεία" as an analogue.
[25] Cf. also Cic. *Ac.* 2.5.15

yourself.[26] This method of teaching is not without its potential to also be humourous and humiliating for either teacher or student, much like the modern concept of irony can be.[27] If a student does not know the answer to the seemingly leading question, it is dissatisfying for both parties and may show either the folly of the question or the ineptitude of the student. The "Socratic method" of teaching is not as far as it may seem from our understanding of irony.[28]

Socrates, however, even when excessively employing his method of guiding students to their own answers, still remains nobly ironic. The example I would like to give comes from Plato's *Symposium* when Alcibiades details his relationship with Socrates (217a-219b). In this passage, Alcibiades explains that his plan to woo Socrates and exchange his beauty for Socrates' wisdom goes awry. Socrates conceals his feelings from Alcibiades consistently throughout multiple meetings and allows Alcibiades to interpret his actions and words in one way or in the opposite, but just as plausible, way. This does not show Socrates as ignobly using irony to embarrass his friend or advance his own interests; on the contrary, it is because he is so dedicated to inquiry and insistent on the fact that students come upon their own answers that he takes it to the extreme and through doing so demonstrates that excess does not always have such an ugly head.[29]

Most discussions of early understandings of irony incorporate at least a note on Aristophanes' *Clouds*. Strepsiades is the country bumpkin (ἄγροικος) often seen as a fool who is deceived or immorally excessive.[30] His role is perhaps the clearest demonstration of all the

[26] Vlastos 2007: 44.
[27] To understand the philosophical implications of Socrates' potentially humiliating teaching strategy see Detweiler 2016: 149-72.
[28] Worth mentioning is that, when using this method in arguments, Socrates certainly seeks an advantage, but "his modesty was not false but natural and purposely heightened in order to disclose the unjustified presumption of his opponents with delicate mockery", Markantonatos 1975: 17-18.
[29] See Vlastos' comments 2007: 44.
[30] As deceived Gaertner 1999: 272–79; excessive, Kastely 1997: 25–46. On the ἄγροικος see, most recently, Belardinelli 2016: 17-35.

aspects of irony that have been discussed thus far. He begins at line 8 ὁ χρηστὸς οὑτοσὶ νεανίας "this fine young man", to describe his good-for-nothing son. Immediately there is a clear use of modern irony (virtually of sarcasm),[31] he says he has a good son, but his son is clearly not good (as he explains). There is no lie here, his intention is clear but the literal meaning of his words do not match the meaning of his comment and in this way pretending plays a role.

Over the course of the play we see Strepsiades develop into one who is going to be questioning arguments, as the hypothetical etymology of irony from ἔρομαι suggests. However, before that the very fact of his status as a country bumpkin should be addressed. The differences between country education and the education one could receive in a *polis* like Athens is explored in this play. Strepsiades uses, perhaps overly, simplistic argument and language; he allegorizes, plays on folk etymology, and reveals his faith in witches.[32] At this crucial point in history, it seems the Athenians are confronting the fact that with new learning comes the abandonment of old and reliable understandings.

While this historical development may be profound, it creates the opportunity for good ironic humour that is not necessarily vindictive or sarcastic as Strepsiades' earlier comment might be. Rather, it is simply done through the contrast and intersection of diverging philosophies, both of which an Athenian audience would likely be familiar with. When Strepsiades and Socrates are discussing rain, Strepsiades approaches the topic in such a contrasted way that he highlights Socrates' distance from an understanding of the traditional association of Zeus with rain (363-406). In this scene Strepsiades exclaims, exchanging Socrates' materialistic answer for his own καίτοι πρότερον τὸν Δί' ἀληθῶς ᾠμην διὰ κοσκίνου οὐρεῖν, "and, just imagine, that before I really thought it was Zeus pissing through a sieve!" (373). The

[31] A subset of irony for which there is insufficient space to discuss here.
[32] Woodbury 1980: 108-27; see also Green 1979: 15-25.

comment is more regarding Socrates' impression of him rather than his impression of Socrates and it is not quite hostile enough to be really at Socrates' expense. Strepsiades' use of both καίτοι and ἀληθῶς seems to me ironic, he embellishes his faith in the old understanding so as to contrast Socrates' new teaching and old beliefs.

As mentioned earlier, the term εἴρων and its relatives are first found in Aristophanes' *Clouds* at line 449.[33] When in dialogue with the chorus about what Strepsiades wants to gain from the new learning, he goes on listing his preconceived understanding of what he may become. βδελυρὸς ψευδῶν συγκολλητὴς (446)… μάσθλης εἴρων γλοιὸς ἀλαζὼν (449), "a loathsome deceiver of lies…a knave, *ironist*, or slippery *alazon*". It seems clear from this passage the term is not used in a positive sense and is related to the ancient idea of a "quack" or *alazon*, that is, one who is arrogant and over-confident. This suggests the term was originally used as an insult against, most likely, Socrates and his annoying way of arguing.[34] The term may then have been a response against the insulting tendency of Socrates and others to pretend they do not understand their adversary in order to quiz his (i.e., the adversary's) argument to death. It was born out of anger and frustration, but the delight present in the phenomenon for both audience and speaker was clearly recognized by the time *Clouds* was produced (423 B.C.).

In summary, the potential applications of a broader understanding of the word irony have been explored through three examples. First, there is Odysseus, through whom it was discovered that intention is critical to being perceived and understood as ironic. Then, through a look at how the term could apply to both the historical Socrates and his representation in comedy it was shown that the "Socratic method" is not as far away from an understanding of irony as it might seem. Additionally, it was shown that even when done to the excess, Socrates' ironic mode of

[33] Ribbeck 1876: 381-400.
[34] Markantonatos 1975: 17.

inquiry can still be understood to adhere to noble practices. Finally, through Strepsiades and his interactions with Socrates it was explained that he is literally an εἴρων in the ancient comedic sense of the word, but also one who represents the irony that underscores the play, that of the intersection between old and new learning. Intersection of disparaging ideas or philosophies often will have the opportunity to be humourous, but this does not mean that all humour is ironic. The next section will detail the theory of humour that will aid in my understanding of irony.

1.1.4 A Theory of Humour: Lack and Excess

On beginning his monumental work *Greek Laughter* Stephen Halliwell was quick to dismiss the very notion of an all-encompassing theory being prescribed to the phenomenon of humour or laughter.[35] Nonetheless, the frameworks that have been established through recent analyses based on the "incongruity" theory are still helpful in understanding the vast majority of humourous, comic, or, more importantly for our study, *facetious* situations and utterances in both the ancient and modern world.[36] This is not to say that the theory I am going to employ, that of Todd McGowan,[37] is perfect, but it established important criteria that more often than not can result in a critical understanding of how and when things are *facetious*.

My decision to use the word *facetious*, over the plethora of other humour-related terms available in the English language comes with ancient precedent. Horace, who was unfortunately silent regarding bucolic for the most part,[38] commented in passing quite early on in Virgil's career *molle atque facetum | Vergilio adnuerunt gaudentes rure Camenae*, "rejoicing in rural life, the Italic Muses have granted to Virgil tender and *facetious* [verses]" (Hor. *Sat.* 1.10.44-45). Though the exact interpretation of these words, *molle atque facetum*, has been disputed since antiquity,[39] Horace elsewhere relates these Muses to the "thin" style of poetry (*Carm.* 2.16.38 *tenuis* = λεπτός). Quintilian denied the possibility of an interpretation that saw *facetum* in the same sense as *ridiculum*,[40] but plenty of modern scholars have seen a sense of "playfulness" in his description.[41] Two things are certain, that Horace regarded Virgil's *Eclogues* as far removed from other styles of poetry, such as epic or didactic hexameter; second, that Horace relates

[35] Halliwell 2008: 11.
[36] Not strictly in the sense of treating serious topics lightly, but also in the simpler sense of "jocular".
[37] McGowan 2017.
[38] It was not mentioned as a type in his *Ars Poetica*.
[39] Scafoglio 2017: 32-33.
[40] Quintilian *Institutio Oratio* 6.3.20, where he instead proposes that the *Eclogues* are *elegentia.*
[41] Rose: 1942 24-25, Zinn: 1960 46-47, Antony: 1976 34, Clausen 1982: 309, Lee 1989: 60.

Virgil's poetry to that of the Alexandrian and Neoteric schools.[42] I define word "facetious" to mean an "intellectual" humour or wit that is intrinsic to the brief poems written in the Theocritean tradition.[43]

Prior to attempting to connect Horace's understanding of the *Eclogues* to the meanings of irony that have been discussed, I first want to outline McGowan's theory and go over two examples of irony, one *facetious* and one not.[44] McGowan, as the title to this section suggests, focuses his analysis on the fact that a surprising intersection of lack and excess that disrupts the social order will create comedy.[45] In everyday life, we cannot partake in excess for fear of social consequences:[46] it is frowned upon to be lazy at work or get drunk on communion wine. When we do see situations such as these, albeit ones where nobody is actually harmed or offended, and are surprised by them very often our reaction is to laugh or smile.

Freud anticipates this interpretation through his "pleasure/reality principle" and then later through what he called the "death drive".[47] The "pleasure/reality" principle refers primarily to the fact that humankind's cathectic ability (i.e., the ability to concentrate mental energy) arose from the dichotomy of pleasure and pain (*Lust-Unlust*).[48] We seek out the things that bring pleasure and avoid those that bring pain, unless there is a reward of greater pleasure as a result of the pain. The "death drive" refers mainly to the fact that since human beings are always lacking even when we acquire what it is we desire we immediately desire something else as we become aware that the initial object of our desire is not what we had imagined. In fact, Freud's theory

[42] Scafoglio 2017: 33.
[43] Ernout and Meillet 1980 s.v. *facetus* says at least one ancient grammarian connect the term with *fax*. While false, it suggests the potential for an intellectual or brilliant aspect to exist within an ironic statement.
[44] Much from the following discussion on lack and excess were originally written for Dr. Bevan's Latin Theatre class in Winter 2021, my appreciation to Dr. Bevan for his comments thereon. All remaining mistakes are my own.
[45] McGowan 2017: 19-48.
[46] Badiou 2014: 19.
[47] Freud, 1920: 141–68; 1911: 38–45, respectively.
[48] See Freud 1911.

argues that we desire these pleasures to the point of dying for them. When we see pleasure and pain or excess and lack united, it can amuse us,[49] though in our everyday life it is still frowned upon and thus we often use fiction to dramatize extreme lack or excess, removing the very real threat both things pose to the social order. Making light of someone's death can be funny under strict circumstances, such as Ted Kotcheff's *Weekend at Bernie's* (1989),[50] but it is more often plainly offensive: we would cease to recognize our society and culture were all the deceased treated as props at a pool party.

The example that McGowan gives is a movie directed by Harold Ramis, *Groundhog Day*.[51] The main character Phil Connors (Bill Murray) repeats the same dreaded day over and over again. Each of us repeat many of the same things everyday: we take the same route to work, engage in the same conversations, drink the same coffee, and so on. When this is taken to the extreme, through the artificial scenario where Connors really does experience the *exact* same day over and over again we confront the fact that "repetition defines the subject".[52] The character gets frustrated and fills his days with more and more excessive activities, because he knows they have no consequences. The monotony of the everyday combined with the excess available to Connors creates a situation rich with comedic possibilities.

As was discussed in the previous section, irony often contains a form of understatement, whether this is explicit or it is inherent to the scenario. Irony often overlaps with sarcasm, being sarcastic is to be ironic in an intentionally offensive or mean way. This can be *facetious* when one does not empathize with the victim, but it is not friendly or necessarily intellectual. The irony that will be explored is inoffensive between the characters themselves and so the herdsmen

[49] "When the subject encounters a potentially satisfying object, it confronts the excessiveness of its lack. When this encounter takes us by surprise, we enter the realm of comedy", McGowan 2017: 33.
[50] Kotcheff 1989.
[51] McGowan 2017: 34. Ramis 1993.
[52] McGowan 2017: 35.

will not be seen to be sarcastic. However, in their ignorance of the potential for them to be seen as sarcastic they display an even deeper irony. Irony is at the same time not always *facetious*; in order for it to be so it must fit the qualifications of McGowan outlined above, namely, it has to be a surprising intersection of lack and excess.

The dark side of irony is perhaps best outlined through exploring what could be understood as "tragic irony" but fits my definition of just the term "irony" equally well. The outcome of Oedipus, as detailed in Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex*, is tragically ironic because the audience knows his outcome both due to the story having been told before and their understanding of the role of fate in Greek tragedy. For example, when Oedipus, the source of the pollution, threatens to take the lives of Creon and Tiresias, Sophocles displays Oedipus' hubris in an ironic way.[53] Rather than making us laugh or even provoking a cerebral smile, this situation is frightening and exposes Oedipus as unknowingly displaying excessive hubris. Not the fact that Oedipus is doomed, but rather the sheer excess in his extreme reaction to his story unfolding represents a lack in his understanding. Here is irony without *facetiousness*.

That irony need not always contain an explicit under or overstatement has been mentioned, but it is worth exploring more how a situation by itself might be ironic – as this will be shown to be the case with the situations our herdsmen find themselves in. In the 1990s sitcom *Seinfeld* in the episode directed by Tom Cherones titled *The Pick*[54] a main character, Kramer, gets the ridiculous idea that there should be a cologne that smells like the beach. In the end, a Calvin Klein executive steals his idea and as a compromise Calvin Klein himself allows Kramer to become an underwear model for them. The irony here is perfectly sequenced, first the idea itself is poor, because the beach does not smell good. Next, when Kramer takes it to an executive

[53] Glassberg 2017: 202.
[54] Cherones 1992.

at a large cologne producer, it is rejected formally. Finally and ironically, the Calvin Klein executive steals his idea and Calvin Klein himself provides payment in a form embarrassing to Kramer. The lack is that he is an unemployed nobody, and the excess is that the executives at Calvin Klein – supposed experts – really liked the idea. The irony is borne out of the overstatement that is represented in the support he receives from such a gigantic corporation for his idea, and the understatement is his lack of a genuine reward.

Thus far it has been shown that irony can be facetious, but it need not always be the case. When Horace comments on the *Eclogues* as containing a *facetum* aspect, he is not necessarily implying that they are ironic. Yet, if we are to understand Cicero's definition of the term, it seems then an element of *facetum* within it cannot be denied. There is potential that irony was included in Horace's ascription of this term to the poems of young Virgil, but I do not mean to do anything more than point out that *ironia* can be *faceta*.[55] I also do not mean to falsely ascribe a modern understanding of an ancient word to Horace. As stated, I do not mean facetiousness in the sense of "treating a serious topic lightly" but in the purer sense of "witty", "humourous" or even "jocular"; this seems in line with what Cicero and Horace likely understood. Far from just referencing the irony, Horace surely refers to other qualities of the poems that could befit a different sense of *facetum* like the beautiful *loci amoeni*. Other aspects like the fact that the herdsmen never seem to actually do their job, also potentially give the *Eclogues* a playful and innocent feeling: what Horace did not state was that these aspects also fit an understanding of *ironia*. It is possible then that Horace saw irony in Virgil's poems and it seems hard to believe that he missed the incongruity between the actual countryside and that represented in the poems, among other things.

[55] Cicero calls it *urbana* but see II. 2. B s.v. *urbanus* in L&S where a definition of "facetious" is given.

Receiving more help from Horace than most who study these poems of Theocritus, we can begin to get a sense that the ancients were able to recognize what I hope to demonstrate is prevalent in these poems. Irony has been shown not always to be facetious; also shown was that irony can be contained within situations themselves and needs no explicit understatement. *Groundhog Day* exposed us to the knowledge that, as lacking subjects in this world, humans are bound to repetition and showed us that the humour of this romantic comedy lies in the free reign the main character is given to act excessively during everyday (i.e., lacking) scenarios. Freud perhaps enlightened us as to the intrinsic qualities that exist in modern understandings of humour and why they seem to exist only in our species. Not discussed was the role that speech plays in our status as lacking, but it seems to be logical that we above all other animals should be so susceptible to these aspects of our daily lives without considering it. McGowan helpfully explains that more often than not, when applying a critical understanding of his theory, an explanation of a humourous or even *facetious* situation or statement can be attained. Lack and excess remain separate for the majority of our lives: on the rare occasion when we are taken off guard by their intersection, we succumb to laughter or a smile. Horace provides critical information for this study of pastoral poems and serves as part of a justification for looking for *facetious* bucolic irony in the poems of Theocritus.

1.1.5 Conclusion

Throughout this preliminary investigation into the nature of both ancient and modern irony, we have given much attention to how we can conclude what exactly *irony* is and how we can attempt to apply our understanding of it to ancient pastoral poems. Horace saw the potential for the *Eclogues* of Virgil to be *molle atque facetum* and many have been convinced, despite the lone ancient scholar that disagrees, that *facetum* must translate to some "playful" adjective along the lines of "facetious"; we have also explored just how and when irony can be interpreted as facetious. Cicero's corroborating definition of irony, where he refers to it as *urbana* "witty" or "facetious", could shed light on what exactly Horace might have meant. I do not mean to say that Horace saw these poems as explicitly ironic, but that our understanding of the term may be fitting to describe the type of phenomenon he attempted to identify.

Humour is a difficult topic to approach critically, as it is often highly subjective and culturally conditioned. Yet McGowan lays a solid foundation for any understanding of the philosophy of humour or *what makes things funny*. His theory of lack and excess has helped explain when ironic situations can and cannot be facetious and also when they are: a representation of lack, intersecting in a surprising way with a representation of excess that disturbs the social order, will result in a comic situation. During our everyday lives, which are inherently lacking, we are seldom confronted directly with excess for fear of distressing the social order. When people living their everyday lives, which will be those of herdsmen in our case, intersect with excessive beings or situations, as a student of pastoral I cannot help but think of the incongruity theory of comedy and desire to seek deeper to try and find more clear displays of this facetious irony in the pastorals.

It seems likely that when Theocritus was writing (270s B.C.) the term "irony" had undergone the post-Socratic interpretation that distances the word *ironist* away from being an insult and towards something more positive. Aristotle certainly believed deception was at play, but this may not have been the prevailing understanding by the third century. It is certain that there was potential for ironic situations and characters to be funny to a Greek audience, as was shown when discussing Aristophanes' *Clouds*. Through looking at the ancient examples of Odysseus and the historical Socrates, the importance of distinguishing between having an intention to deceive versus being truthful and ingenuous was noted. Rather than deception being at play it is more akin to what goes on when we are an audience in a theater, namely that we "suspend our disbelief" in order to delight ourselves in the imperfections of language or in the imperfections of our expectations.

When approaching *Idyll* One, I will conceive of irony as outlined above. This conception could perhaps be summarized as follows. Ironic situations and statements are often created as a result of surprising possible interpretations of utterances or actions of individuals. Often there is a literal understatement, but just as frequently it will be displayed through the ideas represented in the situation. Irony contains an element of pretending more than an element of deception. The term's evolution shows that the importance shifts from deception to being intellectually damning and humourous. The comments of Horace show us that perhaps he recognized irony in Virgil's *Eclogues*, as the meaning of *facetum* and Cicero's understanding of *ironia* seem to show. The characters themselves make ironic statements, but through their status or situation we are also met with surprising outcomes or possible interpretations highly different from what we had expected. Sometimes, when lack and excess meet at certain moments, for a number of reasons, a highly facetious irony is created.

The herdsmen of the pastoral *Idylls* will be seen to fit many of the qualities that ironists possessed in ancient understandings of the term. In addition to their status as ironists, irony as a whole is inherent to the playfulness of Theocritus' poetry. Being subjects that logically must not be city-educated while simultaneously displaying modern and urban learning is the central irony of pastoral initiated by Theocritus. The incongruity of the herdsmen's status and the elegance of their poetry will take a central focus in this thesis, though there will be other delightful ironies to indulge in. First, further attention must be paid to terminology, in particular, what we mean by the terms "pastoral", "bucolic", "mode" and "genre".

Chapter 2: Bucolic Genre, Pastoral Mode

1.2.1 Introduction

The idea of incongruity, or perhaps what is better referred to as tension or balance between opposing forces, is often included in literary discussion on pastoral. Early Renaissance criticism of pastoral did not begin until the Italian humanists began to use Virgil's authority to apply *pastoralis* to mean "pastoral poetry".[56] To start, I will delineate the terms "genre", "mode", "pastoral", and "bucolic" through the work of much more recent literary scholars. Through this treatment an understanding of the "pastoral phenomenon", is then outlined. Ancient criticism itself has left little to work with regarding pastoral theory, but the few ideas available from the scholia, and so from the now lost ancient commentaries that informed them, provide a glimpse into their understanding and can demonstrate the distinction between pastoral and non-pastoral *Idylls*. Once a theoretical approach to the phenomenon of pastoral is established, the first exchange in *Idyll* One will serve as a starting point to begin a critical demonstration of "bucolic irony". A further description of what is meant by the terms "pastoral" and "bucolic" along with whether or not "pastoral poetry" can even constitute a genre will be completed before moving onto less abstract ideas extracted from the ancient texts.

[56] *Ecl*. 10.51 cf. Coleman 1977: 289. Where he says states *pastoris* refers to the "Theocritean genre". Also, *G*. 4.565-566 *carmina…pastorum*. See the comments on the Italian Humanists in Halperin 1983: 13.

1.2.2 Genre

The definition or even description of any genre immediately faces several issues. The most relevant for discussion of Theocritus, perhaps the only surviving ancient Greek poet to ever be dubbed the "creator of a genre",[57] is that the very notion of a genre of literature being created is a contradiction in terms.[58] Genres, especially in the ancient world, are established entities that are authoritative and prescriptive as to how certain literary texts behave in relation to others that resemble them; they cannot, therefore, be new or untried, as that would make them "inherently not generic".[59] If it is not really possible for Theocritus to have created a genre wholly new unto itself, what *did* he create? Throughout his eclectic set of poems, Theocritus experiments with new interpretations of what the ancients understood as *epos*.[60] His most influential experiment was his prominent use of a figure traditionally marginalized in Greek literature, the herdsman.[61] Theocritus' use of the herdsman serves to unite lower characters and everyday themes with the traditional meter and serious tone of full-scale epic;[62] the core of "bucolic irony".

To speak of poetic and literary genres in general, texts always have what are known as dependent and independent deformations. Independent deformations often are what comes to define a new genre.[63] Deformations dependent on the inherited *epos* in Theocritus are easy enough to find: they are, for example, the adaptations of myth in the epyllia (*Idd*. 11, 13, 22, 24) or the use of the ecphrasis of the cup (*Id*. 1). These rely on the *epic* tradition Theocritus inherited.

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[57] Though Thespis and Susarion are considered to have invented tragedy/comedy, the historicity of these figures is highly questionable (unlike that of Theocritus).
[58] Guillén 1971: 125.
[59] Gutzwiller 1991: 4.
[60] In the sense that they are hexameter narrations of characters on a different plane from ordinary humans who interact with the gods and other semi-divine beings.
[61] Gutzwiller 2011: 1-23 discusses herdsmen in Greek literature at length.
[62] The tendency to combine genres (in particular, in Apollonius of Rhodes, the *Homeric Hymns*, as well as Theocritus' *Idylls*) is outlined by Ambühl in Schmidtz, Telg gen, Jöne 2017: 79-103.
[63] Jauss 1982: 81-2. What I mean by deformation is when a poet breaks an established rule, or makes a mistake, he approaches inventing something new. See Shklovsky 1928: 164.

Writing in hexameter also provides an opportunity to exploit and emphasize greatly bucolic diaeresis, giving flavour to the pastoral poems especially.[64] The independent deformations are those that do not rely on any given tradition in order to communicate meaning. Theocritus, in his pastorals, subverts the heroic order and places the herdsmen at the center of his universe, as opposed to Homer's larger-than-life gods and heroes. His experiments with pastoral were among many others that fell in line with the literary context in which he was writing.

Because genre is also inherently historical, what is meant by any genre-term, like "pastoral", has to be historically contextualized to understand when in the tradition a given author was writing.[65] The historical aspect also implies that genre is fluid and unfixed. It is not possible, therefore, for Theocritus to be ironically self-aware of the generic conventions of pastoral –[66] since pastoral was only fully developed centuries after Theocritus' own time.[67] The traditions Theocritus was working in were those of Greek *epos* and the recent literary trends coming out of Alexandria which focused on a style κατὰ λεπτόν.[68] *Epos* or, better put, Greek hexameter poetry, typically privileged the topic fully treated:[69] the wrath of Achilles, rather than the entire Trojan war, was the "full-treatment" given in the *Iliad*. Yet, Theocritus' *Idylls* surprisingly leave much to the imagination. Through writing the *Idylls* Theocritus implied his stance on the contemporary issue of what poetic style is best for Hellenistic poets to use. Callimachus and Apollonius are two representatives of the debate over poetic style, Callimachus preferring the one that is κατὰ λεπτόν. Callimachus wrote shorter pieces that focused on

[64] For a summary of the statistics see Halperin 1983: 263-4.
[65] Consider how, say, the great horror films of the mid-twentieth century might not seem so scary to a modern audience.
[66] Which would make him a *meta*pastoralist.
[67] Halperin 1983: 161-189 who understands pastoral to have truly been "created" by Virgil. Virgil's poems are a further development of Theocritus, whose poems "reveal a pattern of contrasts or oppositions between *bucolic* epos and *heroic* epos".
[68] Coleman 1977: 1-14, 34-35.
[69] De Jong 2014: 135-7. "Nothing is left unexpressed, and everything is externalized."

aesthetics;[70] Apollonius wrote a full-scale epic. Theocritus takes his own position and fixes his interaction with traditions and contemporary topics through oppositions: his herdsmen are opposed to Homer's heroes and the traditions of *epos*. Further, his recreation of Homer on a small-scale, not a lyricist,[71] give him his own corner in the contemporary debate.

Due to the fact that interpretations of a genre can vary so widely and that interpretations change over generations, it should not be a surprise that it is difficult to find one definition that unites authors writing in different languages, let alone different eras. In response to this, scholars have attempted to find terminology to accurately describe the commonality between ancient and modern ideas of pastoral. This commonality seems to be the idea of oppositions, whether that be in content (e.g., city versus country) or in type (e.g., strong versus weak). I follow this mindset,[72] however, I do so with the conviction that within these oppositions are incongruities (represented abstractly as lack and excess) and that when these incongruities surprise the reader, they provoke a humourous and often ironic understanding.

It is not unreasonable to say that the pastoral *Idylls* of Theocritus did create something unique. The distinctive pastoral form may not have come until it was solidified in the Western European tradition by Virgil, but without Theocritus, Virgil could not have written his poems. The pastoral *Idylls* clearly featured prominently in collections of Theocritus, given their primacy of position in the collection;[73] it was the first eleven *Idylls* that Virgil seems, unsurprisingly, to have exploited the most. Theocritus himself might not have seen his various poems as encompassing distinct "kinds", since many of them also distorted epic ideas and themes as well

[70] For example, Call. *Aet*. 1.31-32, where through an animal metaphor he argues in favour of these "thin" verses.
[71] This is not to say Theocritus does not allude to lyricists, such as Sappho, but it seems clear that he is not following in her specific style of composition.
[72] Which is explored in more detail below.
[73] Scafoglio 2017: 36.

as featuring more everyday characters.[74] Nevertheless, Virgil and the subsequent pastoral poets went on to see these *Idylls* as an infinitely reinterpretable part of Theocritus' corpus. Theocritus may be said to have then inspired the proliferation of what eventually became a recognizable *eclogue* genre.[75] A more apt discussion of the "pastoral phenomenon" centers on understanding pastoral as a mode, that is, "the literary manifestation…, not of its [the text's] attitudes in a loose sense, but of its assumptions about man's nature and situation."[76]

[74] Ibid.: 31-58.
[75] To be distinguished from pastoral in general, which is rather a mode and is discussed below. *Eclogue* refers instead to specifically Virgilian pastorals. *The Shepheardes Calender* by Spenser consists of *eclogues*, whereas *Arcadia* by Sannazaro is closer to a *pastoral* novel.
[76] Alpers 1996: 50.

1.2.3 Mode

In delineating the definition just stated, Paul Alpers relies on the thorough outline of "mode" given by Northrop Frye in his book *Anatomy of Criticism*.[77] Frye outlines the term as the classification of fiction "by the hero's power of action, which may be greater than ours, less, or roughly the same".[78] He goes on to describe the different broad-ranging modes that all literature can fit into: myth, romance, high mimetic (epic and tragedy), low mimetic (comedy) and ironic. In each of his definitions the reference point is the hero's strength relative to his peers, the audience, and the world or nature he finds himself in; "each hero… is a *modulor* for verbal architectonics; man is the measure, the *modus* of myth".[79] Perhaps, to use Frye's definition, we should rather understand man as the *modus* of *mythos* (i.e., "the narrative of a work of literature").[80] The most succinct and perhaps digestible understanding of the term, however, comes from Alastair Fowler's *Kinds of Literature*, where he simply states, "a mode is an abstraction of a kind".[81] The literal meaning of abstraction, that is, the quality of dealing with ideas rather than events is meant here.[82]

Taking his terminology from Schiller, Frye further distinguishes between naïve and sentimental poetry.[83] Primitive or popular poetry, as Homer's epics might be considered to be, is naïve in the sense that it can, "communicate in time and space more readily than other types of literature",[84] while sentimental poetry is rather a "recreation" of some older phenomenon. The core of the word naïve seems to still be a factor, in that naïve poetry is not conscious of its own

[77] Frye 2000: 33-66.
[78] Ibid. 33.
[79] Alpers 1996: 50. In understanding mode we must see literature through a lens where "man is the measure". Frye 2000: 35.
[80] Frye 2000: 366.
[81] Fowler 1982: 56.
[82] See below, 35.
[83] Frye 2000: 35
[84] Ibid.

history and place in its tradition, and so perhaps innocent. These two distinctions (naïve versus sentimental and historically innocent versus historically self-aware) are supremely important for any description of the "pastoral phenomenon", because within the ancient pastorals there is often a song within a song: in *Idyll* One Theocritus writes a poem where both of his herdsmen perform their own poetic vignettes, that were, of course, written by Theocritus. Since we have determined there was no such thing as "pastoral" in the 270s B.C., Theocritus might be described as a sentimental poet writing songs to be sung and fictionally "created" by naïve ones.[85] As shall be shown, *Idyll* One portrays the poem, outfitted with elegiac and *Idyll*ic elements, as if it were part of an ancient tradition. Yet Theocritus is the one who seems to have been the first to experiment with it to a significant and successful degree.[86] The songs of his herdsmen, on the other hand, if we are to accept them as "fictional fact", must be considered naïve, as these individuals seem to be uninitiated in sophisticated literary traditions.

If we were strictly to follow Frye's delineation of the five literary modes, pastoral would fall under "Romance", in the sense that its *mythos* is primarily concerned with an idealized world; it could even be considered "Romantic", in that its characters "live in a world of marvels where the mood is elegiac or *Idyll*ic" (i.e., melancholic or idealized).[87] Going one step further and appropriating his definition of the term comic, where the hero is incorporated into his society, it is sometimes even Romantic Comedy. This is not to apply a modern understanding of the movie genre "Romantic Comedy" to ancient pastoral, but rather that pastoral is chiefly

[85] Theocritus and most of Greek literature remain absent from Schiller's discussion, perhaps he missed a good opportunity to exemplify his understanding through a comparison between Homer and Theocritus.
[86] Philitas et al. are often argued as having written "bucolics" before Theocritus, but clearly the *Idylls* stood out among them.
[87] Frye 2000: 366. Though keep in mind the difference between ancient and modern ideas of elegy.

concerned with the presentation of a world of marvels, similar to but different from our own, where there is an epicurean, or perhaps hedonistic, interpretation of the "point" of literature.[88]

Another distinction to be made is the connection between "genre" and "mode". They are not opposed to each other[89] and they should not be understood as inherently excluding one another. Instead of describing the phenomenon of pastoral as generic, as might be tempting, the use of the term mode allows for more wide-ranging interpretations of the various pastorals that have been created over the centuries. Within the pastoral mode, the genres of elegy, fable, myth, and many more can all be contained. Fowler's statement, mentioned earlier, takes the meaning of mode to be dependent on genre, which he understood to have come first historically. Instead of being dependent on genre, mode in Theocritus' pastoral *Idylls*, namely the reciprocal relation between usages (outer form) and attitude (inner form),[90] unites the two in a way that most genres do not. Classification based on mode, then, is more than sufficient to gain an understanding of how the pastorals of Theocritus differed from later pastoralists without resorting to surface-level interpretations of landscape, characters, or symbols. The pastoral mode of Theocritus can be described as Romance poetry, where the narrative is sublime (i.e. "elevated") and expresses either an elegiac or *Idyll*ic outlook. While the aspect of nature is seemingly secondary to the philosophical underpinning of pastoral, pastoral does not just describe nature – it identifies with it.[91] Through reflection on the natural order of things, the pastoralists generate their understanding of the relationship between man, nature, and power.

[88] In that it is concerned especially with pleasures of the mind as possibly evoked by works of literature.
[89] Alpers 1996: 44.
[90] Ibid. 49.
[91] Ibid. 57.

1.2.4 Pastoral and Bucolic

The most accepted and thorough treatment of definition and difference between these two terms can be found in David Halperin's 1983 discussion on the topic.[92] Though he was perhaps overly insistent on the historicity of a strict differentiation,[93] his understanding of pastoral as a mode remains in line with much commentary on the poems.[94] Giampiero Scafoglio recently attempted a new investigation into the meaning of the terms and whether modern definitions can be reasonably applied to the ancient pastoralists.[95] His findings show that generic interpretations based on formal characteristics, such as content and style, will not aid in understanding the *Eclogues*, let alone Theocritus and his Greek successors.[96] It is clear that the ancient commentators and scholiasts understood the apparent difference between the pastoral *Idylls* and the non-pastoral ones, yet they kept the collection of Theocritus in the form we have it;[97] additionally, the earlier successors of Theocritus included a plethora of themes and ideas from his poems in their own.[98] It is not enough to understand "pastoral" simply as a Latin translation of "bucolic".

As mentioned earlier, Theocritus likely saw himself as writing in the tradition of *epos*, poetry written in hexameters.[99] Additionally, we have seen that there are elements from the non-

[92] Halperin 1983: *passim*.
[93] Gutzwiller 2006: 390 n. 33, who cites Isid. *Etym.* 1.38.16 = Wendel 21: *bucolicum, id est pastorale carmen*… "bucolic, that is, song in a pastoral style" to demonstrate how long the equation has existed. Additionally, Servius and Diomedes single out the rustic character/style Wendel 17.26-8, 19.16-18, 21.28.
[94] Van sickle 1976, Effe 1977, Nauta 1990, Thomas 1998, Reed 2011, Stephens 2011.
[95] Scafoglio 2017: 31-58.
[96] The surviving works of Moschus and Bion, included in editions of "Greek Bucolic Poets" (e.g., the Loeb), can hardly meet any apparent criteria of pastoral as a genre. There are laments and epyllia, replete with idyllic outlooks, but not usually very concerned with herdsmen as poetic subjects. Rather, it seems, their concern is with the analogy of poet as herdsman (see Gutzwiller 1991: 177 who discusses Bion).
[97] It is clear that Virgil was using the recently published edition of Theocritus' *Idylls* edited by Artemidorus, whose preface is quoted at *Anth. Pal*. 9. 205.
[98] Reed 2011: 209-34.
[99] Halperin 1983: 15.

pastoral *Idylls* which may still align with his intentions in writing the pastorals.[100] Theocritus himself is credited as being the first to apply the word *bucolic* to his poetry,[101] though the word itself is much older than him.[102] It may be reasonable that the pastoral elements of his poetry did not stand out to his initial audience as much as they might today, because these sorts of elements likely always have, to some indeterminable extent, been a feature of poetry (whether popular or elite).[103] Perhaps this is also evidenced by the frequency of the myths of goddesses and the young herdsman who are their preferred love interests.[104] It seems clear then that what Theocritus meant by calling his poems bucolic was not as strict as what Virgil seems to imply at the end of the *Georgics* when he references his *Eclogues* as being *carmina… pastorum*.[105]

Far from dedicating several hundred pages to an investigation of the terms, in a discussion of just one page Halperin creates a framework from which to view the evolution of the two terms.[106] Here, he argues that the word "pastoral" does not strictly refer to a branch of poetic creation; rather, it has a broader application concerned with a "set of attitudes".[107] It is easy to understand how something can be described as pastoral without being a pastoral poem, it is not so easy to use bucolic in this way. A movie or novel can easily be classed as pastoral, but tagging on bucolic is misappropriating the *Greek* understanding of the word. It will be helpful to begin to understand bucolic as the word that classifies the ancient Greek hexameter poetry that came into existence in the Hellenistic period and positioned itself in the tradition of *epos* by

[100] For example, the unification of "low" characters and "high" poetry.
[101] Halperin 1983: ix.
[102] Βούκολος is a good Indo-European word likely from *gwou "ox, bull, cow" and *kwel "move round, revolve, dwell." The latter interestingly found its way into Latin as *colere* "to till, cultivate". Schwyzer 1968: 298-99, Frisk 1960: 257. (Citations from Gutzwiller 2006: 382 n. 10).
[103] The earliest forms of pictorial art on cave walls, for example, depict the artists' natural environments. See also Rudiger 1959, 7 and Berg 1974 14-15 (from Halperin 1983: 86).
[104] For example, Aphrodite and Adonis/Anchises (see 3.5.5 in this thesis), Paris' judgment, or even Inanna and Dumuzid from the Sumerian period.
[105] *G*. 4.565.
[106] Halperin 1983: 75.
[107] Ibid.

opposing traditional interpretations of that genre. Now, a look into the term bucolic will serve as a starting point before moving back into pastoral.

The ancient use of the word bucolic was pointed out by Charles Segal in the introduction to his book of essays on Theocritus and Virgil as referencing something "slavish" rather than polished verse.[108] Perhaps this was true to some extent, but more recently Kathryn Gutzwiller adequately explored the word's broad range and outlined the ancient examples of its use that may aid in understanding what Theocritus meant by the term.[109] Homer uses the term simply to refer to the herding of cattle, but even by this time its middle form had come to mean more generally "to graze".[110] Gutzwiller sees this as evidence that the type of poetry it refers to has always had a nuance that included both cow-herding and herding or driving animals more generally.[111] The next extension of meaning pertains to guarding or tending that can be seen in the *Homeric Hymn to Hermes* when Hermes "tends" to the interests of Apollo's cattle (167). The metaphor is translated into mental activity, as one cannot "guard" his thoughts, best exemplified in Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*: ἐβουκολοῦμεν φροντίσιν νέον πάθος (669), "we cowherded the new calamity in our thoughts". Aristophanes uses it to imply one who sleeps on the job, just like Argos who was "all eyes" and was supposed to watch Io, a girl metamorphosized into a heifer, but still fell asleep.[112] The relationship to animals and grazing/tending activity (whether literal or metaphoric) is easy enough to understand, but LSJ include many references that understand the

[108] Segal 1981: 8.
[109] Gutzwiller 2006: 380-404. Much of the following information on the development and ancient metaphorical understanding of the word comes from this article.
[110] Cattle: *Il.* 21.448; Horses: *Il.* 20.221 (where the point is that the horses pasture themselves without a herdsman).
[111] Gutzwiller 2006: 382.
[112] *Eccl*. Ar. 79-81 in response to a woman snatching a club from her husband, Praxagora says νὴ τὸν Δία τὸν σωτῆρ᾽ ἐπιτήδειός γ᾽ ἂν ἦν | τὴν τοῦ πανόπτου διφθέραν ἐνημμένος | εἴπερ τις ἄλλος βουκολεῖν τὸ δήμιον." By Zeus the savior, this guy, if he would just put on the jerkin of the All-Seeing One [Argos], would make a fine cowherd of the public trust" (trans. Gutzwiller 2006: 385). The point is that Argos should have been a good herdsman being all eyes, yet still fell asleep. Elsewhere, for example in *Wasps*, Aristophanes further explores uses of the verb (see Gutzwiller 2006: 383-85 on the increasing metaphorical quality of the verb.

term as "cheat". How exactly that came about is best explained through its reference to the real songs of herdsmen and their effects on herds.

The use of the *syrinx* by herdsmen was surely a historical reality,[113] and today in some Scandinavian countries, a similarly high-pitched singing style is used to call herds of cows back from grazing.[114] In Plato's *Ion,* when the question of whether a rhapsode or a cowherd is better equipped to "soothe" (παραμυθέομαι, 540c) is brought up, Plato indicates that cowherds focused on a certain type of song that both calms and controls herding animals.[115] Understanding this, the extension of the word *bucolic* to include something more along the lines of "beguile" can be discerned: the herdsmen enchant, or perhaps trick, their herd to coming to the sound of their music.[116] It is not a far step to then move from "beguile" into something along the lines of "beguile with malicious intent", Menander uses it to describe the common trickery that his young men are often playing on their fathers with the help of their *servi callidi*.[117] By the time of Theocritus, the meaning of the word then had four identifiable uses: first, its more literal meanings associated with herding and grazing; second, to guard or tend (one's thoughts or otherwise); third, to soothe or beguile as a herdsman's music might do; fourth, to cheat or trick.

Knowing the range of usage in the centuries preceding Theocritus provides better insight into his understanding of the term than any other investigation could. These four aspects of the word appropriately can describe the various, seemingly different, poems within Theocritus' corpus. *Idyll* Eleven, Polyphemus' address to Galatea, is framed as a poetic letter to a friend of Theocritus (*Id.* 11.1-18). Theocritus then frames this address to the real Nicias with references to

[113] An early mention is at *Il.* 18.526.
[114] In the Middle Ages the *fäbod* (literally "hill farm") system typically had women look after the animals and they adopted a high-pitched song/call in a range that the *syrinx* also can easily reach. Rosenberg 2014: 100-105.
[115] See Gutzwiller 2006: 386-87.
[116] The logic here being that, since they are cows and their concerns are likely immediate, they would rather continue grazing.
[117] Men. *Sam.* 530, 595.

the power of song (1-2 and 17-18), insisting that Polyphemus once found curative power in outlining his desire for Galatea in verse. It is not at all clear that by the end of his song Polyphemus succeeded in finding this cure,[118] but Theocritus tells us that through singing Polyphemus has "herded his love" (ἐποίμαινεν τὸν ἔρωτα, 80). While not the same verb, his use of the related verb ποιμαίνω, here seems to strongly align with the usages of βουκολέω just discussed. Polyphemus "tends", "soothes", "enchants", both his own emotions and those of Galatea and simultaneously attempts to "trick" her into leaving her watery abode for his cave.

Unfortunately absent from Gutzwiller's discussion of the terminology is a treatment of the non-pastoral *Idylls* that can still be understood to fit within the understandings she discovered in earlier Greek literature. However, the beauty of her treatment is its openness and broad applicability; the word is, in its ancient *Greek* form, after all quite an open one.[119] In his non-pastoral *Idylls*, Theocritus still focuses on certain elements that align them with the pastorals.[120] For example, the song at the palace in *Idyll* Fifteen is largely concerned with erotic material and can equally be seen as an experiment in soothing poetry. What is also clear, however, is that the definition of the word bucolic can be readily applied to Theocritus' pastoral *Idylls* but not explicitly to the pastoral mode in general. It seems then that, barring the few named successors of Theocritus in Greek (Moschus and Bion), the philosophical underpinning of bucolic may have gone underappreciated in the centuries and millennia following the *Idylls*. Virgil saw in the genre what was expedient to him, namely an opportunity for veiled political expression while at the same time maintaining an epicurean outlook, and thus exported to much of the Latin speaking world his own appropriation of the Greek form. To summarize, Theocritus, along with Moschus

[118] Hunter 1999: 220-21.
[119] Scafoglio 2017: 51.
[120] Chiefly, the theme of Eros and the idea of poet as herdsman.

and Bion, wrote in the Greek tradition subsumed within *epos* and termed for its alluring effect as "bucolic".

Following such an understanding it is easy to see how the term "bucolic" has a different nuance than what seems to be the straightforward, or etymological, meaning. These four elements of the term appear variously throughout the *Idylls*, appearing less obviously in the so-called epyllia and more obviously in the poems that feature herdsmen as the central characters. It is a wide-ranging term for a wide-ranging genre. Coupling this definition of "bucolic" with the understanding of the pastoral mode outlined above affords a satisfyingly wholistic understanding of the phenomenon that helps demonstrate the differences between each generation of ancient bucolic and pastoral poets. It can be said that Theocritus wrote bucolic poems in the pastoral mode as well as bucolic poems that are only tangentially related to the pastoral mode, and so deemed "non-pastoral" bucolics. Perhaps it might be wise, when discussing the *Idylls* of Theocritus, to understand them *all* as bucolic but only *some* as pastoral thereby creating the (hopefully not too confusing) distinction of pastoral and non-pastoral bucolics.

1.2.5 Conclusion

The etymology of the term βουκολέω, or at least its usage in the Greek literary tradition, is certainly a worthwhile starting point to begin the exploration of the Theocritean genre. The herdsmen portray themselves and their verses in a sweet and enchanting way, with the intended effect to make the audience delight in the beauty of their song.[121] As we will discover through the close reading of this programmatic first *Idyll*, the understanding that bucolic verses are sweet or even deceitful will be elucidated through the herdsmen's appropriation of traditions. Theocritus wrote all his poems with such an appropriation of traditions, in particular archaic epic, in mind but only a select number of his poems were written in the pastoral mode. The range of bucolic was surely developed by Theocritus' Greek successors, of which few survive.[122] However, in the Roman era, when Virgil adopted Theocritus' style for his purposes, it was to the pastoral element that he returned in order to focalize contemporary and personal topics. Theocritus certainly wrote pastorals, but this was only one element of his larger experiment.

[121] Even in his final words, Daphnis cannot help but make his verses sweet (131-136).
[122] For example, the surviving bucolic of Moschus is sparse on pastoral material.

Part II: Opening and Ecphrasis 1-63

Chapter 3: Tradition and the Initial Exchanges 1-26

2.3.1 Introduction to *Idyll* One

It has been thus far argued that irony in an ancient Greek context can be understood as a situation or speech in which a person cleverly misrepresents his own level of understanding by minimizing it, whether in an explicitly malicious way or not. One experiencing an ironic situation or statement, in literature or elsewhere, is often surprised when he notices the intersection between the lack that ironists display and their true excess of understanding. An important distinction between whether the audience is laughing *with* the ironists or *at* them must be made; if the ironists do not understand the irony in what they are saying, then the opportunity for humour is greater, perhaps doubly ironic, as it is even more surprising that someone could inadvertently be clever. As has been mentioned, through the action of depicting his main characters as herdsmen, yet having them sing learned songs that they supposedly composed themselves, among many other ironic aspects, Theocritus invites such an understanding. This is especially the case when he inserts into the herdsmen's repertoire compositions that reflect urban poetic trends and innovations, such as the Goatherd's appropriation of ecphrasis in the first *Idyll*.[123] The herdsmen seem to be aware of what is trendy in the city, yet they never reveal themselves as even existing in the same world as the famous urban centers, unlike Virgil's Tityrus who mentions his visit to Rome in *Eclogue* One.

[123] For Hellenistic ecphrasis see: Pollitt 1986 and Himmelmann 1983. An example from the cup is the motif of the old fisherman, represented in famous statues and was "clearly a widespread tradition", Hunter 1999: 78. Cf. Pollitt fig. 155, Ridgway 1990: 334-36.

It is hoped that at this point an understanding of the mode and genre that Theocritus' bucolic pastorals are in has been attained. The most prevalent aspect of what Theocritus handed down to the Western European literary tradition is perhaps the irony present in his decision to depict herdsmen the way that he did. The subsequent pastoral tradition did not lose this sense of deceit. Virgil used this sense in his own innovative and uniquely Roman way, through peppering his *Eclogues* with more "serious" or "realistic" aspects of contemporary politics, such as land confiscation. The true meaning of βουκολέω within the context contemporary to Theocritus, that is, ranging from the literal "to graze" to the more sinister "to cheat" by way of "to soothe" (as herdsmen do their herds), will now be shown to be pervasive within the first *Idyll* of Theocritus.

2.3.2 The Opening Exchange 1-11

Θύρσις[124]
˙Αδύ τι τὸ ψιθύρισμα καὶ ἁ πίτυς, αἰπόλε, τήνα,
ἃ ποτὶ ταῖς παγαῖσι μελίσδεται, ἁδὺ δὲ καὶ τὺ
συρίσδες· μετὰ Πᾶνα τὸ δεύτερον ἆθλον ἀποισῇ.
αἴ κα τῆνος ἔλῃ κεραὸν τράγον, αἶγα τὺ λαψῇ·
αἴ κα δ᾽ αἶγα λάβῃ τῆνος γέρας, ἐς τὲ καταρρεῖ
ἁ χίμαρος· χιμάρῳ δὲ καλὸν κρέας, ἔστε κ᾽
ἀμέλξῃς.

Αἶπολος
˝Αδιον, ὦ ποιμὴν, τὸ τεὸν μέλος ἢ τὸ καταχὲς
τᾶν᾽ ἀπὸ τᾶς πέτρας καταλείβεται ὑψόθεν ὕδωρ.
αἴ κα ταὶ Μοῖσαι τὰν οἰῖδα δῶρον ἄγωνται,
ἄρνα τὺ σακίταν λαψῇ γέρας· αἰ δέ κ᾽ ἀρέσκῃ
τήναις ἄρνα λαβεῖν, τὺ δὲ τὰν ὄιν ὕστερον ἀξῇ.

Thyrsis
It's somehow sweet, Goatherd, the whispering, over there that's by the springs, which the pine sings, sweet too is your piping. Second after Pan, you will obtain the prize. If he takes the horned goat, you will have the she-goat; if he takes the she-goat as reward, to you falls the younger one. The younger one's flesh is lovely, until you milk her.

Goatherd
Sweeter, Shepherd, is your song than the sounding of the water which drops down from the rocks above. If the Muses carry the ewe as their gift, you will take a stall-fed lamb; if it is pleasing to them to take the lamb, you will carry the ewe after them.

Although the themes that stand out in these first enduringly influential lines of Theocritus' corpus are many, we must limit ourselves to the few that are relevant to our discussion of irony in the ancient pastorals. In the remainder of this thesis, I will provide an overview of Theocritus' literary programme. In these first eleven lines, therefore, I limit myself to the very important theme of tradition, both that which is built into the world of the *Idylls* and the literary ones Theocritus is drawing from. The two "real" literary traditions (as opposed to those within the fictional world of the herdsmen) that are highly relevant for my overall thesis are the Homeric and Alexandrian literary traditions. The Homeric tradition can be said perhaps to overlap with the fictional tradition Theocritus creates, in that the *agon* is approached with respect for the (potentially) real Homeric *agones*,[125] while also making them surprisingly spoken by herdsmen. It is the interplay among these traditions that form the initial backdrop for both

[124] Text from Hunter 1999. The postscript iotas from Hunter have been changed to subscript for stylistic reasons.
[125] I.e., the contests between Muses and speeches in general in the epics, but also the very real phenomenon of poets improvising hexameters in contest, beginning in at least the 6th century B.C. See 50, below. The herdsmen are likely imitative of the preliterary versions of these hexameter contests, yet their songs are rife with textuality.

Theocritus' literary programme and the inherent irony that I hope to prove is vital within, at least, the first *Idyll*.

The first exchange between Thyrsis and the goatherd signals *Idyll* One as programmatic. Although Theocritus does not explicitly acknowledge this, it is probably the reason why the poem heads both ancient and modern collections of Greek bucolic. The sonorous quality of the first two lines (and συρίσδες) evokes more than just the mental image of a *locus amoenus*, with each verse corresponding to one or more of the previous ones sonorously.[126] In these first two lines the front vowels iota (13), epsilon (4), upsilon (4) combine with the open alpha (rough 4, total 12) as well as the voiceless consonants pi (4), tau (8), sigma (5), and psi (1) to imitate the breathy sounds of the wind, strengthened by the ψιθύρισμα in line one and μελίσδεται in line two, as well as anticipating the similarly euphonic συρίσδες that enjambs the second and third lines and emphatically completes this clause. Additionally, the labials rho (1), lambda (2) and mu (2) combine to mimic the sound of falling water, not unlike the famous invocation to Aphrodite by Sappho.[127] The delayed mention of the *syrinx* also recalls the emphatic οὐλομένην that begins *Iliad* 1.2 and even the delayed πλάγχθη that describes Odysseus at *Odyssey* 1.2. This use of enjambment along with the euphony strongly imitates oral poetry.[128] Oral poetry is inherently traditional,[129] so here we see Theocritus beginning to build a faux tradition into his freshly created world of herdsmen and heroes.

[126] For a graphic of the first six lines, see Donnet 1988: 160.
[127] In particular, the second stanza fr. 2.5-8 (Lobel-Page 1955): ἐν δ' ὕδωρ ψῦχρον κελάδει δι' ὕσδων | μαλίνων, βρόδοισι δὲ παῖς ὁ χῶρος | ἐσκίαστ', αἰθυσσομένων δὲ φύλλων κῶμα κατέρρει· "Moreover, the cold-water babbles through the branches of apples, the *locus* is shady with roses, deep sleep falls down from the falling leaves".
[128] Clayman and van Nortwick 1977: 85-92 and Friedrich 2000: 1-19 on Homeric enjambment and its effects, respectively. Theocritus avoids the coarse type of onomatopoeia found in, for example, Aristophanes' *Frogs* (brekekekex, coax coax, etc.) and instead uses hapaxes and rare words as Homer does, see Stanford 1976: 219-227. For example, Gow 1952: 3 states that καταχές does not occur elsewhere and that σακίταν is also rare (Gow 1952: 4).
[129] Pearce 1993 (cit. by Collins 2004: 54).

In addition to the sonority of the first two lines, this initial speech from Thrysis similarly structures itself in a phonetically pleasing way. The ἀδύ… ἀδὺ frames the opening couplet; the -ίσδε- of συρίσδες repeats the -ίσδε- μελίσδεται;[130] the -ον of δεύτερον is met with τράγον; the verse ending ἀποισῇ parallels the λαψῇ through its pi/psy and eta;[131] αἴκα is repeated in lines 4 and 5 (both also end with an eta before the syllable after the normal caesura, that is, after the first syllable of the third foot); the τῆνος of line 4 is followed by the τῆνος of line 5; finally, γέρας, ἐς τὲ κα- of line 5 is met with the identically placed κρέας, ἔστε κ᾽ ἀ- of line 6.[132] The sound system shifts from focusing on the breathy syllables to focusing on guttural ones (14 in lines 4-6), but the open αι and α vowels continue to dominate (6 in line 4; 7 in 5; 6 in 6) and surround the αἶγα (αἴκα δ᾽ αἶγα λάβῃ) of line 5 as ἁ πίτυς is surrounded by αι (καὶ ἁ πίτυς αἰπόλε). It is easy to see then the importance given to a shady tree and the presence of goatherds given the highly specific attention given to emphasizing the sonorous quality of these two words.

Further deceiving and perhaps upsetting expectations is the very act of uniting his bucolic genre with the heroic meter.[133] Theocritus writes short poems that do feature gods (though not the usual ones) and more often than not herdsmen. The epic of Homer and his successors was composed in a different register than shorter, more lyrical, poetry, such as the *Idylls*, were. The opening exchange of Theocritus demonstrates that he has taken the same formal approach to writing poetry, in the sense that he uses hexameters, but greatly altered the textual approach, not

[130] Especially since Theocritus and his contemporaries would be much more accustomed to -ιζε-.
[131] Consider also that ἀποισῇ and λαψῇ are more similar still. Removing the lambda and -οι- we are left with *ἀπσῆ and *αψῆ.
[132] Observations by Donnet 1988: 158-161.
[133] Though we know the hexameters of Philitas of Kos potentially contained bucolic themes, the way Theocritus begins to treat his herdsmen likely was innovative, while still not straying too far from tradition (these *Idylls*, while often dialogic, are narratives), he fully supplants traditional heroes for herdsmen. Bowie 1985: 67-91 argues in favour of this hypothesis.

least identified through his choice to use the Doric dialect.[134] He unites form (hexameters) with content (herdsmen) in an experimental and unique way.

The catalogues of prizes given by the herdsmen (3-6, 9-11) suggest that there was some tradition of herdsmen exchanging songs or piping together and subsequently sacrificing their best goat or sheep to Pan or the Muses, while giving their second best as prize to the musicians. Of course, each time the humans get to eat the meat of the animal, still it allows them to celebrate twice, once immediately and again soon after.[135] No such widespread tradition can be identified, and the most obvious conclusion is perhaps that Theocritus is already playing with our expectations of his poems, as he will in later *Idylls*. Theocritus interacts with the very well-established epic tradition, through, for example, beginning *a mediis rebus*. But, he also builds a fictional tradition within these poems that he pretends the reader already knows about, yet it was hitherto unknown. The expectation that this will be just like other epics is immediately upset in the first line by αἰπόλε, posing the question to the reader: who *is* this?[136] Theocritus provides a fictional answer to this question in the initial exchange through pretending that this poetic style is already traditional and that there have been poetic exchanges like this since time immemorial.

Prior to concluding my discussion on the relevance of archaic epic to these first lines of Theocritus, I would like to make a note on the Hesiodic motif of the Muses' hatred of herdsmen. In his *Theogony* (26-28) Hesiod famously encountered the Muses and quotes them reproaching

[134] As the choruses in Attic drama were written in Doric due to the literary tradition surrounding Doric lyric poetry, so Theocritus is perhaps signaling that he is going to unite both his native (Syracusan) tradition with hexameters. "Lyrical hexameters" is certainly an apt description for many of Theocritus' poems.

[135] Strengthening the connection of these verses with sacrifice is that, according to Hunter 1999: 72, the ἐς τὲ καταρρεῖ reflects the "flowing" of a kid as it falls after being sacrificed. Further than this, consider the offering of alternatives to deities provided in, for example, CGRN 100, l. x-x (online since 2017, by Carbon and Peels). Catalogues of prizes go back at least to *Il.* 23.262-70. A fitting combination for Theocritus.

[136] Not to mention the relatively shocking fact that a goatherd has replaced θεὰ and μοῦσα in the first lines of the Homeric epics. Additionally, the first word of both epics introduces the theme (μῆνιν and ἄνδρα), whereas in Theocritus it is his style rather than a theme that takes primacy in line one (highlighting what he considers important to his poetry).

shepherds.[137] Hesiod's interaction with the Muses served as inspiration for very real poets to include their own story of transitioning from a herdsman into a poet (e.g., Archilochus).[138] The important element is that the Muses clearly do not favour herdsmen in general but seem to be dear to the two of this poem; in the traditions where the Muses make a herdsman a poet, they never remain a herdsmen yet that is the main vocation of the characters in Theocritus' *Idylls*.

That the ostensibly lowly goatherd is complimented (and as will be shown, poetically skilled and learned) in the opening lines somewhat challenges a hierarchical understanding of Theocritus' herdsmen.[139] The opening exchange demonstrates that while the *agon* is to play a large role in bucolic poetry, there is no animosity, and the outcome is of secondary importance to the process itself. In the exchanges featured throughout the *Idylls* there are participants and sometimes observers, but there is not any indication that they are less than amicable.[140] In *Idyll* One there is no amoebaean contest, but the idea of an exchange frames the ecphrasis and song;[141] such an amoebaean contest on the cup depicts herdsmen (or at least young men) νεικείουσ᾽ ἐπέεσσι "contesting in *epea*" (35). It is only that singing well warrants a prize, a prize fit for the world the characters inhabit. The cup and the goats are highly practical prizes, which show the centrality of animal husbandry to this realm.[142] Both Thyrsis and the goatherd acknowledge this, and each ranks the prizes for a herdsman in descending order. Insisting that significant honours be given shows that the *agones* featured in Theocritus' world will be familiar to the Greek tradition, yet still unusual.

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[137] ποιμένες ἄγραυλοι, κάκ᾽ ἐλέγχεα, γαστέρες οἶον,| ἴδμεν ψεύδεα πολλὰ λέγειν ἐτύμοισιν ὁμοῖα, | ἴδμεν δ᾽, εὖτ᾽ ἐθέλωμεν, ἀληθέα γηρύσασθαι "[the Muses said] wild shepherds, wretched disgraces, all stomachs, we know [how] to say false things as if true, and we know, when we want, to utter true things".

[138] The so-called Mnesiepes inscription, see, most recently, Swift 2019: 58-63, Kivilo 2010: 88 n.4 for bibliography and 95-96 for discussion. The text can be found in *SEG* 15.517.

[139] On this hierarchy see Berman 2005 and Kolde 2019.

[140] Consider, for example, how the goatherd Comatas arbitrarily wins the contest over Lacon the shepherd in *Idyll* 5.

[141] Halperin 1983: 162.

[142] Hunter 1999: 84 argues by interpreting line 56 (αἰπολικόν θέαμα, τέρας κέ τυ θυμὸν ἀτύξαι) that the ecphrasis of the goatherd will have the same effect on Thyrsis as the *Sorrows of Daphnis* will have on the goatherd.

There are at least two identifiable, and textual, traditions which have been introduced in the first eleven lines. First, there is the conscious awareness of the oral tradition of narrative poetry and its meter; additionally, there is the faux agonistic and ritualistic aspect that Theocritus builds into his world. The idea of amoebaean singing is not first introduced in Theocritus.[143] In fact, it is likely that in the initial formation of the Homeric poems there was influence from bards competing with each other, as we know they certainly did beginning at least by the 6th century.[144] There is some evidence to support the important element of competitive epic poetry within the Homeric poems themselves. For example, at *Il.* 1.604, 18.509 and *Od*. 24.60-1, where the Muses are said to be ἀμειβόμεναι ὀπὶ καλῇ. According to the scholiast at *Il.* 1.604, the Muses are meant to be understood as singing "by relay" and "by turns".[145] While not explicitly agonistic, an aspect of competition certainly seems to be implied, as speeches in the Homeric epics in general can be understood to have a competitive retort.[146] So while the tradition of herdsmen competing in amoebaean verses may be understood as intentionally deceiving, it is not wholly unrealistic to imagine two bards competitively "capping" each other's hexameters in the way that these herdsmen do. The deceit is, of course, that these characters are no modern rhapsodes, yet they certainly sound like they could be.

In addition to the faux tradition Theocritus inserts into his world and the obvious connection through meter and other elements with Homeric and heroic epic, there are the urban and contemporary trends that the herdsmen seem to follow. The most famous, although fragmentary, declaration and defense of this style is contained in the prologue to Callimachus' *Aetia*, worth quoting here:

[143] For an overview and translation of the scholia see Collins 2004: 168-171.
[144] It would make more sense for this to have been a longer tradition, perhaps as old as Greek poetry itself, rather than suddenly arriving on the scene only after the epics were more or less crystallized.
[145] Collins 2004: 171.
[146] Martin 1989: 89-145 (from ibid. 172).

Call. *Aet.* fr. 1.3-7 (Pfeiffer)

ἵνεκεν οὐχ ἓν ἄεισμα διηνεκὲς ἢ βασιλ[η . . . . . .]ας ἐν πολλαῖς ἤνυσα χιλιάσιν ἢ . . . . .] . ους ἥρωας, ἔπος δ' ἐπὶ τυτθὸν ελ[παῖς ἅτε, τῶν δ' ἐτέων ἡ δεκὰς οὐκ ὀλίγη…	Since I did not compose a continuous poem either on a king in many thousands of lines… nor… on heroes, but *epos* on a small scale… like a child, though my decades are not few

Callimachus here seems to defend himself from critics who blame him for not writing long-scale poems. Additionally, he means the word παῖς "child" to be taken adverbially as if he had said [I composed] epos on a small scale…in a playful [sc. childlike] way", to describe his preferred style of poetry. Soon after the opening exchange, in the ecphrasis of the cup there will be carved a very playful and childlike scene that can serve as a metaphor for poetry in general.[147] While the length is not revealed or hinted at in this first exchange, Theocritus certainly follows the trend of shunning typically heroic topics such as monarchs and heroes instead by featuring herdsmen. Callimachus goes on to describe what Apollo has told him:

fr. 1.21-24

καὶ γὰρ ὅτε πρώτιστον ἐμοῖς ἐπὶ δέλτον ἔθηκα γούνασιν, Ἀπ[ό]λλων εἶπεν ὅ μοι Λύκιος· ʿ. . . . . .]. . . ἀοιδέ, τὸ μὲν θύος ὅττι πάχιστον θρέψαι, τὴ]ν Μοῦσαν δ' ὠγαθὲ λεπταλέην·	For when I first placed my writing tablet on my knees, Apollo, the Lycian, said to me: "poet, fatten your sacrifice as much as possible, but keep your muse slender, good man.

Slender verses, a style that will go on to be prevalent in Latin elegy,[148] can be achieved through an emphasis on brevity, while still maintaining a rich meta- or intra-textual allusiveness.[149] The extent of information that can be gleaned from the first eleven lines of *Idyll* One perhaps demonstrates this richness. Additionally, similar to the "childlike" simile of Callimachus, Theocritus will display this foremost in his ecphrasis of the cup (*Id.* 1.45-54, 2.4.5).

[147] See 2.4.5. In this scene on the cup, Theocritus uses τυτθόν (45) spatially, mentions that the κῶρος is ὀλίγος (47), and later that he is a παιδίον (50).

[148] Keith 1999: 41-62.

[149] "Intratextuality is a critical term used to explore the relationship between the parts and the whole in texts, including issues of unity (and disunity), the relationship between digressions and their surroundings, interactions between disparate parts of texts (such as ring composition), juxtapositions that may reflect surprisingly on their neighbours, or any structural issue within a single work of literature." Sharrock 2019: s.v. "intratextuality".

Finally, the last Callimachean element worth mentioning from his prologue, must be "sweetness" and its synonyms that he uses to describe his style of poetry.[150] If the restoration is correct,[151] he says … ἀη[δονίδες] δ' ὧδε μελιχρ[ό]τεραι "little nightingales are thus sweeter" (fr. 1.16). The repetitive ἀδύ… ἀδὺ (1-2) and the αἰπόλε (1) that begins after the bucolic diaeresis in line 1 indicates two of his primary concerns in these poems: sweetness and goatherds. If the first two lines do not demonstrate his concern with sweetness strongly enough, then the *sphragis* ("seal") that Thyrsis places on his song at line 65 Θύρσις ὅδ᾽ ὡξ Αἴτνας, καὶ Θύρσιδος ἁδέα φωνά, "I am Thyrsis from Etna and sweet is the voice of Thyrsis", makes it clear that Theocritus considers his particular style of poetry to be concerned with ἁδέα (Attic ἡδύς; cf. *Idd.* 6.9, 7.89, 8.82, 20.28). γλυκύτης "sweetness" and ἡδονή "pleasure" were two closely linked terms in matters of poetic taste.[152] As early as Hesiod (*Theog*. 96) we hear of the "sweet voice [that] flows from their [i.e. the Muses'] mouth[s]" (γλυκερή οἱ ἀπὸ στόματος ῥέει αὐδή.) In later antiquity a helpful discussion of γλυκύτης is provided by Hermogenes of Tarsus, the important insights provided are that, "sweet diction is the diction appropriate to simplicity… and also poetic diction", and that, "a source of sweetness is to ascribe motivation to things which by nature lack it", (i.e., the "pathetic fallacy"; see, for example, *Idyll* One 71-75).[153] By such a reading of the first eleven lines it very much seems like the herdsmen of *Idyll* One are up to date on poetic trends, and the audience waits in suspense to find out how much the herdsmen really know about contemporary poetic composition.

[150] On this topic see, for example, Van Sickle 1975: 54-56 and Segal 1974: 6 and 14-16.
[151] The conjecture is Housman's (Hunt 1927: 53) and a summary can be found in Stephens 2015: "Recreating the Aetia", example 6.
[152] Hunter 1983: 92-98.
[153] Text from Rabe 1985: 334-36 translations from ibid. On the "pathetic fallacy", see, in particular, Griffin 1992: 189-211.

The descriptive ἀδέα given to the whispering of the pine and the goatherd's piping is thus reflective of Theocritus' experiment as a whole. He writes following the tradition that seems to belong to followers of Eratosthenes which privileges the ψυχαγωγία "gratification" attained via poetry rather than any other "point" or "goal".[154] Theocritus' "goal" in writing these hexameter pastorals lies within the experience of hearing and reading poetry itself along with the joy and gratification one can receive from delightful verses. These poems are not caught up in the typical hexametric preoccupation with heroic action.

From these first eleven lines, then, much can be gleaned as regards the traditions that Theocritus plays with. Theocritus appropriated many elements from the Homeric tradition while making it clear that these poems are not concerned with typical Homeric preoccupations. The herdsmen are also up to date on the latest poetic trends and compose with a mind to the critics in Alexandria; even a cursory reading of the first eleven lines makes it hard to ignore the key term that is "sweetness" and its synonyms. Traditional rhapsodes may be an inspiration for Theocritus' rustic *agon* but there is hardly any precedent to put them in the guise of herdsmen. His attempt to make the poetic exchange between herdsmen seem traditional is deceptive in the sense that one can imagine pre-literary rhapsodes competing in a similar manner to the herdsman but their existence is plainly fictitious. His unification of form and content in this experimental way would go on to be his most enduring experiment, appropriated by Virgil and poets for millennia to come.

[154] Pfeiffer 1968: 166-67.

2.3.3 Dual Requests and *Loci Amoeni* 12-26

Θύρσις
λῇς, ποτὶ τᾶν Νυμφᾶν, λῇς, αἰπόλε, τεῖδε καθίξας,
ὡς τὸ κάταντες τοῦτο γεώλοφον αἵ τε μυρῖκαι,
συρίσδεν; τὰς δ᾽ αἶγας ἐγὼν ἐν τῷδε νομευσῶ.

Thrysis
Will you, by the Nymphs, will you, goatherd, since you've sat here, where the this hill is sloping and the tamarisks are, pipe? I will pasture your goats in the meantime.

Αἴπολος
οὐ θέμις, ὦ ποιμὴν, τὸ μεσαμβρινὸν, οὐ θέμις ἄμμιν
συρίσδεν. τὸν Πᾶνα δεδοίκαμες· ἦ γὰρ ἀπ᾽ ἄγρας
τανίκα κεκμακὼς ἀμπαύεται· ἔστι δὲ πικρός,
καί οἱ ἀεὶ δριμεῖα χολὰ ποτὶ ῥινὶ κάθηται.
ἀλλὰ τὺ γὰρ δὴ, Θύρσι, τὰ Δάφνιδος ἄλγε᾽ ἀείδες
καὶ τᾶς βουκολικᾶς ἐπὶ τὸ πλέον ἵκεο μοίσας,
δεῦρ᾽ ὑπὸ τὰν πτελέαν ἐσδώμεθα, τῶ τε Πριάπω
καὶ τᾶν Κρανιάδων κατεναντίον, ἅπερ ὁ θῶκος
τῆνος ὁ ποιμενικὸς καὶ ταὶ δρύες. αἰ δέ κ᾽ ἀείσῃς
ὡς ὅκα τὸν Λιβύαθε ποτὶ Χρόμιν ἆσας ἐρίσδων,
αἶγα δέ τοι δωσῶ διδυματόκον ἐς τρὶς ἀμέλξαι,
ἃ δύ᾽ ἔχοισ᾽ ἐρίφως ποταμέλγεται ἐς δύο πέλλας...

Goatherd
It's not right, O shepherd, at noontime, it's not right for us to pipe. We fear Pan; at that time he is at rest, tired from the hunt, he is fierce, and always has a sharp anger sitting on his nose. On the contrary, you, Thyrsis, sing the *Sorrows of Daphnis* and reach even greater heights in the bucolic muse, here let's sit under this elm, opposite both Priapus and the fountain Nymphs, the spot where this shepherdlike throne and the oaks are. If you sing as once you did, contesting with Chromis from Libya, I will give you a goat that has borne twins to milk three times, she has two kids to feed and is milked into two pales…

Thyrsis' response to the goatherd continues to develop the major themes that have been introduced in the first eleven lines. The Nymphs are placed first in this intermediary section of the poem and thus are emphasized. The Nymphs, through their ambiguous divinity,[155] are able to aid in securely placing Daphnis (the subject of Thyrsis' song) and other seemingly lovelorn herdsmen from the *Idylls* in the realm of traditional and Homeric myth. The goatherd's response indicates a world where the rustic gods mingle among rustic "heroes"; the goatherd, through his complementing second *locus*, is able to *assimilate* himself and his world with nature rather than just draw inspiration from it. Finally, the goatherd provides a proof of this world based in reality, that Thyrsis faced a Libyan shows how widespread singing τᾶς βουκολικᾶς… μοίσας is in this world. The herdsmen are marvellous poets who do not have an understanding of the significance of their own compositional accomplishments. The development of, and emphasis on, these

[155] That is to say they are not immortal, yet still appropriate "divinities" to pray to.

traditions both project the characters of the *Idylls* back into the mythic past and also demonstrate that the characters themselves are unaware of the significance attached to what they are doing. This mingling of levels of knowledge heightens an ironic understanding through the intersection between analogical and naïve interpretive possibilities.

Before the goatherd begins his ecphrasis of the cup, the sonorous qualities relax.[156] Yet, there is still clear euphony in the first line of Thrysis' second speech with λῆς… λῆς; the important aspect here is that the first and third foot combine to surround τᾶν Νυμφᾶν and give a similar emphasis as we saw with ἀ πίτυς and αἶγα in the initial exchange.[157] Additionally, once again the συρίσδεν is delayed a whole two lines from the verb that it complements (λῆς). Also phonetically emphatic is the prefix κάτα- or καθ-, which plays an important role in describing the *loci* in these initial verses. Just a few lines above, while describing the complementing *locus* provided by the goatherd in response to Thrysis, he uses the hapax[158] καταχὲς and then καταλείβεται, with the -λείβε- strongly imitating the very sound of the water it is describing.[159] Here Thrysis notices this trend and in amoebaean style responds to the goatherd's *locus* with his own *locus*, further complementing this friendly yet competitive conversation. After Thrysis' reponse, that expands through his request for piping and his own elaboration of the *locus*, is complete we are solidified in our understanding of the rules of this back and forth:[160] each herdsman must "cap" the other in a game of increasingly complex and expanding themes in hexameter verses.

[156] Though for a few examples see the outline given in Donnet 1988: 163.
[157] Nymphs were featured in several *Idylls,* for example, 3,6,11.
[158] See Gow ad loc. Typical for Homeric poetry is to use hapaxes instead of the coarser approach of Aristophanes see n. 128.
[159] Like the frequent λ found in Sappho's stanza, above n. 127.
[160] Payne 2007: 27 calls it "remembered music", emphasizing that it seems this conversation has been had before, yet it is being created as one reads through the poem.

An emphasis on the phrase τᾶν Νυμφᾶν should not at this point be a surprise, as these ambiguous woodland divinities were associated with the countryside and herdsmen. The obvious reason is that they live in the woods, but there is also a long tradition of myth where shepherds and divinities interact. Myths of this type date at least to the Sumerian period with the story of the shepherd Dumuzi, beloved of Inanna; parallels between Dumuzi and herdsmen qua heroes in Greek myth are abundant.[161] The females that the herdsmen encounter are called "Nymphs", much like the females encountered by Homer's heroes, and neither Theocritus nor Homer make their status, whether divine, human or somewhere in between explicit.[162] The importance of the Nymphs will only grow as they begin to morph into a metaphor for nature itself.[163] Theocritus maintains the ambiguity of the Nymphs' divinity as to more naturally initiate the herdsmen and Daphnis among the class of heroes and characters of myth who, while herding, had a sexually charged encounter with a mysterious divinity.[164]

The dual *loci* further serve to characterize the style of poetry that is being put forward and begin to present the goatherd as a composer of innovative hexameters. For perhaps the first time in ancient literature, the goatherd here provides a poetic *assimilation* of, rather than simply an *inspiration* from, nature and/or the countryside.[165] This identification truly begins in the initial exchange with the euphony of the words that suggest the "music" of both herdsman and nature are intertwined.[166] This feature's importance fades in later imitators of Theocritus, as the focus

[161] Griffin 1992: 202-211. The most obvious example is Paris.
[162] Consider, for example, the scene on the *Shield of Achilles* where "the brides were led out from their marriage chambers", *Il*. 18.493-94: νύμφας δ᾽ ἐκ θαλάμων… ἠγίνεον.
[163] See Gutzwiller 1991: 96-98.
[164] As discussed in the section on the *Sorrows of Daphnis*, Part III of this thesis.
[165] Alcman claims to have learned from the voice of partridges *PMG* 39 (Page 1962); cf. also Apollodorus 1.9.11, Pindar *Ol* 6.43-51, Pindar was said to be nourished by bees (Paus. 9.23.2). On Pindar see Cook 1895: 8, Lefkowitz 1981: 59, and Davies and Kathirithamby 1986: 72.
[166] Especially τὸ ψιθύρισμα and μελίσδεται, that euphonically and literally personify ἀ πίτυς, assimilating the poet, herdsman and nature with their surroundings. "The herdsmen are not just in harmony with nature, but part of a continuum that fails to distinguish the two", Gutzwiller 1991: 85.

shifts more toward the analogy of poet as herdsman and what the poet is able to do in relation to nature. For instance, Virgil appropriates the motif in his first *Eclogue* but emphasizes the idea of nature responding to the herdsman rather than being in harmony with its natural music: *formosam resonare doces Amaryllida silvas* (1.5), "teach the woods to echo fair Amaryllis". What the herdsmen in this *Idyll* are doing is really quite astounding and the innovation would not have been lost on the learned Alexandrian audience; the result of the experiment very much seems to be a fusion between the surface level concern the herdsmen have with reality and their latent but sophisticated analogical expressiveness.

This inability to distinguish between the herdsmen themselves and nature as a concept, mingled with the suggestion of an intersection between naïve and analogical interpretations, is shown in the second *locus* of the goatherd. In lines 21-23 we see the reference to Priapus and the "Nymphs of the fountains", presumably a statue of Priapus and some fountains.[167] Priapus was "in essence a fertility deity" and the "Nymphs of the fountains" are easy to assimilate with irrigation and fertility (uniting the divine with nature).[168] Additionally, the identification of the "shepherdlike throne" and the oaks seem to suggest the seat of the shepherd is literally fused with nature, as a piece of furniture fashioned out of nature itself.[169] This inability to classify strongly emphasizes the assimilation with nature and a sense of naïve oneness with nature itself.[170] The analogical significance of an *assimilation* into the countryside is not my argument to make, but it is clear that the possibility for even surface-level analogical understanding is

[167] Hunter 1999: 75. Also note the mention of an identification with nature here in Hunter, "like Priapos, Nymphs are to play a major role in Thrysis' song, and it is important that bucolic narrative and emotion are seen to grow out of the context in which they are set".
[168] Ibid. and Gutzwiller 1991: 88.
[169] Not unlike Odysseus' bed (*Od.* 23.190-201), further projecting these figures into the era of heroes.
[170] Gutzwiller 1991: 88. "The boundaries between god, man, and nature seem to disappear in this grove…".

possible; perhaps, the goatherd being "one" with nature represents a purer state of man to which the audience is meant to aspire, as is common with "golden-age" interpretations of pastoral.

Finally, the strongest confirmation of the pre-existence of a tradition where two herdsmen "cap" each other's hexameters is provided in the goatherd's responding request for Thyrsis to sing. That Thyrsis once competed with someone named Chromis from Libya in the "bucolic muse" (24) could not be a more explicit and deceitful expression that suggests the "creation of a tradition".[171] The reference to a Libyan competitor indicates how far this tradition of competing in the "bucolic muse" was spread. Either Thyrsis was a widely travelled superstar or word spread to Libya that Thyrsis was a competitor worth travelling rather far to meet and compete with. Either scenario encourages an understanding of poetic interpretation in balance, or perhaps intersection. These herdsmen do not seem to be aware of their impressive innovations and so are naïve, in any sense of the word.[172] At the same time, they exist in and represent another world through which they offer analogies of life that is lost on them.[173] For now, I would like to say that at least one intersection between lack and excess must be the herdsmen's inability to understand the significance of their own poetry and the reader's great appreciation for it.

Despite how far and wide this tradition has supposedly spread, the goatherd combines his concern of prizes (9-11) with a naïve juxtaposition between a priceless work of art and the very ephemeral prize of an animal to milk and then slaughter for meat.[174] Clearly, they evaluate their songs in rustic measures, as at the end of the impressive ecphrasis of the cup the goatherd casually mentions that he bought it for a goat and some cheese (57-8). While the herdsmen seem

[171] Hunter 1999: 75-6.
[172] Just as "Homer" likely had no idea what the impact of his dictation (writing?) would have, so the herdsmen do not *seem* self-conscious yet they still comment on the nature of their poetry. It is difficult to distinguish between the poet's voice and the herdsmen's and so perhaps we are to understand a similar fusion between poet and herdsman to begin here, as seems clear in subsequent pastoral. (See Artemidorus' epigram that began his late-republican collection of bucolics *Anth. Pal.* 9.205). On "voices" see Berger 1984.
[173] The idea of the reader versus the listener will be explored in a later section of this thesis.
[174] Gutzwiller 1991: 87.

to be able to innovate and compose impressive hexameters, their primary concerns still seem caught up with "reality" and such a realization challenges a sophisticated or allegorical reading of their compositions. However, it is this very challenging nature that is at the heart of the phenomenon I investigate. The herdsmen are marvelous poets and part of a marvelous world, but they seem unaware of the significance of their own existence. It is this interplay between the varying levels of knowledge or understanding among the herdsmen, the poet, and the reading audience that creates demonstrable irony.

Characters being unaware of the literariness of the lines they speak must have been common in antiquity as it could hardly have been supposed the bumbling fools of New Comedy could be so eloquent. This factor is not so shocking, rather it is the herdsmen's meta- and intra-textual allusiveness that combines to encourage reflection on the very nature of the verses one reads. The lines analyzed thus far have been shown to invite many interesting avenues of interpretation that reflect on contemporary, mythic, Homeric, and created traditions, making them highly inter and intra-textual – the herdsmen comment on their poetry unawares. In addition, the innovations of the herdsmen seem misplaced for their status and traditional reputation and role in Greek literature. If we saw a lowly character of New Comedy provide commentary on literary trends and traditions it would be rather amusing. Finally, the intersection and suspension of competing interpretations provides additional irony to the herdsmen's lack of sophistication; the herdsmen see what they are doing as nothing out of the ordinary, and so interpret their poetry in materialistic and naïve terms, while still providing the opportunity for the reader to develop a deeper understanding of the herdsmen's compositions and conversations.

2.3.4 Conclusion

In the introductory lines to this *Idyll*, and thus Theocritus' literary programme, there are a number of disparate traditions and themes identifiable. There are strong suggestions made by both characters that their back and forth is indeed traditional and has been done before. Nevertheless, the allusiveness of Thyrsis and the goatherd not only suggests a rustic tradition potentially comparable to real pre-literary rhapsodes competing in hexameters, but also a reversal of the content that could be expected in such a contest. The typical hexametric preoccupation with heroic action and concern for tradition is thrown away by virtue of the very fact these lines are spoken by herdsmen (hated by the Muses). Instead of such heroic action, heroes are replaced with herdsmen and the Olympians with more rustic divinities, such as Pan and the Nymphs. Most importantly, the goatherd begins to offer a balancing act of differing interpretations that elegantly provides the reader a number of avenues to piece together the world on display.

Theocritus has further concern, as demonstrable in nearly every *Idyll*, for contemporary urban trends and injecting such opinions into his characters further suggests the sophistication of their contests. The herdsmen are acutely aware of what may be understood as Callimachean poetics, which focuses on "childlike" poetry and a shunning of typical heroic action. Theocritus shares in this opinion as regards his content, but he writes in hexameters and so clearly depends more on this tradition than his more lyrical contemporaries. There are multiple traditions woven into the creation of his own bucolic world, the Alexandrian, the Homeric, the agonistic and his own "faux" tradition hitherto unknown.

Chapter 4: The Ecphrasis of the Cup 27-63

2.4.1 Introduction

The ecphrasis of the cup combines with Thyrsis' *Sorrows of Daphnis* to create two clear programmatic outlines for the style and content of the poetry that Theocritus intends on writing in his pastorals. The ecphrasis in itself is a prominent feature of archaic epic, where the object of description is usually a shield (e.g., that of Achilles or Heracles). In describing a rustic cup, the goatherd takes the *Iliadic* tradition of ecphrasis and reappropriates it with a more *Odyssean* outlook. The juxtaposition between the *ēthos* of the ecphrasis and the pathos of Thyrsis' song will be further explored in the introduction to the next chapter. For now, it is worthwhile to introduce the ecphrasis in the context of a continued appropriation of a famous device most commonly found in heroic epic poetry. Most importantly, the goatherd is able to compose his verses to incorporate both the straightforward and the complex through his "weaving" or "plaiting" of traditions into his composition.[175]

The frame of the cup provides little help as to the actual, physical, look of the cup and immediately upon entering this alternate plane we question what exactly we are supposed to interpret as happening. Whether the goatherd is describing a Dionysiac miracle, as can be found in Dionysus' *Homeric Hymn* (40-41),[176] or if he is being entirely allegorical is difficult to tell. What is certain is that the goatherd behaves as a certain intermediary interpreter insofar as he ascribes feelings and emotions to the characters that could not be present in a pictorial art form. The first scene he rewrites from epic is the quarrel on the *Shield of Achilles*, replacing it with the contest in *epea* conducted "in vain". A similar reinterpretation or elevation of a marginal figure from epic is present in the goatherd's depiction of the physical toil of the fisherman at work in

[175] As the boy πλέκει "plaits".
[176] Gutzwiller 1986: 254-6.

the second scene. The fisherman not only provides a balancing concern for Hesiodic ecphrasis, but also introduces the very real plastic or visual motif of the "everyday" or "realistic" fisherman. Finally, in his conclusion there is a return to a Dionysiac setting that demonstrates further the goatherd's concern for allowing there to be multiple interpretations of his verbal creation. The boy stands in for the Hellenistic poet, and the goatherd's presentation of his absorption draws us into his world to wonder what significance there is in the fact that he is absorbed in weaving an insect cage/trap.

2.4.2 Outer Design 27-31

καὶ βαθὺ κισσύβιον κεκλυσμένον ἀδέι κηρῷ,
ἀμφῶες, νεοτευχές, ἔτι γλυφάνοιο ποτόσδον.
τῶ ποτὶ μὲν χείλη μαρύεται ὑψόθι κισσός,
κισσὸς ἑλιχρύσῳ κεκονιμένος, ἁ δὲ κατ᾽ αὐτόν 30
καρπῷ ἕλιξ εἰλεῖται ἀγαλλομένα κροκόεντι.

…and a deep cup sealed with wax, two-handled, newly made, still smelling of the knife. High up near the lip winds ivy, ivy speckled with helichryse, along which a helix twines rejoicing in its yellow fruit

The cup most clearly demonstrates the dual nature of Theocritus' poetry; here, for example, we see the anaphora and poetic sweetness combined with the naïve juxtaposition between "real" and highly ephemeral objects. Additionally, we see the further mingling of epic with Theocritus' poetic "invention" that contains the echoes of a Dionysiac miracle, creating a sophisticated yet naïve reading.[177] Perhaps it is not, as Empson argued,[178] that pastoral puts the complex into the simple, but rather that it weaves the complex with the simple as an analogical reading of this ecphrasis encourages us to believe. The anaphora of κισσός… κισσός suggests the curling of the ivy[179] and the μαρύεται and εἰλεῖται clearly aligns this description of the frame with the boy's weaving of a cricket cage, long understood as a metaphor for poetry.[180] Finally, the reversal of epic instances of pastoral, where the herdsmen who tend to their music are slain,[181] with Theocritus' own interpretation is poignant. The images on the cup, right from the beginning of the frame, seem to move on their own[182] and the three scenes featured all continue this trend; Theocritus alludes to the miracle in the *Homeric Hymn to Dionysus* (40-41)[183] and replicates this model in the introduction to the ecphrasis through reinterpretations palatable to his Alexandrian audience.[184]

[177] Gutzwiller 1986: 254-6. More on this point below.
[178] Empson 1935: 23 (Versions of Pastoral).
[179] Hunter 1999: 78.
[180] An early parallel that strengthens this interpretation can be found at Bacchylides 5.9-10, or 19.8.
[181] Griffin 1992: 198-99.
[182] For example, μαρύεται and ἀγαλλομένα are in the middle "twines itself" "rejoicing in *its own* yellow fruit".
[183] Gutzwiller 1986: 254-56.
[184] Described by Gutzwiller as "somewhat jaded" (1986: 254).

The tradition that we see Theocritus create as we move through the poem continues to emphasize the "pathetic fallacy".[185] As discussed above, later poets following in Theocritus' footsteps become more concerned with the inspiration drawn from nature and what the poet can do in relationship with it.[186] Here, through both euphony and etymological allusion,[187] Theocritus' goatherd assimilates himself with nature and blurs the distinction between the real and the imaginary. It is unclear whether the goatherd adopts an allegorical appreciation of the cup through his description of "more than is actually there" or if he experiences some religious miracle as the possible parallel to the *Homeric Hymn* suggests. A satisfying result to this inter-textual weaving is that the goatherd balances the expectations of a contemporary Alexandrian audience with what may be understood as traditional "religious naivety", such as that featured in the *Homeric Hymns*. The goatherd is then a traditional figure of a quasi-mythical world where such a miracle might occur, while at the same time being a metaphorical and allegorical composer of verse.

While not containing an explication of the *kosmos*, the cup is clearly derivative, if not parodically imitative, of the *Shield of Achilles* featured in the *Iliad* (18.478-608).[188] The description of Achilles' shield became the ecphrastic archetype of Greek literature;[189] so much so that we see many imitations, often parodic.[190] The initial opposition with the epic ecphrastic tradition is in the object itself; Homer describes such things on the shield because their significance matches that of its bearer. The first step in interpreting Theocritus' bucolic ecphrasis

[185] See n. 153, above and section 3.5.3, below. This phenomenon is detectable in the Greek tradition as early as the archaic period, Hurwit 1982: 193-99.
[186] As discussed with reference to Virgil's appropriation of the motif in his first *Eclogue*, above, 57.
[187] The repetition of the stem ἑλι- (i.e. in, ἑλίχρυσος, ἕλιξ, and εἰλέω), for example, highly reinforces the idea of a *helix*. See Gutzwiller 1986: 254.
[188] For more on ecphrasis and, in particular, comparisons between all three images and the Shields of Achilles and Heracles see Nicosia 1968: 39-42, Ott 1969: 100-101, Halperin 1983: 177-183. Koopman 2017 compares and contrasts the most famous examples of Greek ecphrasis including these two shields and Theocritus' cup.
[189] Hardie 1985: 11.
[190] Most famously at Ar. *Ach*. 583-6 and *Lys*. 185-237, similarly dealing with wine.

would then be to understand the cup in relation to its bearer as analogous to how the shield relates to Achilles. How precisely to understand the relationship between Achilles and his shield is best left for other scholars,[191] however, it is not unreasonable to assume the shield is a godlike shield for a godlike hero.[192] After noticing the reference to θεῶν δαίδαλμα (*Id.* 1.32) and realizing a god ποίει δαίδαλα πολλὰ on the shield (*Il.* 18.482) it seems the goatherd may be godlike in his own way. The way in which he is godlike is in the act of composing poetry that the first and third scenes on the cup allegorize.[193] Here the work of art and its owner are cast in heroic terms but also situated within the lowly world of Theocritus' herdsmen.

Before continuing it is important to remember how exactly this poem is structured overall, there are several frames that all create disparate planes of either existence or allegorical understanding. At this point in the description of the cup we enter the deepest level of the frame that is somewhat confusingly the most "real" while at the same time being entirely artificial.[194] In the opening lines we see the conversation between the two herdsmen begin (1-11), which complements their final exchange (143-52); further strengthening the connection between the opening scene and the final one is the fact that Theocritus only ever uses the verb κλύζω "to wash" in relation to the cup (27) and Daphnis' death (140).[195] In the initial scenes the water was sonorous and sweet (7-8), in the end it consumes Daphnis (140).[196] There are more instances of parallelism that could be detailed,[197] yet this is sufficient to see a clear frame. Within we have the

[191] See, for example, Hardie 1985: 14.
[192] Koopman 2018: 183 "These ekphraseis [the shields of Achilles and Heracles] concerned shields… both… made for a hero with superhuman qualities".
[193] Homer's heroes were often compared to cosmic elements Hardie 1985: 14. The goatherd, then, is likely comparable to the objects on his work of art.
[194] It is more "real" in the sense that it depicts plausible scenes; it is entirely artificial because of the conceit that such an object could never exist, Segal 1981: 27. Halperin 1983: 243 argues the cup is a "true portrait of 'little people'" (i.e., people perceived to be low status, socially speaking).
[195] See Segal's treatment, focusing on the symbolism of water, 1981: 25-46.
[196] "Nature here [i.e. in lines 1-11] is [a] cool, aloof backdrop against which the characters act", Lawall 1967: 18.
[197] See Segal 1981: 27.

cup and song, these also parallel each other in a number of ways, which will be discussed as they arise. For now, it is worth emphasizing that the frame of the cup is encircled with ivy (29-31, 55) and encloses the scenes marking them as something contained for human use, like the cricket-cage.[198]

[198] Segal 1981: 27. Lawall 1967: 27 suggests the frame also sets the cup on a different plane and makes it "timeless".

2.4.3 The Contest in *Epea* 32-38

ἔντοσθεν δὲ γυνά, τί θεῶν δαίδαλμα, τέτυκται,
ἀσκητὰ πέπλῳ τε καὶ ἄμπυκι· πὰρ δέ οἱ ἄνδρες
καλὸν ἐθειράζοντες ἀμοιβαδὶς ἄλλοθεν ἄλλος
νεικείουσ᾽ ἐπέεσσι· τὰ δ᾽ οὐ φρενὸς ἅπτεται αὐτᾶς·
ἀλλ᾽ ὁκα μὲν τῆνον ποτιδέρκεται ἄνδρα γέλαισα,
ἄλλοκα δ᾽ αὖ ποτὶ τὸν ῥιπτεῖ νόον· οἱ δ᾽ ὑπ᾽ ἔρωτος
δηθὰ κυλοιδιόωντες ἐτώσια μοχθίζοντι.

Within is carved a woman, an elaboration of the gods, adorned with robe and headband. Near her are men with lovely hair competing against one another in *epea*, taking turns. These things do not effect her mind, but once she turns towards one man, smiling, and again later she casts her attention toward the other. While they, with eyes long dark-rimmed from love, labour in vain.

The scene "carved within [i.e. within the frame]" also aligns the first scene with the third, creating an even smaller frame that helps suggest an allegorical interpretation of each scene's relationship with the other two. The first and third scene deal with two different aspects of Eros,[199] at two different stages in life. The men in the first scene are obviously erotic figures as their lovely hair suggests;[200] the boy, completely absorbed in his task, represents the Alexandrians' tendency to both avoid "serious" topics in their poetry and their concern for the beauty of it.[201] The psychological topic of Eros contrasts with the overtly physical description of the fisherman in between the other two scenes. The goatherd presents the cup chiefly in terms of his emotional response to it as a work of art, rather than describing it.[202] In doing so he creates a significant distance between object and bearer and he surprisingly does not commiserate much with the fisherman.[203] The cup then seems to be an outside perspective on the inner workings of the world in which the goatherd himself lives. His descriptions are of "little people" (to quote

[199] The third scene requires more of a Platonic understanding of Eros as a force which can be directed to intellectual pursuits, cf. Pl. *Sym.* 181b–182a.
[200] Halperin 1983: 178.
[201] More on the boy below (2.4.5).
[202] Miles 1977: 147 the cup is described "through the eyes of the bucolic world". See also Payne 2007: 29.
[203] Gutzwiller 1991: 94.

Halperin), yet his language creates an artificial distance that almost assimilates the reader with the goatherd.[204]

The position of the goatherd in relation to the cup is often noted in scholarly readings of this ecphrasis.[205] The sense of detachment is first suggested through the creation of an ecphrasis in itself – the goatherd describes a work of the plastic arts and provides his interpretation of it to his audience.[206] This outside perspective not only assimilates the goatherd with his audience, in that they are both interpreting a work of art, but also with the poet himself. It seems, based on readings of various *Idylls*, that Theocritus' perspective on myth is similarly framed.[207] The goatherd then stands on an intermediary plane between the figures of myth themselves and the real audience they are singing to, that is, the Alexandrians. The goatherd represents a mediating force between the world of the poems and the world of the Alexandrians; at one time he is concerned with goats and milk (25-26), at another cheese and goats (57-8), and in between these concerns with "reality" he plays the role of both interpreter and composer. Like a confident composer, the goatherd here is certainly more sure of his description than any member of his audience ever could be.[208]

In the first scene, after an erotic description of the two men and the woman (32-4), the goatherd provides a highly Homeric-sounding phrase in the first third of line 35 νεικείουσ' ἐπέεσσι.[209] The reason that this word, ἐπέεσσι, has been left untranslated is because of the near

[204] The goatherd clearly goes beyond "what is actually there", and through his description he encourages us to do the same. He looks forward to the characters of other *Idylls* that "labour in vain," (38) says to us "you would think" (42) and finally provides an allegory for the act of composing verse through the boys plaiting (53-54). More on this point can be found in Payne 2007: 38-39.
[205] Halperin 1983: 242 and Gutzwiller 1991: 93-94.
[206] That the herdsmen themselves become their own audience is often mentioned as well, see, for example, Alpers 1996: 26-27.
[207] Griffiths 1976: 360.
[208] Payne 2007: 33.
[209] Though it is usually with an adjective, see ibid. For example, *Il*. 2.277, 21.480 (ὀνειδείοις).

certain allusion to the genre made in the word: it can mean both "words" or "hexameters".[210] This "contest in *epea*" is meant to evoke the νεῖκος, or "quarrel", that takes place on the *Shield of Achilles*.[211] This substitution of a murder trial with the trial of two lovers before their beloved is a strong suggestion of the reversal, or at least substitution, of epic and heroic themes with those more concerned with Eros. The *Iliad* deals with serious matters, here the goatherd dwells on and elaborates the beauty of the subjects as they contest "in vain" and ἀμοιβαδὶς "amoebaean" or "by taking turns", as did the Muses themselves.[212] The thread uniting Theocritus to the *epea* genre is his assimilation of the agony of war with the agony of Eros, specifically unrequited Eros, the type anticipated in this scene through the phrase ἐτώσια μοχθίζοντι "they labour in vain" and displayed by Thyrsis in his song about Daphnis. Lastly, the fact that the eyes of the two men are ὑπ᾽ ἔρωτος | δηθὰ κυλοιδιόωντες (37-8) shows an "epic distraction" that creates a mock solemnity through its analogical quality.[213] So the goatherd ironically detaches himself further from the scene much like the way Theocritus is detached from the subjects of his art, while at the same time interweaving Homeric allusion with his own, more delicate, mythical world.[214]

Payne is correct to interpret the spatial markers present in the ecphrasis as reminders of the "friction" extant in depictions of a fictional world;[215] however, would the temporal adverbs ὀκὰ and αὖ not be doing the same thing? The friction between "real" and "imaginary" has been demonstrably present in the poem thus far, the fact that the spatial markers concentrate the scenes together does not seem to me the strongest reminder of the fact that the goatherd displays an illusion. By its nature of being a physical work of art, it of course cannot exist in two different

[210] Halperin 1983: 242-43.
[211] Ibid. 178. *Il.* 18.497.
[212] See above, 50.
[213] Gutzwiller 1991: 93-94.
[214] The cup can further demonstrate the goatherd's commitment to tradition while recognizing its own divergences, Van Sickle 1975: 56.
[215] Payne 2007: 37, see also Heffernan 1993: 4.

times simultaneously, as the goatherd interprets it as doing by using these two temporal adverbs. Combining the idea that the cup is "timeless" (made so through the writing of this ecphrasis) and the fact that it is said to exist at two different points in time further strengthens both the distance between the goatherd and his subject, but also the playfulness of this poem and its lack of a serious tone. Nevertheless, positioning this lovers' quarrel analogously to the contest on the *Shield of Achilles* strongly aligns the response to a work of art of this goatherd, who is not very concerned with "serious" topics, with the most serious and weighty ecphrasis of the Greek tradition.

2.4.4 The Old Fisherman 39-44

τοῖς δὲ μετὰ γριπεύς τε γέρων πέτρα τε τέτυκται
λεπράς, ἐφ᾽ ᾗ σπεύδων μέγα δίκτυον ἐς βόλον ἕλκει 40
ὁ πρέσβυς, κάμνοντι τὸ καρτερὸν ἀνδρὶ ἐοικώς.
φαίης κεν γυίων νιν ὅσον σθένος ἐλλοπιεύειν,
ὧδέ οἱ ᾠδήκαντι κατ᾽ αὐχένα πάντοθεν ἶνες
καὶ πολιῷ περ ἐόντι· τὸ δὲ σθένος ἄξιον ἅβας.

Near them is carved an old fisherman and a rugged rock, on which the old man energetically gathers his great net for a cast, just like he had the power of a working man. You would think he fished with all the strength of his limbs, so do the sinews bulge all over his neck; though he is grey, his strength is worthy of a youth.

The physicality of the scene immediately contrasts with the psychological and emotional scene just described.[216] It seems an intentional juxtaposition between Eros and *ponos* is being made: the lovers represent a more frivolous time of life, when one's concerns are with erotic affairs. Here, we see the latter part of the "ages of man"[217] (that is, "old age" and all the responsibility that comes with it).[218] The realism used here is highly reminiscent of the Hellenistic obsession with realism in their plastic arts;[219] the goatherd intends to encourage the understanding that his work of art is "new" or more palatable to modern tastes.[220] Simultaneously, then, the goatherd interweaves literary traditions, such as the Homeric or Alexandrian, with contemporary plastic traditions.

Instead of being directly reminiscent of a Homeric scene, we see Theocritus rewrite the Hesiodic motif of the fisherman (*Sc.* 213-15).[221] An elaboration of a background or peripheral figure, such as the fisherman from the *Shield of Heracles*, is a characteristic appropriation of traditional mythic literature resuited for the contemporary purposes of third century poetics.[222] On a microcosmic scale the goatherd allegorically represents the poetic program of the *Idylls*

[216] Zanker 2004: 12.
[217] Cf. Solon fr. 27 West^2.
[218] Cf. *Id*. 10 Milon, who also contrasts work and love. Also, Lawall 1967: 29.
[219] Cf. Politt 1986. On Art and audience see Zanker 2004.
[220] Cf. line 28 νεοτευχές, an undeniably programmatic word.
[221] αὐτὰρ ἐπ᾽ ἀκταῖς | ἧστο ἀνὴρ ἁλιεὺς δεδοκημένος εἶχε δὲ χερσὶν | ἰχθύσιν ἀμφίβληστρον ἀπορρίψοντι ἐοικώς "And on the shore a fisherman sat waiting, he held in his hands a net for fish as if he was going to cast it". Furthermore, Theocritus also weaves mimetic ecphrastic tradition with these, see Gutzwiller 1991: 92.
[222] On the amplification of peripheral themes or topics see Halperin 1983: 176.

through exemplifying the appropriation of myth that will take place, encouraging reflection on the poet's choice of herdsmen for his main characters. The major difference between the epic treatment of the fisherman motif and that presented here is the central focus given to the fishermen by the goatherd.[223] The fisherman on the *Shield of Heracles* is about as important as the fact that there are dolphins near the harbour (*Sc.* 212); on the other hand, Theocritus places him right in the center of the marvellously described cup and juxtaposes him with contrasting stages of life. The allusion to both the heroic ecphrasis of Pseudo-Hesiod along with the striking concern for realism interweave both older and newer traditions (Hesiodic and Alexandrian) that are explored in this poem. The constant juxtaposition and counter balancing of various ideas and scenes is characteristically bucolic – here we see a distant and allusive representation of a "little person" at work.

In addition to demonstrating the appropriation of traditional myth that will occur, that is, the scaling down of epic and the primacy given to "little people", this scene of the ecphrasis demonstrates most clearly the bucolic concern of *ēthos*.[224] The authentic appeal is exemplified here by the great detail given to the portrait of the fisherman. The fisherman is a highly personalized and characterized figure, even in comparison with the others on the cup. As noted, the goatherd distances himself from this scene and matter of factly suggests that the fisherman is in the middle of a great amount of effort, exemplified by his strength. The description is individual, realistic, and highly concerned with the figure himself rather than his metapoetic possibilities (like the lovers' quarrel or the boy plaiting a cage/trap).

[223] Assuming the description of the cup only lasts from 29-55, line 42 would be the median, putting ὁ πρέσβυς right in the centre.
[224] That is, a display of the character of the poems rather than attempting to invoke certain emotions. Halperin 1983: 243.

It is at this point in the ecphrasis that the "disarming simplicity"[225] is most inviting to the audience. Recent research into the connections between Payne's interpretation of the fiction within the *Idylls* and Michael Fried's analysis of 18th cent. French painting has aided significantly in understanding the multiple planes of existence within the *Idylls*. Fried raised surprisingly relevant points while attempting to understand the evolution of what Yukai Li calls[226] the absorption-distraction structure within this particular fifty years of French art.[227] Much like the viewer of a painting, when reading a poem we stand outside the "frame" and gaze within, albeit only in our minds. It is this ontological separation that Payne interprets primarily through emphasizing its role in reminding us of the poem's fictionality. Naturally, an observer of a painting concerned with realism may wonder things such as whose perspective the painting is from or if a figure looks beyond the canvas then they might wonder what the figure is looking at.[228] Through depicting figures that are entirely absorbed in their task both Theocritus and the 18th cent. French painters similarly flaunt their fictive nature. Fried would argue this is done to negate the existence of the observer, Payne that through this negation we are all the more fascinated with the ontological status of the poem.[229]

Understanding both approaches to the aesthetics of their respective arts, Payne and Fried offer complementing theories. They both argue that the more attention that is drawn to the attempted erasure of the beholder or reader, the more the actual beholder or reader is fascinated with the world of the painting or the poem.[230] By being reminded of the impossibility of the cup through the mention of the fisherman's "sinews bulging all over his neck" (it is an ivy cup, after

[225] Ibid. 167.
[226] Li 2019.
[227] Fried 1980.
[228] Li 2019: 398.
[229] Ibid. 392, Payne 2007: 3.
[230] Li 2019: 388.

all), the question of ontological planes arises once more. The goatherd describes a godlike cup that represents his world through hyperbole and the hyper-realism of the fisherman. Nevertheless, in this representative, while still individualistic, scene we have also noticed that the goatherd distances himself to the point where we are not certain he realizes the representational value of the cup. The goatherd only provides his interpretation of the images on the cup and so the interpretation of the world it represents; he interweaves Hesiodic epic and Alexandrian plastic traditions, and blankets his world with the deceit and irony involved in arguing for the existence of a cup that incorporates such disparate traditions. The world of the herdsmen can only exist in these poems[231] and from the beginning of the programmatic introduction to it, what is possible in this world is already made unintelligible through the deception of the varying ontological planes between cup, goatherd, and reader. Any attempts at a clear interpretation of the world Theocritus creates is thwarted from the very beginning by this naïve yet sophisticated goatherd.

This point has not gone unnoticed by previous scholars. The reason that the picture lacks accuracy is succinctly summarized by Manakidou:

> *Theokrit selbst beabsichtigt nicht, eine allzu klare Vorstellung von dem beschriebenen Objekt zu geben. Da er kein pedantischer Betrachter ist, zeigt er kein Interesse an einer genauen Darlegung, sondern legt Wert auf die poetischen Eigenschaften bzw. Dimensionen der Rede, auf die Dichtung als woertlich Realisierung seiner bildenden Phantasie.*[232]
>
> Theocritus himself does not intend to give an all too clear idea of the described object. Since he is not a pedantic observer, he shows no interest in an exact explanation, but rather places value on the poetic properties or dimensions of speech, [places value] on poetry as the literal realization of his creative imagination.

In a recent study on Greek ecphrasis Koopman takes issue with this approach, however, his conclusion that "the narratee should try to visualize the cup"[233] is not necessarily at odds with

[231] Payne 2007: 15.
[232] Manakidou 1993: 73.
[233] Koopman 2018: 205.

Manakidou since, in the same paragraph, he concedes the cup is not entirely imaginable if one takes into account every detail. The scene of the fisherman, more so than the other two, is noted for its lack of narrativity.[234] Unlike the first scene, the fisherman is not depicted in multiple stages of action or at two different times; nevertheless, the goatherd assures us that he is interpreting the cup rather than describing the images as they actually are.[235] This interpretive edge that the goatherd has over both Thyrsis and the real audience is still, therefore, very much present even though this scene is one of the easier ones to imagine carved into a cup – the goatherd does not cease reminding Thyrsis and us that his description of the cup is clouded by his own passion for, and love of, the works of art carved into it.

[234] Ibid. 195-98.
[235] Ibid. 197. Cf., Zanker 1987: 81 and Allan, de Jong and de Jonge 2017: 41-2.

2.4.5 The Plaiting Boy 45-54

τυτθὸν δ᾽ ὅσσον ἄπωθεν ἁλιτρύτοιο γέροντος
†πυρναίαις† σταφυλαῖσι καλὸν βέβριθεν ἀλωά,
τὰν ὀλίγος τις κῶρος ἐφ᾽ αἱμασιαῖσι φυλάσσει
ἥμενος· ἀμφὶ δέ νιν δύ᾽ ἀλώπεκες ἃ μὲν ἀν᾽ ὄρχως
φοιτῇ σινομένα τὰν τρώξιμον, ἃ δ᾽ ἐπὶ πήρᾳ
πάντα δόλον τεύχοισα τὸ παιδίον οὐ πρὶν ἀνησεῖν
φατὶ πρὶν ἢ ἀκράτιστον ἐπὶ ξηροῖσι καθίξῃ.
αὐτὰρ ὅγ᾽ ἀνθερίκοισι καλὰν πλέκει ἀκριδοθήραν
σχοίνῳ ἐφαρμόσδων· μέλεται δέ οἱ οὔτέ τι πήρας
οὔτε φυτῶν τοσσῆνον ὅσον περὶ πλέγματι γαθεῖ.

A little ways from the sea-worn old man is a lovely vineyard heavy with ripe grapes, nearby a certain boy guards sitting on a stone wall; around him are two foxes, one runs around up the rows laying waste the table grapes, the other sneaking using all its guile for the boy's knapsack and won't stop until it, thinking to itself, has dined on a dry good. But he is plaiting a lovely insect receptacle of asphodel getting use of a rush, he cares as little for his knapsack and vines as he does rejoice in his plaiting.

That the boy has been understood as a metaphor for (bucolic) poetry has been mentioned but deserves further attention here.[236] Additionally, that the boy plaits and does not weave *per se* does not disturb the seemingly clear allusion here to the writing of a poem. The Greek language did not quite have a term like the Latin *texere*, which means properly "to weave" but gives us the English word "text" via its perfect participle *textus*. Nevertheless, the metaphorical idea of a poet being a weaver of sorts is easily comparable to the fact that the Fates "spin the threads" of the lives of mortals.[237] The idea of a lifespan being woven metaphorically fits with the idea of the text being woven in the same way; since, like one of the Fates, the poet determines the outcome of his characters or topic. When the poet ceases to write, the characters' "thread has run out"

The emphasis on the Dionysiac setting indicates the importance of the scene to follow and foregrounds its interpretations. The rest of the images described as being on the scene happen simultaneously, but the goatherd still references two future events, as he does in the fisherman scene.[238] Similar to the first scene,[239] the goatherd also suggests a sequence of events though they could hardly really be depicted on the cup. Here, the mention of the young boy is the

[236] See Hunter 1999: 77, Purchase 2003: 97 and Heerink 2015: 61.
[237] See, for example, *Il.* 24.209-10.
[238] Koopman 2018: 194-98.
[239] Ibid. 198-202.

first clue that hints at an interpretation of the cup as containing the "ages of man". However, while the images may suggest such a temporal order, they are only connected by the goatherd spatially. It is thus the case that we cannot immediately make the conclusion that Theocritus portrays, "the chronological sequence *par excellence*, the span of a human life. No temporal progression is more familiar or more basic".[240] The interpreter must then be the one to attach the significance of the "ages of man" to the cup and instead understand that the goatherd rather seems to be trying to portray *typical* scenes of life from within his world.[241] The goatherd reads psychological themes into the cup and his figures, this is clear, but it is the audience who must now read the symbolism of these psychological themes.[242]

The goatherd likely saw the functionality of, for example, the locust (cricket?)[243] trap or cage, as ἀκρίδες are pests to vineyards (*Id.* 5.108-109).[244] Yet scholars have long been eager to understand the boy as weaving these cages because ἀκρίδες were kept as pets for their pleasing song.[245] Before moving on to interpretations of the insect-catching, it is important to note is that there is no consensus on what is being referenced here. Whether they are grasshoppers, locusts or crickets and whether he is weaving a trap or cage (i.e., is he going to kill it or keep it for its song?) is not entirely clear. It seems certain that ἀκρίδες *can* refer to each type of insect,[246] however, in *Idyll* Five the context also involves foxes damaging vines (112-13). It seems the two animals are perhaps a pair of typical (though not traditional) threats to vines from nature. Lastly,

[240] Petrain 2006: 257.
[241] Lawall 1967: 30, Ott 1969: 107, Gutzwiller 1991: 92 and Hunter 1999: 63.
[242] Payne 2007: 39.
[243] Gow 1952 110-111 mentions that the word mainly refers to chirping insects in general, most usually crickets and sometimes grasshoppers. Nevertheless, Gow mentions, it was certainly also used for locust. For a full treatment see Davies and Kathirithamby 1986: 134-148.
[244] Koopman 2018: 200. In *Idyll* five locusts are meant since their threat is made clear. Gow 1952: 110-11, Davies and Kathirithamby 1986: 139.
[245] Gow 1952: 12, Hunter 1999 83-84. For the cicada as an explicit symbol for the singer see Cairns 1984: 104.
[246] See nn. 243 and 244 above.

-θήραν technically refers to a trap,[247] but it is easy to see trap and cage as fairly synonymous.[248] As mentioned, the goatherd is clearly concerned with "reality",[249] but at the same time he naively offers the opportunity of multiple interpretations: one functional, and presumably the goatherd's own, and one metapoetic, presumably intended to satisfy Alexandrian audiences.

It is not that they are wrong to understand a metapoetic comment here, but rather, that there exist two simultaneous interpretations. The boy could be understood as being on "guard-duty"[250] and so is simultaneously supposed to be watching the vines as well as weaving a cage (to trap pests that threaten the vines), this being the functional interpretation. Yet this would then be a rather ironic scene, as the boy is failing his primary duty, since the foxes are in fact doing damage to the vines and grapes. The metapoetic interpretation remains as well. While the goatherd may understand the image as a simple scene of a boy neglecting his primary duty, due to the notion of weaving being tied to poetic composition (both inside and out of this *Idyll*) and the boy's total absorption in his task the allegorical opportunity must remain.

Such an interpretation that suspends the different readings invokes the bucolic experience *par excellence*. On the one hand, the goatherd himself is clearly elaborating and focusing on the details he finds important himself; then, there is Thyrsis, who is presumably much like the goatherd;[251] finally, there are the Alexandrians and the wider Greek audience. The goatherd, much like Thyrsis in his own song, incorporates not only disparate traditions in order to provide his own unique song, but also clearly includes both more and less "realistic" depictions. The

[247] Gow 1952: 12-13, he nevertheless translates it to as "cage" since "it seems unlikely that trapping them would be of much use". Hunter 1999: 83 refers to it as a "trap for crickets" but says that traps may also function as cages. Finally, Dover 1971: 82 alters the reading of the text to -θήκαν to make the reference to cages certain since "to catch grasshoppers…simply walk into the grass and pounce on them".
[248] As does Hunter 1999: 83.
[249] E.g., his concern with the ephemeral objects that frame this ecphrasis, see 2.4.2 above. Also, see Gutzwiller 1991: 83.
[250] Koopman 2018: 199 n. 91.
[251] The goatherd's concern with realism has already been addressed. Thyrsis' song, while perhaps not concerned with realism, certainly still provides a popular and "useful" song about Daphnis. More on this latter point below.

psychology of Eros and the description of the two men competing contrast with the simple description of the fisherman. With the plaiting boy we now return to a psychological theme and the most extensive scene yet. The boy completes the microcosm of the bucolic world: within the world of Theocritus' herdsmen there are clearly a number of competing ideas best represented allegorically through this ecphrasis.

The two men competing in *epea* represent the agonistic aspect of the poems that are written in this style, while at the same time representing the content of the contests to come as well (namely unrequited Eros). So too does the third scene discuss the psychological topic of Eros from a poetic point of view while also providing insight further into the poems themselves. Through both the expression τυτθὸν δ' ὅσσον and the dimunivite παιδίον the goatherd recalls the Callimachean fragment discussed above (Call. *Aet*. fr. 1.3-7)[252] that argues in favor of writing verses "like a child". Whether or not this is an explicit allusion to Callimachus, both argue in favor of embracing the same psychological condition, that of a child. The most important element of this metaphor is that children are more apt to forget about what the "point" of doing something is, and so the reader is being encouraged to let go and indulge themselves in the poetry.

[252] Above, 51.

2.4.6 Complementing Design, Praise, and Value of the Cup 55-63

παντᾷ δ᾽ ἀμφὶ δέπας περιπέπταται ὑγρὸς ἄκανθος
αἰπολικόν θέαμα τέρας· κέ τυ θυμὸν ἀτύξαι.
τῶ μὲν ἐγὼ πορθμεῖ Καλυδωνίῳ αἶγά τ᾽ ἔδωκα
ὤνον καὶ τυρόεντα μέγαν λευκοῖο γάλακτος·
οὐδέ τί πω ποτὶ χεῖλος ἐμὸν θίγεν, ἀλλ᾽ ἔτι κεῖται
ἄχραντον. τῷ κὰ τυ μάλα πρόφρων ἀρεσαίμαν,
αἴ κά μοι τύ, φίλος, τὸν ἐφίμερον ὕμνον ἀείσῃς.
κοὔτί τυ κερτομέω. πόταγ᾽ ὥγαθέ· τὰν γὰρ ἀοιδὰν
οὔ τί πᾳ εἰς ᾽Αίδαν γε τὸν ἐκλελάθοντα φυλαξεῖς.

All around the goblet spreads a fluid acanthus, a goatherd's wonder, a marvel for your heart to admire. I gave a goat to a Calydonian ferryman as price, and a great cheese of white milk; not ever yet has it touched my lip, but still it lies undefiled. It's fine with me to give it to you, if you, my friend, might sing the lovely song to me. And I'm not joking, my good man, please bring it about, for you won't be able to keep on singing that song, not even in Hades, the place of forgetfulness.

Returning now to the outer frame of the cup and with the completion of the goatherd's ecphrasis we see a satisfying conclusion to both the frame of the cup itself and the poetry that it contains. While the opening lines to the ecphrasis (especially 27-31) highlight the imagery of the ivy border, here there is only a single visual detail. Nevertheless, line 55 completes the physical and poetic frame of the scenes with an image certainly befitting the bucolic world.[253] The acanthus "spreads" itself all over the cup, though it is now a δέπας rather than a κισσύβιον, so instead of being a "rustic cup" the goatherd elevates it with a different Homeric word.[254] Finally, the spreading of the acanthus and the fact that it is "fluid" is again suggestive of motion and personifies nature by giving it agency.[255]

Line 56 similarly displays an inversion of epic themes for those more suitable to the rustic goatherd. In the *Shield of Heracles* (318) it is stated θαῦμα ἰδεῖν καὶ Ζηνὶ βαρυκτύπῳ…, "a wonder to behold, even for loud-thundering Zeus", so the goatherd goes even further in his description of the cup as it is not only "a wonder" but also a τέρας, strengthening both words through their juxtaposition to each other. The use of this Hesiodic motif plays with the traditional

[253] It befits the world of the goatherd while maintaining an etymological and metapoetic significance for the "real" Theocritus and Alexandrians. Dubel 2010: 18 argues "… *Théocrite décrit ici en philologue plutôt qu'en botaniste*".
[254] For examples of δέπας see: *Od*. 10.316, 15.466, *Il.* 1.471. The goatherd "tries to increase the desirability of the κισσύβιον by calling it a δέπας and hence slightly modifies 'reality'", Koopman 2018: 185, cf. Hoekstra 1990: 198.
[255] As the ivy at the start of the ecphrasis "acquires agency and feeling", Koopman 2018: 188.

order with Zeus at the top of the hierarchy and powerfully suggests that as much as Zeus is king of the gods, so does the goatherd reign here in his poetry.[256] Still, there is the literal and functional interpretation of the word that only suggests it is a "wonder" in the sense that it is something the goatherd is seeing and describing.[257] The use of the word τέρας suggests "the manifestation of the supernatural, and this associates viewing the cup with the reception of poetry".[258] Within two words of this line, the goatherd incorporates his blend of rustic and epic themes and argues for the divine nature of the cup, not unlike those famous archaic shields.

In reverse order, we descend through plant motif, epic allusion and elevation of the cup, and back into the "reality" of Thyrsis and the goatherd. As the goatherd began his ecphrasis with a juxtaposition to ephemeral and material goods so here does he inform us of the cost he paid for the cup (57-8). To be sure, it is no small sum; nevertheless, the juxtaposition between his poetic concern for structure and order with his emphasis on the pastoral economy is poignant. It is perhaps at the end of this sudden return to the "reality" of the goatherd's world that we are most likely to see him as a naïve observer.

The reference to the occupation of the person from whom the goatherd bought the cup provides a window into the goatherd's thought process. As Hunter mentions, it is not unlikely we are to suppose the ferryman got the cup from a god.[259] The goatherd's elevation of the cup in these lines to the level of the (certainly divine) shields of epic ecphrasis perhaps suggests the goatherd's hopeful naivety that his cup has similar origins. On the one hand, there is clear

[256] Halperin 1983: 183.
[257] Gutzwiller 1991: 92.
[258] Hunter 1999: 84. "The Dionysiac face of poetry in full-force" Purchase 2003: 97.
[259] Hunter 1999: 85 suggests we are to recall Aphrodite and Phaon. See also Koopman 2018: 186. The mysterious origins likely parallel those of bucolic itself. The reference to Hades just a few lines later further implies this boatman may at least *recall* Charon himself, without the figure necessarily *being* him. It would be quite a development if the goatherd had his own κατάβασις into the underworld!

literary significance given to the fact that he obtained the cup from this ferryman;[260] on the other hand, the goatherd has the functional goal of convincing Thyrsis to sing the *Sorrows of Daphnis*.[261] Finally, it very much seems that whatever the origin of the cup "[its] genealogy is *in statu nascendi*: when Thyrsis – a celebrated singer – acquires it, he might hand it to whomever he likes, etc" so too is the style of poetry which Theocritus writes.[262]

Furthering this functional goal is the fact that the goatherd has not yet used the cup. Perhaps it is somewhat humourous that the cup, which is a "goatherd's wonder", has not yet been used by a goatherd, but surely highlighting the fact that it has not yet been used serves a rhetorical goal.[263] At the same time, as the mention that the cup is νεοτευχές (27) "recently made",[264] so here the mention of the cup being ἄχραντον "undefiled" gives the goatherd's final lines a programmatic charge. Callimachus uses the spelling ἀχράαντος in his *Hymn to Apollo* (111), where the comparison and commentary on his own poetry is made clear.[265] It seems then that these references to the cup's "newness" and purity also have a functional and metapoetic interpretation. The ecphrasis itself is not only "new" but is here crystallized as a pure and undefiled paradigm of bucolic ecphrasis.[266]

The goatherd's conditional request (61) finally completes the outermost frame of the ecphrasis through recalling what is essentially the same request at the beginning (23-24). However, the line immediately preceding it also offers a dual interpretation. The song of Thyrsis

[260] For example, he attempts to align his ecphrasis with the famous shields to create a bucolic version of the *Shield of Achilles*.
[261] Koopman 2018: 186.
[262] Ibid.
[263] To the Greek frame of mind, in contrast to poetry, applying the adjective "new" to piece of equipment or technology must have carried the same positive charge it does today.
[264] Either it is a new rendition of a tradition or, what is more like and in line with my interpretation of this poem, is that it is both a new rendition (of an ecphrasis) but also one entirely new unto itself.
[265] Hunter 1999: 85.
[266] Its subsequent reputation in literary traditions suggests that, as Horace and Catullus desired their poems to greatly outlive them, so Theocritus anticipates this ecphrasis as serving as an archetype in its own right.

will hopefully be an ἐφίμερον ὕμνον as the goatherd's ecphrasis just was.[267] Ἐφίμερον is a somewhat uncommon Greek word, appearing in this form less than ten times.[268] Significantly, however, it is used twice in the Hesiodic corpus and once by Apollonius of Rhodes. It occurs both in the *Theogony* and the *Scutum*, it is ἄτερ φιλότητος ἐφιμέρου, "without sweet love", that Gaia gives birth to Pontus, and similarly the *Scutum* begins with Heracles being ἄτερ φιλότητος ἐφιμέρου (15) for his wife. Apollonius, on the other hand, uses it of the song of the Hesperides (4.1399), Ἑσπερίδες ποίπνυον, ἐφίμερον ἀείδουσαι, "the Hesperides were busy, chanting their lovely [song]". Importantly, the author of the eighth *Idyll* used it to describe the singing of Daphnis ἁδύ τι τὸ στόμα τευ καὶ ἐφίμερος ὦ Δάφνι φωνά "somehow sweet is your voice and, Daphnis, your tone is lovely". The precedence for the usage of this word seems to be Hesiod, but the context of Apollonius and the eighth *Idyll* give clues to how Theocritus interprets it. Hesiod uses it to describe a lack of love, which makes it a fitting allusion for the *Sorrows of Daphnis* and the subsequent Hellenistic usage suggests it can be applied to songs in general.[269] Perhaps, then, Theocritus takes the Hesiodic usage and multiplies its meaning by giving the generic sense of "pleasing" while maintaining epic allusiveness to divine and heroic action.

The final two lines of the goatherd remind us of the inherent ephemerality of song and, more importantly, the third vignette on the cup. It is there that the boy is similarly "on guard" against the foxes, so the goatherd tells Thyrsis to be "on guard" against a comparable threat for an oral singer (that of forgetfulness). The goatherd is not blind to the realities of life,[270] but is actually overly self-conscious and his insistence on "seizing the moment" provides an Epicurean

[267] Koopman 2018: 188.
[268] Search term "ἐφίμερ.*" in the PhiloLogic4 database under "Greek Texts".
[269] Apollonius' book four was certainly post-Theocritus.
[270] Gutzwiller 1991: 94.

charge to his conclusion.[271] The combination of the fact that the boy γαθεῖ "rejoices" and that he is on guard against a real threat suggests, in this metaphor the "plaiter", or as with Thyrsis the singer, must be cognizant of the realities of life and so indulge in the richness of song while there is still time. There is no larger goal that the goatherd exhorts Thyrsis to achieve, but to take pleasure in the act of recounting his ἐφίμερον ὕμνον.

[271] Purchase 2003: 98.

2.4.7 Conclusion

In the goatherd's ecphrasis, there has been a continuation of many of the themes and ideas introduced in the initial exchanges. There has been further exploitation of what are clearly Homeric and Hesiodic ideas recast and fitted to this peculiar world of herdsmen. Thyrsis is warned by the goatherd to be "on guard" as the boy was "on guard", and perhaps this piece of evidence gives most support to the argument that the boy ought to be interpreted in some way as a metaphor for poetic composition. The goatherd is thus not unaware of the reality of life, the danger of foxes and of Hades. Nevertheless, his concern with the moment is made clear through such a reference and reminds us of the Epicurean charge to these poems. The goatherd strives to elevate his cup above the archaic shields and humbly only alludes to its potential as a divine object, offering little help in achieving an understanding of the world he inhabits.

The three scenes on the cup combine to offer a catalogue of scenes from the world which the cup and its bearer inhabit. The Dionysiac setting betrays the importance of the third scene and the boy is given an emphatic amount of detail. There must be a suspension of readings that is so commonly bucolic, the boy literally is failing his task of guarding the vines while he is absorbed in a task that can be either functional (weaving a cage for pests) or metapoetic (unconcerned with reality and absorbed in his task). Like the two men competing in *epea*, the boy provides insight into the poetry representing it. At the very least, this is a childlike scene showing the boy has childish concerns, as befits the Alexandrian poet.

The scene of the old fisherman stands in contrast with the focus given to the physical strain of the old man as compared to the psychological themes of the other two scenes. Here we see the use of an additional tradition, though this time much more "real" than a literary ecphrasis ever could be. The popularity of a similar fisherman among Hellenistic art reminds the concern

with the association between contemporary tradition and trends with his own creation. At the same time, it is a near continuation of the fisherman motif from the *Shield of Heracles* by Pseudo-Hesiod. Such an appropriation of myth is central to the literary programme being offered, there will be traditionally neglected figures (as herdsmen or fishermen are) taken from the peripheries of epic and given central focus. The fisherman is any man hard at work and it is the focus on "little people" that is central to this realm.

The first scene most clearly parallels with the third to provide an even smaller frame than the plant images and requests do. The contest pictured here on the cup is meant to evoke the murder trial present on the *Shield of Achilles*. A similar reversal of an archaic epic theme is undertaken in replacing the trial with a frivolous contest between rival lovers, who nevertheless "labour in vain". The goatherd detaches most clearly when he enters the ecphrasis and offers what can only be his interpretation of the action taking place on the cup. He ascribes to his figures a psychology that could not be present in what is essentially pictorial art. His intention as composer is the hope that his audience will undertake the next step in interpretation and try to understand a larger meaning from his own intermediary interpretation. The blend between his concern for reality that also frames the ecphrasis confuses the potential to see the goatherd as allegorical and sophisticated. But, it is precisely this nature of challenging interpretation that is central to the creation of Theocritus. At this point in my reading there is a significant hint towards understanding the pastoral as "weaving the complex with the simple" as the goatherd seems to be able to play both parts most clearly demonstrated by this ecphrasis.

Part III: The Herdsman's Hero or *The Sorrows of Daphnis* 64-152

Chapter 5: Thyrsis' Opening and Daphnis' Visitors 64-114

3.5.1 Introduction

Prior to continuing and concluding my close reading, it is worthwhile to step back and consider the larger appropriation of traditions that is at play and becomes clearer through Thyrsis' song. Taking no significance away from the minute details and borrowings discussed in the previous two chapters, instead I will show that all these have been building up to an even larger juxtaposition of themes and traditions. For the significance of each Homeric epic, a brief return to Aristotle is necessary. Aristotle was the forerunner in understanding the *Iliad* as representative of *pathos* and the *Odyssey* as representative of *ēthos* (*Poetics* 1455b32, 1459b8); his successors all agreed that *ēthos* is inherently "less serious".[272] Certainly, *pathos* deals with extreme emotion and is seldom personal; *ēthos*, on the other hand, was chiefly understood to provide an inward focus on more "everyday" themes. It is easy then to draw the line from the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* to tragedy and comedy. So it shall be demonstrated, through a close reading of Thyrsis' song in connection with the first half of the poem, that Theocritus' broadest programmatic statement is that the bucolic is simultaneously tragic and comic, Iliadic and Odyssean, serious and ironic.[273]

[272] Halperin 1983: 239. Pseudo-Longinus argued this point most extensively, where he says that the transition of *Iliad* to *Odyssey* is a decline, "a sort of comedy of manners", Russel 1964: 95, 99.
[273] On *Poetics* 1459b14-15, see Halperin 1983: 239-43 and Gill 1984: 149-66. "The 'goat-song' of Pan will thus be as double as the god himself and the Aristotelian distinction between the *pathos* and *ēthos* of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*", Hunter 1999: 62.

While the goatherd rewrote the Homeric ecphrasis of the *Iliad*, the cup itself maintains a significant *Odyssean* interest focused on *ēthos*; it is, after all, a κισσύβιον (27).[274] Like the shield it offers a microcosm of its world.[275] Nevertheless, the clearest similarity to the *Odyssey* is the goatherd's concern for the so-called Ages of Man, associating the cup also with New Comedy.[276] Being a *nostos*, the *Odyssey* is inherently more personal than the *Iliad*, focused on an individual's return to his *oikos*. Similarly, it highlights the individual responsibility of both Telemachus and Odysseus in restoring order to their *oikos*; it is no coincidence that Odysseus is the only one of his crew to survive. As the *Odyssey* focuses on the process of maturing and the duties of the matured, so does the cup offer insight into universal stages of development. The *Shield of Achilles*, on the other hand, while offering a universalizing image, shows little concern for the reality of individuals in any particular stage of life.

The emphasis provided by post-Aristotelian scholars on the fact that comedies were realistic and concerned with *ēthos*, while tragedies dealt with the opposite, can provide insight into Theocritus' depiction of "little people".[277] As with New Comedy, the goatherd depicts on the cup a "manifest fiction":[278] the figures on the cup are based in reality but it is nonetheless fictitious. Theocritus is more willing than the writers of New Comedy to develop the irony inherent in attempting to imitate reality while openly creating an entirely new world right before the audience's eyes.[279] The psychology and motives provided in the first and third scenes of the cup represent both real life and the fictional world in which they are contained. Theocritus most

[274] See Gow, Hunter ad. loc. At *Od.* 9.346 a κισσύβιον is used by the Cyclops and at *Od.* 14.78 by Eumaeus.
[275] Hardie 1985: 11-31 on the shield; Hunter 1999: 77 "the cup offers a view of the wider world against which the limited concerns of 'bucolic' poetry are played out".
[276] Hunter 1999: 77 and Ettin 1984: 116.
[277] "The dedication of Theocritus to depicting the *ēthos* of humble folk and of everyday life imparts a comic design to his work…" Halperin 1983: 241-2. Auerbach 1953: 31 "everything commonly realistic, everything pertaining to everyday life, must not be treated on any level except the comic…"
[278] Payne 2007: 38.
[279] And, unlike epic, "erotic entanglements must be treated with neither awe nor wonder, as Homer is inclined to treat them, but only with distance, humour, and irony", Halperin 1983: 243.

clearly exploits this contrast in the third scene via the metapoetic hint that the poet is like the distracted boy at ease in a vineyard; the Dionysiac setting only strengthens a tragi-comic interpretation. While the boy is like the poet, the boy is still "real" (as are the other characters) but in his pure representative force lies his fictionality.[280]

The tradition behind the figure of Daphnis is mysterious in and of itself, much like the version sung by Thyrsis in this poem, where the vague reference to his death has eternally stirred critics.[281] It is certainly the case that Theocritus, as he has been shown to do already,[282] reappropriates the myth with little concern for precedence and moulds it for his own purposes.[283] The plane of reality within which Daphnis exists is, similarly to the cup, separated from that of the herdsmen themselves yet simultaneously represents them and their world. Thyrsis' song is both an example of bucolic song and also an example of the archetypal poet-herdsman whom Thyrsis and his colleagues presumably are supposed to learn from or, at least, seek to understand.[284] Mostly this song depicts "heroic stubbornness",[285] his hopeless and seemingly erotic passion and his relationship with the Nymphs and countryside. It is likely the case that as the cup portrays vignettes of scenes focalizing *ēthos* so does the story of Daphnis focalize *pathos*.

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[280] Theocritus adapts the vineyard scene from *Il.* 18.561-62, yet the inward focus on the absorption of the boy and its force as representing the poet is chiefly concerned with Odyssean *ēthos*, Heerink 2015: 61-62.

[281] Segal 1981: 25-46, focalizes the issue around the symbolism of water, also ibid. 50-53 where Daphnis the "hero" dies unlike ordinary "oxherds". See also White (1977) 578-79, who argues Daphnis is punished by Aphrodite and dies in the manner of Hylas cf. Call. *Epigr.* 22 where Astakiadas has been "snatched from the mountain by a Nymph". According to Hutchinson 1988: 149, Daphnis refuses to satisfy his love for a mortal girl and drowns in the Nymphs' pool as revenge for breaking his oath of chastity. Citing Van Erp Taalman Kip 1987: 249-51, Hunter 1999: 67 insists "the watery nature of his end…seems to point to a specific narrative and not *simply* to be an elaborate way of saying 'went to the underworld'" and suggests the place of his death was marked by a spring.

[282] In addition to my own discussion of this poem, a good example is *Idyll* Eight where Pseudo-Theocritus "recreates the age in terms of choric lyric", Cairns 1984: 109.

[283] Here to provide an example of the "heroic" world of the herdsmen. See Lawall 1967: 19 and Hunter 1999: 64-68 and Hunter 1983: 22-31 on the other ancient sources that mention Daphnis and a discussion of some principal secondary sources.

[284] In the way that any Greek may have been meant to treat any hero.

[285] Lawall 1967: 20 uses this term to of both Daphnis and Aeschylus' Prometheus.

Lastly, before resuming my line-by-line analysis, gaining a complete understanding of the role of the Homeric epics in creating the quintessential dichotomy of bucolic can be attained by focusing on the central figure of Achilles and his similarity, and difference, to, Daphnis.[286] Achilles' κλέος of course costs him κῆδος[287] and the *Iliad*, at least up until Book 16 (when Patroclus is killed), could easily be titled something like the ἄλγεα of Achilles.[288] The difference between the "heroic stubbornness" of the two is that Daphnis ἄνυε πικρὸν ἔρωτα, καὶ ἐς τέλος ἄνυε μοίρας, "bore his bitter love, he bore it until its fated end" (93), and this distinguishing feature may even elevate him over Achilles, as Daphnis truly never gives up. The simplest connection is that they are both immortalized through poetry. Both "heroes" provide the most extreme display of emotion and undertake feats that the average person, including Thyrsis and the goatherd, only fantasize about. To be sure, Achilles has long been recognized as imperfect[289] and so too Daphnis: those who suffer some love sickness certainly may feel like dying but Daphnis actually does succumb to it. So it may very well be that Daphnis is the bucolic Achilles, or at least *the* bucolic hero in the same sense that Achilles is *the* heroic warrior.

In addition to the traditions discussed in the previous two chapters, namely the relationship with archaic epic and Alexandrian poetics, there seems to be a broader juxtaposition of different points of view. The goatherd appropriates the shield ecphrasis of the *Iliad* yet in his ecphrasis is concerned mostly with Odyssean themes and ideas. In the middle of the cup, there is a clear concern for contemporary trends in the plastic arts in addition to the concern for "reality" that links the fisherman scene with a concern for *ēthos*. The song of Daphnis, as we read through

[286] This most interesting observation was first mentioned by Cairns 1984: 110-13
[287] *Od.* 8.73,75 where an example of κλέα ἀνδρῶν is the νεῖκος Ὀδυσσῆος καὶ Πηλεΐδεω Ἀχιλῆος "the glories of men…the quarrel of Odysseus and Peliad Achilles"; 9.15 Odysseus says *κήδε*᾽ ἐπεί μοι πολλὰ δόσαν θεοὶ Οὐρανίωνες. "for the heavenly gods have given me many pains". Cairns 1979: 201.
[288] As the etymology of his name might suggest. ἄχος λαῶν "the people's sorrow".
[289] See, for example, Richardson 1980: 273.

the remainder of the poem, will provide a balancing concern for *pathos* as represented by the intense emotion suffered by the quintessential poet-herdsman. Perhaps it is that as ancient Greeks at large were concerned with the characterization of Achilles and understanding his motives so do our herdsman treat their own, bucolic, hero.

3.5.2 Invocation to the Muses 64-69

Θύρσις
Ἄρχετε βουκολικᾶς, Μοῖσαι φίλαι, ἄρχετ' ἀοιδᾶς.
Θύρσις ὅδ' ὠξ Αἴτνας, καὶ Θύρσιδος ἁδέα φωνά.
πῆ ποκ' ἄρ' ἦσθ', ὅκα Δάφνις ἐτάκετο, πῆ ποκα, Νύμφαι;
ἦ κατὰ Πηνειῶ καλὰ τέμπεα, ἢ κατὰ Πίνδω;
οὐ γὰρ δὴ ποταμοῖο μέγαν ῥόον εἴχετ' Ἀνάπω,
οὐδ' Αἴτνας σκοπιάν, οὐδ' Ἄκιδος ἱερὸν ὕδωρ.

Thyrsis
Begin, dear Muses, begin the bucolic song.
I am Thrysis from Etna, and sweet is the voice of Thrysis. Wherever were you when Daphnis was melting, wherever were you, O Nymphs? Either in the lovely valleys of Peneios? Or by Pindos? For surely you were not by the great stream of the river Anapos, nor Etna, the lookout, nor the holy brook of Acis.

Similarly to the "Opening Exchange" (1-11) of this *Idyll* the concern for euphony, punctuated by three threnodic refrains,[290] is difficult to ignore in Thyrsis' opening. The refrains structure the *Sorrows of Daphnis* into sixteen stanzas where we can imagine a chorus chanting the refrain in unison, using the variations of the refrain as a *guide mélodique* marking *la progression du récit*.[291] Though a *sphragis* most commonly would end poems, especially the in the Homeric Hymns,[292] Thyrsis' choice to begin with reference to his own ἁδέα φωνά reminds us of the continued display of a poetic program. The choice to include a *sphragis* should not be treated as insignificant, especially in light of my elucidation of the varying traditions at play in this poem. The juxtaposition of a refrain followed by a *sphragis* is really juxtaposing two traditions: the oral and literary. The inclusion of a *sphragis* seems to have specific significance in marking the text as permanent, at least insofar as something *written* would remain permanent in the ancient manuscript tradition. This is perhaps demonstrated in the *sphragis* of Theognis (*IEG*[2]

[290] Smyth 1906: cxx – cxxviii discusses the *threnos* and the *epikedeion*. Smyth states "the singing was responsive: first the men, then the women; while the refrain was wailed by the entire company" cxxii, citing Eur. *Andr*. 93-95 ἐμπέφυκε γὰρ | γυναιξὶ τέρψις τῶν παρεστώτων κακῶν | ἀνὰ στόμ' ἀεὶ καὶ διὰ γλώσσης ἔχειν, "for there is an enjoyment borne into women: having present evils always in their mouth and on their tongue" trans. is my own.
[291] Donnet 1988: 169. The other variations punctuate a shift in the poems, see 3.5.5 and Aphrodite, for example.
[292] See Capponi 2003: 9-35. Or the ending to Virgil's *Georgics* 4.559-66, Kyriakidis 2002: 275-89.

19).[293] The push and pull between the display of what seem like pre-literate herdsmen and the clear concern for textuality is signalled to continue with the song of Thyrsis.

The rhetorical question asked of the Nymphs is certainly an urgent request, marked by the interjection ἄρ'.[294] The rhyme of Πηνειῶ… Πίνδω… Ἀνάπω, the alliteration of pi and kappa throughout and the assonance of Ἀνάπω … Αἴτνας… Ἄκιδος aid in creating a touch of "mythic distance".[295] Τέμπεα certainly was used in later poetry as a generic marker of a "lovely valley", but at this point Theocritus may have also had in mind the literal Tempe: the last part of the journey through the Pindos range and into the sea between Olympos and Ossa.[296] Thyrsis ironically suggests that the Nymphs were in *cool* valleys or ranges while Daphnis *melted* away:[297] he seems to hold the Nymphs in contempt. His move from the ranges of northern Greece to those in southern Italy suggests the interconnectedness between the rural "lovely valleys" of Greece and those around Theocritus' native Syracuse.[298] Thyrsis' euphony and rhetorical questions develop the mythic quality of his world; the Nymphs, being markers of life in general,[299] must have been absent when the mythical Daphnis died. Thyrsis displays one element of nature at odds with another: the Nymphs neglected Daphnis, but the "rolling hills of rural Greece… sympathize with Daphnis' distress".[300]

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[293] Text in Edmunds 1931: fr. 19. Textual concerns discussed by Pratt 1995: 171-185.
[294] Hunter 1999: 88. Denniston 1952: 39-40. LSJ s.v. B2. οὐ γὰρ behaves similarly see Denniston 1952: 77-79. "It is not so much an answer as a show of indignation", Payne 2007: 41.
[295] Segal 1981: 216.
[296] Hunter 1999: 88.
[297] Ibid. A clear reference to the fact that there are tears in his eyes.
[298] Details like this may be indicative of Theocritus' desire to "[strike] a nostalgic note for the Greek audience in Alexandria removed from the traditional 'old world' culture of Greece and Sicily", Kaloudis 2017: 210. Zanker 1987: 19-25 makes this argument giving the example of Praxinoa's and Gorgo's pride for the native Syracuse in *Idyll* Five. Stephens 2003: 7 takes issue with this and argues instead for a syncretism between Greek and Egyptian cultures, but it difficult to see many instances of Egyptian culture penetrating the *Idylls*.
[299] Gutzwiller 1991: 96-8.
[300] The mood that is generated through the euphony of these lines suggests a "sound painting" (Rosenmeyer 1969: 153) that "sketches an impressionistic vision in the mind of the listener", Kaloudis 2017: 226.

3.5.3 The Pathetic Fallacy 70-75

ἄρχετε βουκολικᾶς, Μοῖσαι φίλαι, ἄρχετ' ἀοιδᾶς.	70	*Begin, dear Muses, begin the bucolic song.*
τῆνον μὰν θῶες, τῆνον λύκοι ὠρύσαντο,		For him the jackals, for him the wolves,
τῆνον χὠκ δρυμοῖο λέων ἔκλαυσε θανόντα.		wailed, and for him the lions of the thicket even cried at his death.
ἄρχετε βουκολικᾶς, Μοῖσαι φίλαι, ἄρχετ' ἀοιδᾶς.		*Begin, dear Muses, begin the bucolic song.*
πολλαί οἱ πὰρ ποσσὶ βόες, πολλοὶ δέ τε ταῦροι,		Many oxen and many bulls, still many
πολλαὶ δὲ δαμάλαι καὶ πόρτιες ὠδύραντο.	75	heifers and calves howled at his feet.

The phenomenon of the "pathetic fallacy" is employed here by Thyrsis.[301] A definition of the pathetic fallacy could be something along the lines of "an illusion, more or less real, that the inanimate world is possessed of human feeling".[302] In some cases, as here, animals are also involved: an example of wild and domestic animals weeping for the death of a herdsman was provided at the dawn of the epic tradition by Gilgamesh himself.[303] What is common to any example of the pathetic fallacy is that "when a poet imparts human feelings to natural objects, he is actually reverting to a mythical past…".[304] So here Thyrsis continues to develop the mythical world of Daphnis to reiterate what may be a naïve sense of oneness that was prominently displayed in the first 28 lines. Not only does the lions' "wailing at [Daphnis'] death" ascribe to nature "human feeling", but as a recitation of them reveals, the lines with their many slow spondees both imitate animalistic howling and evoke the solemnity fit for a *threnos*.[305] Once again a concern for projection into a cloudy mythical past and a euphonic, perhaps even textual,[306] recreation of a traditional phenomenon.

[301] The principal work on the topic is Copley 1937. Cf. also Dick 1968 and Buller 1981.
[302] Copley 1937: 194.
[303] Sandars trans. 1960: 91. "O Enkidu, the wild ass and the gazelle | that were father and mother, | all four-footed creatures who fed with you | weep with you…".
[304] Dick 1968: 30. Though these lines in particular were skipped over in this article.
[305] Hunter 1999: 89 "the verses [71-2] imitate the mournful howling of the animals". Kaloudis 2017: 226, "The slow meter and deep vowels of the language invoke a mournful longing. This meter adds to the emotional realism of the scene, as the long spondees mimic the slow procession of a dirge".
[306] In her article, Naomi Kaloudis (2017: 212-13) concludes that music was likely somewhat supplanted by more sonorous words that could be said musically by an unaccompanied poet in a royal court.

The opening to Thyrsis' song also contrasts the absence of the Nymphs with the presence of the domestic and wild animals. The introduction to this (re)telling of the myth thus indicates that it is not a sequence of events: the animals mourn for Daphnis because he has already died, yet we will soon hear him speak. It is rather that our singer forces a perspective that seeks to understand what it is about Daphnis that resulted in such an incongruous relationship with nature.[307] The answer to the question posed by Thyrsis, namely what led to this result, is what forms the main portion of the *Sorrows of Daphnis*. It seems that Thyrsis will continue to balance a concern for both what is new and what is traditional.

[307] Gutzwiller 1991: 97 and Buller 1981: 37.

3.5.4 Daphnis' Visitors 76-94

ἄρχετε βουκολικᾶς, Μοῖσαι φίλαι, ἄρχετ' ἀοιδᾶς.	*Begin, dear Muses, begin the bucolic song.*
ἦνθ' Ἑρμῆς πράτιστος ἀπ᾽ ὤρεος, εἶπε δέ· "Δάφνι,	Hermes came first from the mountains and
τίς τυ κατατρύχει; τίνος ὤγαθὲ τόσσον ἔρασαι;"	said: "Daphnis why are you so exhausted?
	Whom, good man, are you so in love with?"
ἄρχετε βουκολικᾶς, Μοῖσαι φίλαι, ἄρχετ' ἀοιδᾶς.	*Begin, dear Muses, begin the bucolic song.*
ἦνθον τοὶ βοῦται, τοὶ ποιμένες, ᾠπόλοι ἦνθον·	In came the oxherds, the shepherds, in came
πάντες ἀνηρώτευν τί πάθοι κακόν. ἦνθ᾽ ὁ Πρίηπος	the goatherds. All asked what evil he suffered.
κἤφα "Δάφνι τάλαν, τί τὺ τάκεαι, ἁ δέ τε κώρα	Priapos came and said "wretched Daphnis, why
πάσας ἀνὰ κράνας, πάντ᾽ ἄλσεα ποσσὶ φορεῖται —	are you melting? Your girl runs all around the springs and the groves on foot—
ἄρχετε βουκολικᾶς, Μοῖσαι φίλαι, ἄρχετ' ἀοιδᾶς —	*Begin, dear Muses, begin the bucolic song —*
ζάτεισ᾽· ἆ δύσερώς τις ἄγαν καὶ ἀμήχανος ἐσσί.	Seeking you out. Ah, wretch in love, so very
βούτας μὰν ἐλέγευ, νῦν δ᾽ αἰπόλῳ ἀνδρὶ ἔοικας.	cruel to you. You were indeed called a
ᾠπόλος ὅκκ᾽ ἐσορῇ τὰς μηκάδας οἷα βατεῦνται,	cowman, but now you are just like a goatherd
τάκεται ὀφθαλμώς ὅτι οὐ τράγος αὐτὸς ἔγεντο.	man. A goatherd, when he sees they mount the bleating she-goats, melts in his eyes, since he was not born a goat.
ἄρχετε βουκολικᾶς, Μοῖσαι φίλαι, ἄρχετ' ἀοιδᾶς.	*Begin, dear Muses, begin the bucolic song.*
καὶ τὺ δ᾽ ἐπεί κ᾽ ἐσορῇς τὰς παρθένος οἷα γελᾶντι,	And when you see the maidens, how they
τάκεαι ὀφθαλμώς ὅτι οὐ μετὰ ταῖσι χορεύεις."	laugh, you melt in your eyes, since you are not
τὼς δ᾽ οὐδὲν ποτελέξαθ᾽ ὁ βουκόλος, ἀλλὰ τὸν αὐτῶ	dancing with them". The cowherd answered
ἄνυε πικρὸν ἔρωτα, καὶ ἐς τέλος ἄνυε μοίρας.	with nothing, but bore his bitter love, he bore it until its fated end.

That Hermes comes "from the mountains" is not surprising,[308] he is also the first to visit and able to guess (as far as we can tell) correctly the nature of Daphnis' trouble. Hermes was the father of Pan and similarly credited with the creation of the *syrinx* (*Hymn Hom. Merc.* 511-12), further he, like Priapus, was commonly depicted as ithyphallic.[309] It seems the erotic divinities who visit Daphnis are placed in an ascending order. Hermes and Priapus are perhaps the cruder divinities, or rather they offer the most straightforward interpretation of Daphnis' situation. Strengthening this approach is that Daphnis does not actually engage in a dialogue with anyone except for Aphrodite. Any conclusion that could be drawn from the interaction with Hermes and

[308] Many gods, including Hermes, had their own *oros*. For Hermes see Paus. 8.36.8 for others see Buxton 1993: 87.
[309] Hunter 1999: 90. The passage at *Od*. 8.338-42 where Hermes professes his desire to sleep with Aphrodite, is provided by Hunter as an example of his "straightforward view of sexual passion".

Priapus alone would seem like Daphnis was simply acting melodramatically to his harmless situation.

Daphnis' peers are of no use in gaining insight and while there is more information provided by the speech of Priapus there is little he seems to understand.[310] First, Hermes asks and assumes that Daphnis' grief has something to do with Eros; then, Priapus expands on this and explains his own confusion –[311] the "girl" (ἁ κώρα, 82) is "seeking [Daphnis] out" (ζάτεισ', 85) and Priapus cannot comprehend why Daphnis does not simply give in to his love.[312] This is the most difficult element of the retelling of the myth of Daphnis in this poem, namely that it is unclear based on the text alone why exactly Daphnis refuses to give in to his desire. It is difficult to understand his situation as one that is expressly unrequited,[313] rather it is more so that he desires someone that he is prevented from loving due to his vow of chastity,[314] or, perhaps because it is too dangerous.[315] It is clear that the word in line 97 κατεύχεο has its usual meaning of "vow" and not "boast";[316] Daphnis certainly made a vow as per the traditional myth, but the nature of the vow is not made clear. Convincingly, it has been argued that Daphnis desires Aphrodite herself based on comparison with near-eastern figures like Adonis.[317] Whatever the

[310] Gutzwiller 1991: 97-98. Lawall 1967: 23 also argues there is more than Priapus understands, however for him it is because Priapus cannot grasp a vow of chastity.
[311] "Hermes raised the question 'who?' and, unless the poet is being deliberately obscure, it is natural to take Priapus' remark as the answer", Gutzwiller 1991: 97.
[312] "If he is dying because of his resistance to love rather than because of an excessive indulgence in it or excessive desire, Priapus would hardly be the god to understand that" Segal 1981: 36.
[313] Because the question that Priapus asked must still be raised.
[314] Ogilive (1962): 106-107 and Schmidt 1968: 540-41 survey early scholarship on this point. Earlier commentators often tried to align Thyrsis' song and the traditional myth. The legend and ancient sources are summarized both by Gow 1952: 1-2 and Hunter 1999: 64-66. Williams 1969, makes the argument that the κώρα is the princess that seduced Daphnis and now he is being punished for breaking his oath of chastity to the Nymphs, here the "maidens" παρθένος (90).
[315] The remark by Priapus that compares Daphnis to a goatherd who longs to be a goat (87-88) analogizes the situation to mean that what Daphnis wants seems impossible, despite mutual desire.
[316] Gutzwiller 1991: 98, Cholmeley 1919 *ad loc.*; Ott 1969: 125-26. Cited as "boast" *ad loc.* LSJ.
[317] Anagnostou and Konstan 2008: 492-527.

exact nature of Daphnis' death in this rendition of the myth it is clear Theocritus appropriates the traditional story and only selectively applies traditional details to his version.[318]

The arguments that attempt to align the Daphnis of Thyrsis' song with tradition all are reliant heavily on the lines spoken by Priapus.[319] Elsewhere in the poem there are no noticeable allusions to any other version of the myth as we know it.[320] As mentioned, many commentators note that Priapus does not seem to *get* Daphnis' situation,[321] further, his view of erotic affairs is noted as "straightforward".[322] Finally, that Daphnis does not even respond to Priapus' long line of questioning is perhaps meant to cast doubt on the accuracy of his guesses.[323] As in the earlier portion of the poem there were instances of juxtapositions between sophisticated and functional interpretations, so here it very much seems that Hermes and Priapus offer interpretations of Daphnis that could be seen as simpler or adhering to the traditional myth while the Daphnis of this telling is really undergoing something quite more complex and elusive, beyond the ithyphallic deities' comprehension. Considering that Priapus parallels Daphnis' situation with the desire of goats, "animals whose satisfaction of their natural drives is uncomplicated and free of emotion",[324] seems to suggest most strongly the balancing of traditional and new or simple and complex interpretations of Daphnis.

[318] "The very mystery of Daphnis' end may be the most essential element in the poem…the essential fact remains that within the narrative which the poem itself provides; Daphnis feels himself at odds with Aphrodite", Segal 1981: 36. It is also significant that such an approach to mythology is of course highly lyrical, providing substance to the argument that Theocritus is writing lyrical hexameters.
[319] "…the assumption underlying all of this [i.e., aligning the traditional myth with Thyrsis' version] is that Priapus knows what is really going on and is accurately representing it here in the text", Zimmerman 1994: 35.
[320] Segal 1981: 35.
[321] For example, Lawall 1967: 23, Gutzwiller 1991: 97-98 and ibid.
[322] Hunter 1999: 90. Consider how he analogizes the simple sex lives of goats (87-8).
[323] Zimmerman 1994: 35.
[324] Bernsdorf 2011: 192. Perhaps of the type that Hermes and Priapus are used to.

A further issue with interpretations attempting to find parallels to the traditional story of Daphnis is that they all fail to satisfyingly account for the maidens that Priapus mentions.[325] The Nymphs are never παρθένοι,[326] so it is difficult to see them straightforwardly as the Nymphs. It is here that is important to not lose sight of part of what makes Daphnis a suitable subject for this song, namely that he was a *poet*-herdsman. We see him here wasting away, whether because of his commitment to a Nymph (and perhaps nature itself)[327] or some entanglement with Aphrodite.[328] Either way, it seems clear that he suffers from intense passion that cannot be fulfilled. Priapus' comment on the παρθένοι is a reminder of what Daphnis so often would do, that is, perform music and dance. The shadow of his fatal erotic passion is cast over the importance of his art and the only time it is mentioned explicitly is in his farewell that is certainly παθητικός (128-30). The significance of his position as a singer and entertainer, however, is emphasized. For example, his pipe has "breath like honey" (128) and he is "dear to the Muses" (141). Daphnis is dragged to Hades because of his intense erotic passion and in doing so he abandons his pipe and "enacts a tragic union of art and death".[329] It is then not that the maidens need to be identified with any girls in particular, but that being a poet-herdsman they may have once been his audience to whom he would sing and pipe.

Before concluding this section with a note on how Thyrsis balances the illusion that he is an oral poet with his Alexandrian concern for euphony, I would like to return to the idea of Daphnis as a tragic hero and the concern for *pathos* within Thyrsis' song. Whether or not the exact reason as to *why* Daphnis retains a "heroic stubbornness" is known, it is certain that he,

[325] Williams 1969: 123 argues that since "dancing is the Nymphs' characteristic activity" these "maidens" are to be the Nymphs. He does not address why there would be more than one if this were following the traditional story.
[326] Segal 1981: 35. See also 34-38 for expansion on some points raised in this paragraph.
[327] Gutzwiller 1991: 99. Cf. also Pind. *Pyth.* 4.14-15.
[328] "The evidence of the poem reveals clearly that Aphrodite failed to reciprocate the passion of Daphnis", Anagnostou and Konstan 2008: 498.
[329] Segal 1981: 37.

like Prometheus or Hippolytus or even Achilles,[330] remains committed to his vow. Further, it was noted in the introduction to Thyrsis' song that Daphnis clearly has a special relationship with nature and the Nymphs in some mysterious way; this relationship with nature puts him on par with figures such as Orpheus. Finally, the procession of individuals is reminiscent of both Prometheus and Cassandra in Aeschylus, as they too greet their visitors with silence.[331] Rather than hear about how the story goes, Thyrsis' song gives us a "glimpse at the internal struggle" that Daphnis endured.[332] In this sense Daphnis' figure is παθητικός; still, the opportunity to see in the details provided by Thyrsis a nearly divine relationship between Daphnis, nature, and the Nymphs provides him with that quintessential heroic quality of commitment to a code of values.[333]

Finally, in this section, Thyrsis still sounds both Hellenistic, but nevertheless also like an oral poet.[334] Repetition has already been demonstrated to be a feature of this poem, still the use of sounds in 87-91[335] in combination with repetition is once again employed to weave textual and Hellenistic ideals about euphony with a sound pattern that makes the composition seem to have been composed orally.[336] The lines are worth repeating in isolation:

87-91[337]

A ὠπόλος ὅκκ᾽ ἐσορῇ τὰς μηκάδας οἷα βατεῦνται,	"A goatherd, when he sees they mount the
B τάκεται ὀφθαλμώς, ὅτι οὐ τράγος αὐτὸς ἔγεντο.	bleating she-goats, he melts in his eyes, since he

[330] Lawall 1967: 14-33 on Prometheus and Hippolytus. Cairns 1984: 110-113 on Achilles.
[331] Parry 1957: 11 and Lawall 1967: 20.
[332] Gutzwiller 1991: 99.
[333] Cf. ibid.
[334] "Oral composition often consists of linguistic patterning in the form of repeated words and phrases that perform an aesthetic and utilitarian function", Kaloudis 2017: 216.
[335] Compare also ἦνθον… ἦνθον… ἦνθ᾽ (80-81). "The repeated verb [i.e., ἦνθον] imitates a Homeric mannerism", Hunter 1990: 90. Cf. *Od.* 3.430-35, 8.322-23 (the gods coming to laugh at Ares and Aphrodite).
[336] Demetrius of Phalerum (ca. 355-280 B.C.), for example, writes ἔχει γάρ τινα ἡ λύσις καὶ ἡ σύγκρουσις οἷον ᾠδὴν ἐπιγινομένην, "for the resolution and combining [of vowels] have something like the occurrence of song" *Eloc*. 70 (trans. Kaloudis 2017: 214). For the date of the author of *De Elocutione* see Porter 2011: 281. Despite some objections about the date Gutzwiller 2007: 206 still argues it displays "Hellenistic critical thinking about literary style".
[337] Further parallel can be found in the reference to Daphnis being a cowherd in lines 86 and 92 adding a link between the stanzas.

	was not born a goat.
C *ἄρχετε βουκολικᾶς Μοῖσαι φίλαι ἄρχετ' ἀοιδᾶς.*	*Begin, dear Muses, begin the bucolic song.*
A καὶ τὺ δ' ἐπεί κ' ἐσορῇς τὰς παρθένος οἷα γελᾶντι,	And when you see the maidens, how they laugh,
B τάκεαι ὀφθαλμώς, ὅτι οὐ μετὰ ταῖσι χορεύεις.'	you melt in your eyes, since you are not dancing with them"

The metre of the lines that flank the refrain (87-88, 90-91) is the same (viz. -uu -uu -||- -uu -uu - x / -uu -- -||uu -uu||-uu -x)[338] creating not a simple chiastic structure ABCBA, but ABCAB that nevertheless centers around the refrain. The goatherd is juxtaposed with "you", referring to Daphnis; so the she-goats with the maidens; the subject of the verbs beginning 88 and 91 are the goatherd and Daphnis, respectively; finally, the two causal clauses also juxtapose the wish of the goatherd to be a goat with the wish of Daphnis to be dancing. Further, while not quite literally enjambed, the other two stanzas are also of equal length and there more literally enjambed with each other.[339] In each B line the ὀφθαλμώς both slows down the meter and appears before the principal caesura. Priapus' stanzas do seem isolated from the rest as the section that begins Aphrodite's visit is punctuated by a change in the refrain.

The use of repetition in this section and the highly emphatic juxtaposition in these lines between Daphnis and the goatherd are clearly intentional. The idea that Daphnis is "just like a goatherd" (…νῦν δ' αἰπόλῳ ἀνδρὶ ἔοικας, 86) is central to Priapus' speech. Once again, this gives insight into Priapus' idea for a solution to Daphnis' problem: he conjectures that Daphnis, like a goatherd who could never be a goat, longs for something he cannot have. Further, Daphnis, who assimilated himself to the natural world of goats and woods, now longs for the human sexual pleasures he cannot have – for whatever reason. Finally, the comparison in emotion, that each "melts in [their] eyes" must mean something along the lines of "cry".[340] Nevertheless,

[338] Where / = line break and || = caesura or diaereses.
[339] Linking these stanzas is also the verb τήκω.
[340] Giangrande 1977: 180 n. 9.

Priapus does not understand and so there is no reply for the goatherd to make.[341] The scholia to this passage seem to think chiefly in terms of the "bucolic hierarchy", though here in expressly sexual terms, to explain the reproach that constitutes "you are like a goatherd": οἱ μὴν γὰρ βουκόλοι πρὸς τὴν τῶν ἀφροδισίων μῖξιν ἐγκρατεῖς, τοὐναντίον δὲ λαγνότατοι οἱ αἰπόλοι (Σa), "in matters of love the cowherds are in control of themselves, on the other hand goatherds are most lecherous".[342] This is presumably because of the behavior of their respective animals and probably not indicative of much more as evidence for the hierarchy in Theocritus is difficult to fully understand – if there is one at all. It is likely that the sexuality of goats is probably relevant here and that Priapus means to say that Daphnis is acting out of line with his usual nature for a reason he cannot comprehend.

So Thyrsis continues to provide evidence that would suggest his song is a traditional oral and perhaps even a pre-literate composition. Nevertheless, his concern for the particularly Hellenistic sensibility for things like the resolution of vowels is still prevalent. The use of repetition not only contributes to this dual oral-textual euphony but also to the characterization of the bucolic world and the fact that things are out of order now that Daphnis is wasting away. The Nymphs are absent, wild and domestic animals mourn, and neither of the rustic shades of Aphrodite, represented through the ithyphallic gods, are able to provide much insight into the struggle of Daphnis, only observations of it. These observations nevertheless serve to characterize Daphnis as both heroic, providing him with the opportunity to remain silent and not explain his stubbornness, as well as a general bucolic figure who stands in close connection with nature. When Priapus compares his upset passion to an impossible desire to be free from the cares of the very human condition of Eros, he understands Daphnis' trouble in terms he can

[341] Gutzwiller 1991: 98.
[342] Reed 2010: 247.

relate to. The first perspectives offered on Daphnis then are two that paint him in terms of *pathos*, if these were the only perspectives provided the case for him as a tragic or heroic could hardly be proved. The juxtaposition of simple perspectives of herdsmen with the complex perspective put forth in the scene between Daphnis and Aphrodite serves to also characterize bucolic: in these poems we will find a reconciliation between high and low, complex and simple, and all the other dichotomies mentioned thus far in this thesis.

A further continuation of the trends noticed earlier in the poem is provided by the treatment of the traditional material from the myth. As has been noted, there are only a few surviving accounts and they mostly do not align with the telling here by Thyrsis.[343] Theocritus clearly does not write poetry that is straightforwardly understood, this was demonstrated by the confusing details we are perhaps meant to imagine on the cup. The mystery of Daphnis' situation parallels that of his death and the tradition that Theocritus appears to be writing in. The point, thus far in Thyrsis' song, does not seem to be *what* happened to Daphnis or even *why* it did, but rather simply that it *did happen* and that there must have been a special relationship between this herdsman, the Nymphs, nature and even Aphrodite (not least because he suffers from Eros).

[343] Again see, for example, Hunter's summary of the tradition Hunter 1999: 64-66 and, for example, the attempt by Williams 1969: 121-23 to align the myth with the poem.

3.5.5 Cypris 95-113

ἄρχετε βουκολικᾶς, Μοῖσαι, πάλιν ἄρχετ' ἀοιδᾶς.	*Begin, Muses, begin again the bucolic song.*
ἦνθέ γε μὰν ἀδεῖα καὶ ἁ Κύπρις γελάοισα,	Cypris came sweetly delighted, delighted
λάθρη μὲν γελάοισα, βαρὺν δ' ἀνὰ θυμὸν ἔχοισα,	inwardly, yet she showed anger and said
κεἶπε "τύ θην τὸν Ἔρωτα κατεύχεο Δάφνι λυγιξεῖν·	"surely, Daphnis, you do not vow to be on
ἦ ῥ' οὐκ αὐτὸς Ἔρωτος ὑπ' ἀργαλέω ἐλυγίχθης";	the verge of mastering love? Isn't it you who was mastered by grievous love?"
ἄρχετε βουκολικᾶς, Μοῖσαι, πάλιν ἄρχετ' ἀοιδᾶς.	*Begin, Muses, begin again the bucolic song.*
τὰν δ' ἄρα χὠ Δάφνις ποταμείβετο· "Κύπρι βαρεῖα,	And then Daphnis replied "heavy Cypris,
Κύπρι νεμεσσατά, Κύπρι θνατοῖσιν ἀπεχθής,	Cypris with a vengance, Cypris hated by
ἤδη γὰρ φράσδῃ πάνθ' ἅλιον ἄμμι δεδύκειν;	mortals, do you mean that my last sun has
Δάφνις κὴν Ἀΐδα κακὸν ἔσσεται ἄλγος Ἔρωτι.	already set? Daphnis even in Hades will be a grievous pain to love".
ἄρχετε βουκολικᾶς, Μοῖσαι, πάλιν ἄρχετ' ἀοιδᾶς.	*Begin, Muses, begin again the bucolic song.*
οὐ λέγεται τὰν Κύπριν ὁ βουκόλος; ἔρπε ποτ' Ἴδαν,	So the cowherd said to Cypris "off to Ida, off
ἔρπε ποτ' Ἀγχίσην· τηνεῖ δρύες, ἔνθα κύπειρος,	to Anchises. In the spot with trees, there the
αἱ δὲ καλὸν βομβεῦντι ποτὶ σμάνεσσι μέλισσαι.	cypress and the bees buzz charmingly in their hives
ἄρχετε βουκολικᾶς, Μοῖσαι, πάλιν ἄρχετ' ἀοιδᾶς.	*Begin, Muses, begin again the bucolic song.*
ὡραῖος χὤδωνις, ἐπεὶ καὶ μᾶλα νομεύει.	Adonis too in his prime, since he's pasturing
καὶ πτῶκας βάλλει καὶ θηρία πάντα διώκει.	his sheep. Both the hares he hunts and all the wild beasts he chases.
ἄρχετε βουκολικᾶς Μοῖσαι πάλιν ἄρχετ' ἀοιδᾶς.	*Begin, Muses, begin again the bucolic song.*
αὖθις ὅπως στασῇ Διομήδεος ἆσσον ἰοῖσα,	Or for a second time so that you come
καὶ λέγε "τὸν βούταν νικῶ Δάφνιν, ἀλλὰ μάχευ μοι".	standing face to face with Diomedes and say: "I conquered Daphnis the cowherd, come and fight me!"

While laughter may be typically associated with Aphrodite,[344] these lines, difficult as they are, at least recall the smiling woman in the first scene on the cup (36). There the detail signals a teasing laughter[345] with an inward focus on the woman's situation. The text makes the exact interpretation of Aphrodite's entrance less certain; it seems here that Aphrodite is delighted in her triumph over Daphnis,[346] and in conjunction with her speech below, (for example ἀργαλέω

[344] See Sappho fr. 1 Lobel-Page or Voigt, where it "conveys indulgence", Hunter 1999: 94. Further on Sappho: that she is pleased with her powers and delights, see Lawall 1967: 24.
[345] Segal 1981: 29.
[346] See *Hymn. Hom. Ven*. 49.

(98)), she pretends to be angry while still "indulgent toward her Adonis-like favorite".[347] So the treatment of Eros differs greatly between the goatherd's ecphrasis and that displayed here by the goddess herself. Eros was displayed in miniature on the cup where the concern was immediate and personal. Thyrsis' song is almost in a different register, through which it juxtaposes the humourous exaggeration of depicting the love lives of "country bumpkins" with the dangers of Aphrodite on a tragic or even heroic scale.[348]

It is worth exploring here the interpretation alluded to previously, namely that it is Aphrodite herself whom Daphnis loves.[349] His association with chaste figures places far too much significance on casting Daphnis as a follower of Artemis, because of his connection with nature.[350] Further if the "girl" mentioned by Priapus was the one Daphnis loved, then the need to assume he is committed to a vow of chastity, and not to his passion, is unnecessary.[351] Now the remark by Priapus that Daphnis is δυσέρως (85) can be fully interpreted. As mentioned above,[352] the combination of the comparison of Daphnis with goats with this word seems to imply that Daphnis wants something that he cannot have; he is filled with desire rather than bereft of it, as Priapus implies. The object of his love, however, is no ordinary "girl" but Aphrodite and perhaps Daphnis would rather die than succumb to a fate such as Adonis or Anchises, soon mentioned by Daphnis.

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[347] Hunter 1999: 94. Zuntz 1960: 40 was the first to makes such an interpretation of ἀνέχειν but interpreting βαρὺν… θυμὸν as "grief" recent commentators convincingly argue she is "laughing secretly but harboring a deep anger", Anagnostou & Konstan 2008: 519. Interesting is that this fits well with my understanding of an εἴρων as a *dissembler*.

[348] The playful love that was featured on the cup here becomes destructive for Daphnis. Segal 1981: 29, Lawall 1967: 29-31, Ott 1969: 132-37.

[349] Anagnostou & Konstan 2008: 497-27, esp. 522-27.

[350] E.g., in Lawall 1967: 14-34. Artemis is wholly absent from the *Idylls*. It should come as no surprise that herdsmen, who keep domesticated animals, would more likely relate to Aphrodite than Artemis.

[351] Gutzwiller 1991: 95-100 argues that the traditional myth, despite there being little evidence for its relevance, nevertheless forms the backdrop to the poem.

[352] See above, 98.

Before going through the evidence in the dialogue between Daphnis and Aphrodite, I want to return again the idea of Daphnis being some sort of tragic or heroic figure. What is peculiar about Daphnis in comparison to the heroes I have thus far compared him with is, obviously, that he is deeply affected by Eros, rather than a more typical heroic affliction. In antiquity Phaedra was often the figure that was used when drawing a mythic comparison to someone obsessively in love.[353] Phaedra, the stepmother of Hippolytus, similarly chooses to die rather than succumb to her passion, though she did so because of the incestuous and adulterous nature of her love. Rather than being obsessed with his chastity like Hippolytus,[354] Daphnis would in fact give in to his immense passion were there not some complications in the way (much like Phaedra probably would). As I hope to show, this is because he is in love with Aphrodite herself and refuses to satisfy his desire because of her multiple amours and mistreatment of the few mortal men she consorted with.

The focus on Eros in Aphrodite's first lines seems to aid in this different tragic identification (97-98). Aphrodite is focused on the outcome of Daphnis' vow rather than the content of it, at this point she believes that he will still succumb to Eros.[355] However, Daphnis' response shows that he will not, in fact, concede to Eros. Stating that he will still be a thorn in the side of Eros even in Hades (103), which means that when he dies after successfully resisting Eros, there will forever be a mortal who bested Aphrodite and her son's best efforts to overpower him.[356] While Aphrodite may have played a role in instilling Daphnis with this passion the fact that it is Eros suggests that it is not explicitly Aphrodite herself that is to blame. Aphrodite was

[353] Gutzwiller 1991: 241-42 n. 62. In *Ecl.* 10 Gallus alludes to Phaedra and so Virgil seems to have picked up this idea Snell 1953: 298.
[354] Lawall 1967: 20-25.
[355] Gutzwiller 1991: 98.
[356] That is to say that his "death will be proof that Eros could not master him (100-103)", Anagnostou and Konstan 2008: 519. Cf. "Eros (and Aphrodite) will always know that one man at least rejected their power", Hunter 1999: 96.

certainly offended by the chastity of Hippolytus and here she is similarly frustrated by her lack of direct control over Eros as she must have been then, in addition to Daphnis' stubbornness.

Daphnis continues his reproach of the goddess by mentioning the times she herself has been overpowered by Eros (105-110).[357] Seeing as it is not likely that Aphrodite is simply to be identified with the power of Eros, the alternative hypothesis that Daphnis was beset with a passion for Aphrodite herself becomes more attractive. The mention of the densely wooded area around Mount Ida reminds us of Anchises' social position: he was a herdsman too. Daphnis scornfully reminds Aphrodite of not just the past times she has been overpowered by Eros but also the outcomes of her previous liaisons with herdsmen. Through mentioning Adonis hunting, the fact that he met his death being speared by a boar's tusk is alluded to. The figure of Adonis can be confidently identified with other near-eastern herdsmen who meet their end after consorting with a deity and they are also subjects of laments.[358] Finally, his reference to these two figures certainly makes it seem like he is comparing himself to the other herdsmen who have suffered as a result of an affair with Aphrodite. Otherwise, the comparison would be that Aphrodite overpowered them as she does here. As mentioned, however, the emphasis on the fact that it was Eros and not Aphrodite that is ultimately to blame further makes this interpretation likely.

The reference to Diomedes is perhaps odd, but the fact that this hero met Aphrodite on the battlefield likely gave him a special association with the goddess.[359] Further, it is clear that Daphnis intends to paint Aphrodite unfavorably and the interaction between her and Diomedes

[357] The relationship between Aphrodite and her son was a Hellenistic motif also found in Apollonius 3.85-99. Here, Aphrodite states that πίθοιτό κεν ὔμμι μάλιστα,| ἢ ἐμοί (3.91-92), "he [i.e. Eros] would sooner obey you [i.e. Hera] than me". Apollonius shows Aphrodite "anxious to pass the buck" (Campbell 1994: 86) after Hera asked her to ἐπικέκλεο παιδὶ "order (your) son" Eros to stir the passion of Medea for Jason. The point being that Hellenistic poets noted Aphrodite's lack of control over Eros.
[358] Hunter 1999: 96. Anagnostou and Konstan 2008: 499-503.
[359] Consider the potential allusion to this story (*Il.* 5.334-37) in Sappho's famous hymn to Aphrodite fr. 1 (Lobel-Page, Voigt).

was certainly a source of embarrassment for the goddess, as Homer even has the other gods reproach her in that episode.[360] It seems that in these lines Daphnis emphasizes the trivial amount of power it would take to overcome a defenseless cowherd like him or Anchises, in comparison with an adult warrior. The taunt is also clearly an opportunity for Thyrsis to further suggest the replacement of the typically hexametric concern for heroic action for things erotic. Figures such as Daphnis have taken on the parallel role to the Homeric heroes as some kind of representation of a larger society, world or even code of values.

The interaction between Daphnis and Aphrodite is full of details that identify Daphnis with both a tragic trope, that is, the similarly passionate Phaedra, and the near eastern tradition of herdsmen dying after an interaction with a goddess. Daphnis' own words provide the clearest evidence of this (105-110), because why would he compare himself with other lovers of Aphrodite were he not meant to be one himself? His exact reason for scorning Aphrodite is difficult to discern. For, if he was afraid of the outcome of her previous consorts then bearing his passion until he dies seems to result in the same outcome. It is perhaps that Thyrsis, in depicting Daphnis resisting Aphrodite so, focuses on the act itself and the outcome and seems not to include important details like providing some kind of explanation for his action or what events led to this point. However, as was seen in Thyrsis' opening, this song is not concerned with a simple sequence of events filled with clear motives and desires; what is important, on the other hand, is that Daphnis *did* resist Aphrodite until his bitter end and not necessarily *why*. The argument in favor of Daphnis maintaining a commitment to chastity does not seem to find much support in the poem itself and reading into these lines stories from different traditions is

[360] The episode begins with her wounding at *Il.* 5.334-40 and continues with Athena, Hera, Zeus reproaching her *Il.* 5.417-431.

problematic.[361] He simply seems to not wish to succumb to the divine powers that be, and chooses instead to stoically[362] stay true to his conviction: that he will not be another Anchises or Adonis and be so humiliated, for he is Daphnis *the* cowherd.

Finally, the multifaceted depiction of Daphnis as being an amalgam of different heroic and tragic figures further exemplifies the programmatic nature of the poem. Daphnis replaces the heroic warrior Achilles as the principal figure that is sung in hexameters with the erotically inclined cowherd Daphnis; his condition seems to be similar to what we see in Phaedra, obsessively stuck in a love that she refuses to satisfy; Adonis and Anchises align with Daphnis because they too were desired by the goddess; lastly, Daphnis makes his taunt of Aphrodite complete by references to her humiliation by a real opponent. Such similarities to these different figures combine to make Daphnis his own character and suitable to be immortalized in song. What is important is that he embodies the quintessentially bucolic suffering, that of a deep passion that a herdsman is prevented from fulfilling. One need not look too far into the corpus of Theocritus for another example of such a figure pining away for a divinity of some sort.[363] So it seems that the symbolic importance of the Daphnis figure is elucidated in this part of the song, hopefully Daphnis' situation is becoming clearer.

[361] Anagnostou and Konstan 2008: 520-524.
[362] In the modern and colloquial sense.
[363] Consider the Cyclops (*Idylls* Six, Eleven) who desires Galatea yet is unable to swim. Or the goatherd who is kept out of the cave of Amaryllis (perhaps a Nymph). Konstan and Isenberg 1984, Konstan 1994: 167-70.

3.5.6 Conclusion

Thus far, there certainly seems to be no close parallel to which we can compare the Daphnis of Thyrsis' song. A Daphnis tradition certainly existed prior to Theocritus,[364] but his peculiar condition and situation in this song seems to be a new creation. In his reproach to Aphrodite, when he mentions the times Eros had "mastered" Aphrodite herself, invites a comparison between himself and two famous lovers of the goddess. In addition, the comparison between Daphnis, a herdsman, and the tradition of herdsmen (like Anchises or Adonis) having mysterious sexual encounters with goddesses is quite ancient.[365] Finally, the herdsmen in the other *Idylls* also seem to pine for some divinity and it seems that Daphnis may be similarly afflicted. While the typical Adonis-like figures are not described as necessarily being in love with the goddess as Daphnis seems to be, it is perhaps that Theocritean sprinkle of innovation mixed with tradition that instills this archetypal poet-herdsman with a programmatic passion for a divinity that cannot be fulfilled.

The identification with Adonis-like figures and a passion for a goddess certainly combines a traditional myth with a bucolic interpretation. However, this is merely one layer of Daphnis' complex relationship with traditional poetry, particularly tragedy and epic. Phaedra was the archetypal figure of someone mad with unfulfillable passion,[366] but her relationship with Aphrodite was rather different; simultaneously, Daphnis plays the role of an Achilles figure, only that Daphnis "bore his bitter love until its fated end" rather than being triggered into some kind of frenzy.[367] Thyrsis focuses on Daphnis' act of overcoming Eros and resisting his passion for the goddess: rather than making it clear why he chooses this path, Thyrsis emphasizes the fact

[364] See the summary of primary sources by Gow 1952: 1-2 and Hunter 1999: 64-66.
[365] As mentioned, dating at least to the Sumerian period. Anagnostou and Konstan 2008: 497-507 discuss this topic.
[366] Gutzwiller 1991: 241-42 n. 62.
[367] Perhaps even elevating him over Achilles.

that it *did* happen and he *did* resist Eros – his stubbornness is borne through an adherence to a code of values. Daphnis resists his interaction with Aphrodite because he is *the* cowherd, the other herdsmen would give in to their passion if they could, but not Daphnis (for he would rather be dancing).

Aphrodite's entrance juxtaposes the treatment of Eros on the cup with that in Thyrsis' song. The smiling Aphrodite, while unsurprising for the goddess, reminds us of the laughing woman on the first scene of the cup. There, the concern was innocent and inwardly focused on a young girl deciding between two competing suitors. The emphasis on the *ēthos* of the girl and the characters is thrown aside when Aphrodite shows the dangers inherent in mingling with a goddess in the realm of Eros. Daphnis at first seems as though he would be helpless to the wicked goddess who pretends she is angry while "indulgent toward her Adonis-like favorite".[368] As the interaction goes on, Daphnis' taunts and defiance in the face of the goddess show that not only does Daphnis have a very unique relationship with nature, but his determination to resist his passion is superhuman as well. Not only does he reproach the goddess' run-ins with Eros but also the much more physical interaction with a true warrior – Daphnis aims to wound.

Many commentators have used the evidence provided by Priapus in his speech to align the telling of the Daphnis myth by Thyrsis with various "traditional" sources. Through their attempts, they believed to have successfully figured out that Daphnis took a vow of chastity and was punished with desire for a Nymph, to whom he refused to submit. These interpretations rely on the speech by Priapus, who has long been recognized as not really understanding the situation Daphnis is in; he thinks there is some "girl" that Daphnis refuses to love back and that he should just give in. Priapus and Hermes, perhaps more rustic arms of the force of Eros, seem to have

[368] Hunter 1999: 94. Zuntz 1960: 40. See n. 345.

their cruder or more simplistic understanding immediately juxtaposed by the various complications that arise in the scene between Daphnis and Aphrodite.

The most jarring difficulty with understanding a close alignment between Thyrsis' Daphnis and the traditional one is that they fail to account for the "maidens". Daphnis wants to be performing with them, dancing and presumably singing and playing music as well; he is, after all, a poet at heart. It is difficult to substitute the maidens directly for the Nymphs he has scorned by resisting Eros, the fact that Nymphs are expressly not maidens is what gives them their mysterious divinity.[369] Finally, the fact that Priapus seems unreliable at best, not least shown by Daphnis' silence, casts a shadow of doubt on his interpretation of Daphnis' situation.

After Thyrsis' emphasis on the absence of the Nymphs to signify what a great incongruity with nature happened when Daphnis died, the ancient phenomenon of the pathetic fallacy is included. The pathetic fallacy is an extremely fitting phenomenon for the world of these herdsmen; the simple illusion that nature is possessed of human feeling[370] not only adds a mythic distance to this telling of Daphnis' death but through the Hellenistic, and textual, euphony it fuses the tradition of folk song with appropriately modern elements. The spondees of these lines imitate the howling of the animals they describe while also maintaining a slowness fit for a threnos. Further, in this scene we learn that Thyrsis is not concerned with a retelling of the events that led up to Daphnis' death or an explanation as to why they happened, rather, the fact that the animals already mourn a dead Daphnis suggests a focus on the simple fact that it did happen and what the reactions of the countryside and its divinities were. Thyrsis seeks to guard the memory of the heroic and tragic aspects of Daphnis, providing a counterpart to the world of *ēthos* depicted on the cup with his own focus on *pathos*; Thyrsis "who has no awareness of self

[369] Consider the common modern association between Nymphs and fairies. Briggs 1976 ad loc.
[370] Copley 1937: 194.

because of that delicious inattention that results in poetic creation, or re-creation, of the lost… Daphnis".[371]

Finally, the refrain/invocation to the Muses, with its emphasis on the Nymphs' absence, and the *sphragis* programmatically introduce the song, and thus the genre, to be consciously textual while feigning orality. The *sphragis* seems to be a textual phenomenon, while we can be sure of the ancient nature of the refrain used in dirges.[372] The rhetorical questions to the Nymphs add both a mythic distance and a slight irony to the situation of Daphnis. The interconnectedness of old Greece and Sicily suggests both a certain interconnectedness between the two worlds themselves but also that the Nymphs were in *cool* valleys while Daphnis *melted* adds the ironic undertone so commonly found in this poem. The Nymphs are absent, yet the hills and the animals sympathize with Daphnis, the question posed is not *what led to this?* but rather *what came of it*? and at the very start we see that the Nymphs' absence identifies something is off at the peculiar moment in the Daphnis myth about which Thyrsis sings.

Thus far in the song of Thyrsis we have seen Daphnis be developed greatly and innovatively, since, as far as we can tell, this telling of Daphnis' story is highly original. The allusiveness that exists and teases the possibility that Thyrsis adheres to some older telling of the story titillate the sophisticated audiences of which Thyrsis somehow seems to be cognizant. The song so far has been sung to introduce Daphnis as a heroic archetype fit for the bucolic world and for the lesser herdsmen to not only sing about but question and understand Daphnis, like an Achilles or perhaps even Gilgamesh. The balancing concern for the *pathos* of a famous cowherd, with the innocent and delightful *ēthos* of the "little people" on the cup, not only develops the structure of the poem satisfyingly and encourages juxtapositions between the two performances,

[371] Gutzwiller 1991: 104.
[372] See n. 288.

but it also provides the strongest programmatic element to the whole poem: the *Idylls* will be clearly concerned with the traditions stemming from the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, while still creating something brand new that challenges old poetic limits and aims to be both poetry for the new Hellenistic world and simultaneously one as old as time.

Chapter 6: Daphnis' Death and Thyrsis' Conclusion 114-52

3.6.1 Introduction

In the final portion of both the poem and Thyrsis' song there continues to be displayed the by now familiar interplay of genres and traditions: Daphnis is at once a tragic hero, an epic warrior and the quintessential παθητικός cowherd. At the beginning of the end, so to speak, Daphnis calls out to nature in a similar tone to Ajax most especially. He writes his own epitaph as Hector wrote the epitaph of whosoever would duel him (*Il.* 7.81-91). Progressing through Daphnis' final lament his reference to the waters recalls the disparity between the frame of this poem and the content of Thyrsis' song through the juxtaposition of an almost comedic interaction between two characters discussing the sound of water with its destruction of Daphnis. As the reference to the absence of the Nymphs began the song of Thyrsis so is Pan described as absent in this section and Daphnis transitions into a *kletic* hymn, that is, a versified prayer to the gods, where he continues to mingle with myth and "reality" and signals the end through the change of refrain.

As Daphnis utters his final words in his *adunaton* his focus is utterly on himself. He predicts the tragedy that will follow his death in particular and represents perhaps the feeling of any individual that his own death is rather tragic. Nevertheless, the poet and artist within Daphnis cannot resist but continue to compose delightfully sounding verses that recall the use of the pathetic fallacy by Thyrsis at the beginning of the song. The concern for the future of song alluded to in his reference to the owls competing with nightingales perhaps may be a self-centered reference that nobody else will approach Pan as Daphnis did, but still maintains the possibility of being understood as an allusive reference to the program I have been attempting to elucidate. The nightingale sang the proverbial song of lament and represented tragedy, the owl

represented comedy; additionally, the verses are a sort of *pharmakon* of the type that Theocritus promises his friend in *Idyll* Eleven. So again, there is a mixture of comedy and tragedy, Odyssean and Iliadic, everyday and heroic.

Finally, in the concluding frame to the poem Aphrodite's change of heart comes too late and Daphnis "go[ing] to the stream" clearly contrasts with the water in the opening locus. The many contrasts of the poem and the genre continue then to be explored until the very end, the competing traditions and contrasts between nature's power to nurture or destroy, to harmonize or clash with, any individual or civilization. As the song began with the Nymphs and then Pan, so it also ends and the cup of the goatherd transforms into a different, but still Odyssean, σκύφος. The final line of Thyrsis then recalls the traditional end to Homeric hymns. The goatherd's conclusion brings us back to the Hellenistic tradition with what is perhaps a Callimachean motif of having one's poetry washed in some divine liquid. The goatherd seemed to improvise a more traditionally oral or spontaneous creation, Thyrsis certainly sings a remembered song that almost seems to be expressly textual in a few key ways.

3.6.2 Daphnis' Lament 114-21

ἄρχετε βουκολικᾶς, Μοῖσαι, πάλιν ἄρχετ' ἀοιδᾶς.	*Begin, Muses, being again the bucolic song.*
ὦ λύκοι, ὦ θῶες, ὦ ἀν' ὥρεα φωλάδες ἄρκτοι, 115	O wolves, O jackals, O bears lurking in the
χαίρεθ'· ὁ βουκόλος ὔμμιν ἐγὼ Δάφνις οὐκέτ' ἀν' ὕλαν,	mountains, farewell! I, Daphnis, the cowherd, am no more in your woodlands no more in
οὐκέτ' ἀνὰ δρυμώς, οὐκ ἄλσεα. χαῖρ', Ἀρέθοισα,	your thickets or groves. Farewell Arethusa
καὶ ποταμοί τοὶ χεῖτε καλὸν κατὰ Θύμβριδος ὕδωρ.	and you rivers that flow down the lovely waterway of Thymbris.
ἄρχετε βουκολικᾶς, Μοῖσαι, πάλιν ἄρχετ' ἀοιδᾶς.	*Begin, Muses, begin again the bucolic song.*
Δάφνις ἐγὼν ὅδε τῆνος ὁ τὰς βόας ὧδε νομεύων, 120	I am Daphnis, the very one who herds cows
Δάφνις ὁ τὼς ταύρως καὶ πόρτιας ὧδε ποτίσδων.	so, Daphnis who brings calves and bulls to drink so.

After finishing his abuse of Aphrodite, Daphnis provides a farewell to his surroundings and nature that resembles tragic heroes saying goodbye to their worlds. Ajax (856-65), Philoctetes (936-40) and Hippolytus (1092-97), in their namesake tragedies, cry out similarly to Daphnis here.[373] Also, the grief of the animals, "marks his death as the event which ultimately separated man from nature, as Prometheus' deception separated men from the gods".[374] These allusions clearly align Daphnis with some of the figures of the great tragedies thus encouraging the argument that he should be counted among them. More than that, however, is that again we see euphony that feigns an oral tradition where herdsmen elevate pastoral song to celebrate a mythical event. The multiple omega's are surely indicative of a person lamenting,[375] and the tricolon is emotional in both its prosody and expression.[376] As at lines 71-75 we see, in addition to the tragic and heroic quality, a concern for projection into a cloudy mythical past and a euphonic, perhaps even textual,[377] recreation of a traditional phenomenon.

[373] For a brief discussion see Walsh 1985: 9 and Ott 1969: 126 n. 365.
[374] Hunter 1999: 98.
[375] Kalousdis 2017: 227
[376] Hunter 1999: 98-99.
[377] See n. 303.

That this section of Daphnis' speech is textual is further emphasized through the fact that Daphnis twice writes his own epitaph (116, 120-21). The most famous figure to compose an epitaph for anyone was Hector who after offering himself to the Achaeans to duel, writes the epitaph for whomever steps forward and may end up slain by Hector (*Il*. 7.81-91). As above, when he references Diomedes, Daphnis seems to incorporate himself among the epic heroes and here provides a pastoral take on the motif of an anticipatory epitaph. As often, there is a reversal of the epic and heroic expected outlook from the epic genre: Daphnis writes it for himself providing both an inward but also tragic focus. Finally, the writing of his epitaph aligns him with Thyrsis himself who sang his *sphragis* at the start of the song as his signature and Daphnis now tragically writes the signature not to a song, but to his life. Both a *sphragis* and an epitaph become heavily associated with the textual nature of poetry soon after the introduction of the alphabet;[378] while we see Thyrsis connect Daphnis with another heroic figure we are also encouraged to try to gauge the relationship these poet-herdsmen are supposed to have with textuality and recent poetic trends.

Before concluding discussion of the first stanza of this section, I would like to pay attention to the mention of the two waterways. Water is similar to fire in its capacity to advance or destroy civilizations if mishandled. The water at the beginning of the poem contains a musical sweetness that forms a waterfall, by the end of the poem we will be witness to water's capacity to destroy. Daphnis calls out to the waters due to not only his close connection with nature but because of both his and the water's representational force. Daphnis' death results in a disconnect, as he elaborates in his *adunaton*, between *the* cowherd and nature that is never properly restored. The safe, music-producing, water of the opening exchange which Daphnis vainly calls out to is no longer there, things are changing now that Daphnis is dying. It is the interplay between the

[378] See n. 293 on Theognis.

light-hearted and the serious that seems to inform a reading of much of this poem. In this case there is a certain irony inherent in comparing the almost comic display of the dialogue at the start of the poem, with the weighty and mythical seriousness of the death of a heroic figure cast on a different plane.[379] As Daphnis meets his end so too will water go from musical to destructive.

It then seems that from Daphnis' own final speech we continue to see his inward focus, so while Daphnis certainly behaves and alludes to tragic characters it is important to understand his difference to them. As discussed, the focus of the outlook of the cup clearly prioritized *ēthos* and I argued that *pathos* was similarly represented in Thyrsis' song. To be sure it is difficult to attempt to elicit certain emotions from the audience without having some sort of concern for *ēthos*.[380] While the focus of the tragedies is usually on the doom that befalls entire households, it is still usually done through the actions of a single individual.[381] Daphnis has no royal house that can fall from grace, so instead we are met with the heightened sense of importance of the individual's death. Thus, another bucolic appropriation of a tradition is adjusted for what the audience or this shadowy world of herdsmen and heroes needs and desires.

[379] See Segal 1981: 27-29.
[380] For more on the *ēthos* and *pathos* of Thyrsis' song see Walsh 1985: 8-9.
[381] Consider the names of tragedies compared with comedies (e.g., *Ajax* and *Agamemnon* versus *Clouds* and *Assembly Women*).

3.6.3 A Prayer and Dedication of a Pipe to Pan 122-30

ἄρχετε βουκολικᾶς, Μοῖσαι, πάλιν ἄρχετ' ἀοιδᾶς.
ὦ Πὰν Πάν, εἴτ' ἐσσὶ κατ' ὤρεα μακρὰ Λυκαίω,
εἴτε τύγ' ἀμφιπολεῖς μέγα Μαίναλον, ἔνθ' ἐπὶ νᾶσον
τὰν Σικελάν, ΄Ελίκας δὲ λίπη ῥίον αἰπύ τε σᾶμα
τῆνο Λυκαονίδαο, τὸ καὶ μακάρεσσιν ἀγητόν.

λήγετε βουκολικᾶς Μοῖσαι ἴτε λήγετ' ἀοιδᾶς.
ἔνθ' ὦναξ καὶ τάνδε φέρευ πακτοῖο μελίπνουν
ἐκ κηρῶ σύριγγα καλάν, περὶ χεῖλος ἑλικτάν.
ἦ γὰρ ἐγὼν ὑπ' ἔρωτος ἐς ΄Αιδαν ἕλκομαι ἤδη.

Begin, Muses, begin again the bucolic song.
O Pan, Pan! Whether you are in the long mountains of Lycaeus or you are going about great Maenalus, come to Sicily's isle, leave lofty Helice and the high tomb of the Lycaonid, wonderful even to the blessed gods.

Cease, Muses, now cease the bucolic song.
Come, lord, and take this lovely pipe, honey-breathing from the pressed wax, rounded at its lip. For I am already being dragged to Hades by Love by Eros.

Transitioning from providing his own epitaph and bidding farewell to nature and the countryside itself, Daphnis turns to its divine representative. Like the Nymphs, it seems that Pan is absent and perhaps this is part of why nature is so upset now that Daphnis is dying. He transitions from tragic and heroic appropriations to a different tradition, that of *kletic* hymns.[382] The "holy doubling", as seen in Aeschylus (e.g., *Ag.* 121), here provides the signal of the transition. Further, the listing of the god's haunts is typical of such hymns.[383] The *pathos* of this calling out to Pan is clear: were Pan present perhaps this incongruity of nature might not have occurred. Still, at the same time, the allusions to mythological Arcadia are significant because they continue to provide the opportunity for more than a single interpretation: one literal, one metaphorical.

Helike could refer to the town of that name on the Corinthian gulf and the descendant of Lykaon "Aipytos, a grandson of Arkas (Pausanias 8.4.7, 16.1-3) whose tomb near Mt Kyllene, the highest Arcadian mountain, [and] is mentioned in the *Iliad* (2.603-604)".[384] The attractiveness of such an interpretation is the charming wordplay in the Homeric passage that might have been difficult for a Hellenistic poet to resist. οἳ δ' ἔχον Ἀρκαδίην ὑπὸ Κυλλήνης ὄρος

[382] Smyth 1906: xxxii.
[383] Payne 2007: 44.
[384] Hunter 1999: 100-101 summarizes.

αἰπὺ | Αἰπύτιον παρὰ τύμβον ἵν᾽ ἀνέρες ἀγχιμαχηταί, "they who held Arcadia under the high peak of mount Kyllene, near the tomb of Aipytos, where men fight in close combat" (*Il.* 2.603-4). The alternative is to seek an identification with Kallisto, an Arcadian Nymph descended from Pelasgos who was, as early as Hesiod (fr. 163 Merkelbach-West), identified with the Great Bear constellation. What makes this latter interpretation more metaphorical is that the "Peak of Kallisto" might mean any Arcadian mountain.[385] In conjunction with the fact that her name means "most beautiful" it is logical that her mountain should be a generic representative of the beauty of nature, in particular in Pan's Arcadia. Perhaps, however, this is meant to be a continuation of the traditional and mythological games that Thyrsis has Daphnis playing.

Thyrsis transitions with a change to the final version of the refrain asking the Muses to end the song, at the moment when Daphnis dedicates his pipe to Pan. The repetition of ἔνθ', "come" recalls the similar use of the verb to introduce Daphnis' visitors and marks the absence of the divinity with a certain degree of *pathos*.[386] This stanza reminds that as Thyrsis attempts to make Daphnis like himself,[387] Daphnis too resembles the goatherd, as he is representative of the class of poet-herdsmen at large that includes the *syrinx* specialists like the goatherd of this *Idyll*. Further linking the two characters is the fact that the pipe is πακτοῖο μελίπνουν | ἐκ κηρῶ… περὶ χεῖλος ἑλικτάν, "honey-breathing, from the pressed wax… rounded at its lip" (128-9) much like the cup which is βαθὺ κισσύβιον κεκλυσμένον ἀδέι κηρῷ… τῶ περὶ μὲν χείλη μαρύεται ὑψόθι κισσός "a deep cup sealed with sweet wax… high up near the lip winds ivy" (27-29). The air produced by the pipe, like the musical, whispering breeze that began the poem, is sweet and unites the music of herdsmen with the music of nature in one of Daphnis' final emotional outbursts. Nature's representatives are absent and Daphnis, resigning to his fate, gives up his

[385] Hunter 1999: 100-101.
[386] Payne 2007: 44.
[387] Cf. the *sphragis* and epitaph discussed above 92-93 and 118, respectively.

devotion to music and through his abandonment recalls another myth of a herdsman losing his will to pipe, namely that of Thamyris.

The multiple variants surrounding the myth of Thamyris are perhaps relevant in two ways; first, that, like the story of Daphnis, this myth is particularly mutable and second, that Thamyris is always in some musical contest with the Muses, often with an added sexual element, and this causes unnatural or undesirable results.[388] Significant for us is that when the sexual element is an explicit part of the story, that is when the punishment of blinding is also explicit.[389] The fact that the other versions of the Daphnis myth have him similarly blinded by a divinity because of some sex-related crime perhaps does not link Thamyris to Thyrsis' Daphnis very clearly, but there are too many similarities in their murky background to ignore, not least the abandonment of the pipe.[390] The simple fact is that while there may not be detectable allusions between the two stories, Daphnis' final stanzas provide a balance between tragic hero, παθητικός herdsman, and finally, in the upcoming stanza, an everyman who feels his own death must result in a change in the cosmic or natural order.

[388] For the variants and a more informative expansion on the myth see Devereux 1987: 199-201.
[389] Ibid. 199.
[390] Hunter 1999: 101.

3.6.4 Daphnis' *Adunaton* 131-36

λήγετε βουκολικᾶς Μοῖσαι ἴτε λήγετ' ἀοιδᾶς. 131
νῦν δ' ἴα μὲν φορέοιτε βάτοι, φορέοιτε δ' ἄκανθαι,
ἁ δὲ καλὰ νάρκισσος ἐπ' ἀρκεύθοισι κομάσαι,
πάντα δ' ἔναλλα γένοιτο, καὶ ἁ πίτυς ὄχνας ἐνείκαι.
Δάφνις ἐπεὶ θνάσκει, καὶ τὼς κύνας ὤλαφος ἕλκοι,
κὴξ ὀρέων τοὶ σκῶπες ἀηδόσι γαρύσαιντο 136

Cease, Muses, now cease the bucolic song.
Now, you brambles bear violets and acanthus too, and the lovely narcissus grow long with juniper and all you others run contrary, and let the pine bear pears. Since Daphnis is dying, let the stag tear apart the dogs and let the scops owls from the mountains sing against the nightingales.

As alluded to above, Dapnhis' *adunaton* has been noted by many commentators as expressing the tragic feeling that everybody feels when their own death is imminent.[391] The literary device of *adunaton,* by itself is either a promise nothing extraordinary will happen or is in response to something extraordinary.[392] Only in the eyes of Daphnis, the figure within the song sung by Thyrsis, is it either of these. Certainly, there has been an identification of Daphnis with nature in this poem thus far as well as the incongruity that exists in that when Daphnis dies Nature acts upset; however, what has not been shown is a true physical response to the misfortunes of Daphnis. The hills and trees certainly seem to sympathize, and it is very likely that they do. But their experience of Daphnis' death is not really much more tragic or world turning as he makes it out to be in this *adunaton*. The goatherd, listening to Thyrsis, certainly sees the *pathos* involved in this quintessential poet-herdsman such that we also can observe that the hyperbole of his *adunaton* does not seem warranted by anybody but himself. So, as Daphnis utters his final words he focuses entirely on himself and the tragedy of the disunification of nature and herdsmen that he expects will follow after his death. However, this clearly does not come true as we know the goatherd and Thyrsis are in tune with their surroundings as evidenced by the opening verses of this poem.

[391] Gutzwiller 1991: 100.
[392] Hunter 1999: 103.

Daphnis is, after all, a poet and musician at heart, and so rather than draw powerful emotions out of us, say as a tragedy may attempt to do, he focuses on the joy his listeners may receive.[393] He, while maintaining a focus on himself, cannot help but delight his present audience with the lovely "sweet" *adunaton* that illuminates perhaps a heretofore latent part of the programmatic puzzle. Though the content is serious, Daphnis is truly about to die in a few lines. The language of the *adunaton* seems rather concerned with beauty of both the lines and their imagery.[394] It is this incongruity of content and language that seems to fit the bucolic experiment as a whole. While we may expect certain characters of say, New Comedy, to behave in an appropriate and expected way, it seems that cannot be applied to Theocritus' characters.

The concern with the beauty of the violets and narcissus plants is matched at the end when he shows a grave concern for the future of song in his woods. In the very middle of the stanza the tree that initiated this program in line 1 is itself incongruously bearing pears.[395] To provide these owls with a singing voice is a similar "mythological game" that we saw at 125-26; further, Daphnis must identify himself with the nightingale, whose voice is only surpassed by Pan (Hes. *Op.* 203-12 and *Hymn. Hom. Pan* 16-18).[396] He seems to boast that after Daphnis' death never will another poet-herdsman excel to such a degree that he approaches the nightingale and Pan himself. This would, however, be a surface level reading (that is nonetheless possible), it is more attractive however to see another metapoetic comment where we learn more about the roots of the styles that befit "bucolic song". The nightingale is certainly recognized at this point as the bird of lament,[397] thus representing tragedy, while the owl has been known to represent

[393] See Rosenmeyer 1967: 121 on Verg. *Ecl.* 5.
[394] Gutzwiller 1991: 100
[395] The very symbol of nature Hunter 1999: 103
[396] Ibid. 104.
[397] On the bird in Greek and Latin poetry see Chandler 1934: 78-84.

comedy.[398] The metapoetic point that is being made within these poems is that the person who holds this very book or scroll will soon see – not a contest between the genres of tragedy and comedy – but rather competitions among fictitious poet-herdsmen, whose songs fuse the two traditions, among others. In these competitions they are allowed to draw from a surfeit of genres, not least comedy and tragedy, to highlight *pathos*, the *ēthos* of the characters in their songs, or, perhaps, what a tragedy it is when two lovers are prevented from seeing each other.[399]

The surrounding of the *adunaton* with a concern for the beauty of both nature and future songs is also indicative of a very Theocritean phenomenon. That is, the potential of erotic poetry to act as a *pharmakon* for the ails that accompany it.[400] These "sweet" verses then perhaps are emblematic too of the genre, in that they act as a certain *pharmakon* to those experiencing distress at the hands of Eros.[401] Perhaps, it is Daphnis' final attempt to fill himself and his audience with the feeling that would properly fit the death of a hero. Not only does his encircling emphasize the middle line of the stanza, where the *adunaton* is truly called for[402] and the pine, that special pine, goes awry, but the encircling similarly embodies the principle that even within death, it is nature and the animals that seem most relevant to the audience of Daphnis.

To help to provide a close to the figure of Daphnis, prior to concluding on the section and poem as a whole, I would like to discuss a few things. In these lines, as mentioned, the focus is inward and perhaps this reminds us of not only Daphnis' personal viewpoint but also how this

[398] Σκώπτω "I mock, joke with" is of doubtful etymology but it has been linked with σκώψ "a small owl", see the examples provided by LSJ s.v. σκώπτω A.2.
[399] The incongruity is simply on a metaphorical plane, in that comedy and tragedy could hardly be performed simultaneously.
[400] Consider the opening to *Idyll* Eleven, which was written to, presumably, a friend of Theocritus.
[401] Rosenmeyer says that Daphnis uses it as if it were a "soothing balm" perhaps as erotic passions were said to be calmed by poetry, Rosenmeyer 1967: 264.
[402] When Daphnis calls "on nature to overturn her laws… the pastoral lament turns into a pastoral panegyric", Rosenmeyer 1967: 122.

viewpoint can incline toward tragedy as his fellow poet herdsmen are wont to do.[403] Nevertheless, the murky picture he leaves us with and the amount of context he refuses to provide point us towards seeing another aspect of his heroism, that is, in there being no clear explanation it suggests it is past our comprehension. Finally, it is precisely because of this previous fact that we are so drawn to him as a shadowy figure. We greatly desire to make him whole but, despite our greatest attempts, flaws may still be exposed in any comprehensive understanding of him or his story. Daphnis' world is elevated to a higher plane than the herdsmen, yet nevertheless a plane that seems to be simpler than that of traditional myth. This clear heroic elevation of Daphnis is the driving force towards his initiation as the quintessential bucolic poet-herdsman and hero and into the faux tradition.

[403] They remind us of how Hippolytus focuses on himself in his play Eur. *Hipp*. 1078-79. Cf. also, the goatherd in *Idyll* Three.

3.6.5 Daphnis Dies 137-141

λήγετε βουκολικᾶς, Μοῖσαι, ἴτε λήγετ' ἀοιδᾶς.
χώ μὲν τόσσ᾽ εἰπὼν ἀπεπαύσατο· τὸν δ᾽ Ἀφροδίτα
ἤθελ᾽ ἀνορθῶσαι· τά γε μὰν λίνα πάντα λελοίπει
ἐκ Μοιρᾶν, χώ Δάφνις ἔβα ῥόον. ἔκλυσε δίνα
τὸν Μοίσαις φίλον ἄνδρα, τὸν οὐ Νύμφαισιν ἀπεχθῆ.

Cease, Muses, now cease the bucolic song.
And after he said this, he was finished and Aphrodite wanted to raise him up but all his threads from the Fates had run out, and Daphnis went to the stream. The eddies washed over the man dear to the Muses and not hated by the Nymphs.

Right after the dedication of the pipe Daphnis dies and his song ends quite literally within the frame of Thyrsis' song.[404] The change of heart undertaken by Aphrodite comes too late; Daphnis has escaped the influence of Eros but in doing so denies himself life.[405] That she now decides she wants to "raise him up" is markedly tragic but perhaps there is a more sinister connotation given the demonstration of Aphrodite's pleasure in Daphnis' pain, namely that she wants to "rise him up" so she can continue to torture him.[406] Either way, the goddess clearly wishes he were not dead, and she vainly seeks to find a way out of Daphnis' defeat of Eros, even if this too was in vain.[407] The mysterious death of Daphnis, like his mysterious identity, serves to assimilate Daphnis back into the nature he so loved and with which he felt such a profound closeness, even in death.[408]

That Daphnis "goes to the stream" has been variously interpreted: it does not seem to be a clear allusion to the rivers of the underworld, but is meant to provide a balancing interpretation of the element of water.[409] Daphnis, in his representative force that has hopefully been proven, is clearly a passionate artist, poet and piper; his oneness with nature has been stressed and he

[404] Kaloudis 2017: 227 n. 79
[405] Miles 1977: 152.
[406] Especially sinister given the other examples of resurrection in the Greek traditions, for example, Pind. *Pyth.* 3.56-57. Vaughn 1981: 58, see Hunter 1999: ad loc., lines 95-96, 152.
[407] "Daphnis' rebellion is, by the standards both of the herdsmen and of the gods who counsel him [i.e. Hermes and Priapus], misguided and ultimately futile…we are encouraged to see all heroic efforts as unnecessary and, therefore, vain", Miles 1977: 153.
[408] Gutzwiller 1991: 100.
[409] For more on the symbol of water see Segal 1981: 25-46.

clearly has a nearly divine relationship with it. In the unification of song and death (as per his final remark in lines 135-36) he reminds us of the bitterness of unfulfilled Eros.[410] But in this reminder the viewpoint of those rustic deities that came to console him wins out, Daphnis' wounds were self-inflicted.[411]

The suggestion of Daphnis fading or assimilating himself back with nature in his death via "go[ing] to the stream" clearly contrasts the sonority provided by the water in the opening *locus* (8-9). There, water was a representation of nature's musical sonority and like the pine that we just recently heard Daphnis suggest will now bear pears, takes a turn towards a much more negative connotation and symbolism. As Daphnis unites song and death in his final concern for the songs of birds that seem to act as a stand-in for himself and other herdsmen, so too here Daphnis unites the idea that the water which once was sonorous and life-giving, is here deadly and destructive.[412] This certainly fits the many contrasts present in the poem at large, namely between competing traditions, between man and nature, between nature's sonority and its capacity to destroy, between "sweet verses" and more serious and tragic topics and any other dichotomy thus far presented.

[410] Segal 1981: 43.
[411] Thyrsis' vagueness in the song of Daphnis suggests Daphnis is primarily to blame for his condition, Miles 1977: 154.
[412] Segal 1981: 33.

3.6.6 The Closing Frame 142-52

λήγετε βουκολικᾶς Μοῖσαι ἴτε λήγετ' ἀοιδᾶς.
καὶ τὺ δίδοι τὰν αἶγα τό τε σκύφος, ὥς κεν ἀμέλξας
σπείσω ταῖς Μοίσαις. ὦ χαίρετε πολλάκι Μοῖσαι,
χαίρετ' ἐγὼ δ' ὕμμιν καὶ ἐς ὕστερον ἄδιον ᾀσῶ.

Cease, Muses, now cease the bucolic song.
Hand over the goat and the cup, so that I can make a libation to the Muses after milking it. O many farewells to you Muses, farewell! I will sing to you something even sweeter later.

Αἴπολος
πλῆρές τοι μέλιτος τὸ καλὸν στόμα, Θύρσι, γένοιτο,
πλῆρές τοι σχαδόνων, καὶ ἀπ' Αἰγίλω ἰσχάδα τρώγοις
ἁδεῖαν, τέττιγος ἐπεὶ τύγα φέρτερον ᾄδεις.
ἠνίδε τοι τὸ δέπας· θᾶσαι φίλος, ὡς καλὸν ὄσδει·
Ὥρᾶν πεπλύσθαί νιν ἐπὶ κράναισι δοκησεῖς.
ὦδ' ἴθι Κισσαίθα, τὺ δ' ἄμελγέ νιν. αἱ δὲ χίμαιραι,
οὐ μὴ σκιρτασεῖτε, μὴ ὁ τράγος ὔμμιν ἀναστῇ.

Goatherd
Thyrsis, may your lovely mouth be full of honey, full of honeycombs and may you eat an abundance of dry figs from Aegilus, since you sing better than the cicada. Here's your cup; see my friend, how lovely it smells, you would think it was washed in the springs of the Hours. Now go Kissaitha, and you milk her. Young she-goats, don't be so energetic, or the billy goat might rise up against you.

Judging from the sudden switch into the second person and into the herdsmen's "reality", this refrain (142) seems to close out the song properly. Nevertheless, as the song began with the Muses and reference to the Nymphs, so it ends with the refrain to the Muses and just above with Daphnis' relationships with the Nymphs and Muses juxtaposed (141). The cup that featured in the goatherd's ecphrasis has shifted from a κισσύβιον into a σκύφος. Being an Odyssean *hapax* (14.112),[413] this shift in vocabulary recalls the relationship between the ecphrasis and the *Odyssey*. The close of the frame certainly seems to recognize the ephemerality of their songs due to the herdsmen's equivocations between poetry and material goods.[414] The tactful use of a Homeric *hapax* seems at odds with what Thyrsis is concerned with, that is, the milking of the goat and the pouring of a libation. Finally, the ἐγὼ of line 145 recalls Thyrsis' *sphragis* (65) and in this final line also echoes the traditional end to Homeric hymns.[415]

[413] When Eumaios the swineherd is entertaining Odysseus: καί οἱ πλησάμενος δῶκε σκύφον, ᾧ περ ἔπινεν "after filling the cup gave it to him, from which he was drinking".
[414] See above: 58-59.
[415] Taking place of the typical αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ καὶ σεῖο καὶ ἄλλης μνήσομ᾽ ἀοιδῆς "and now I will remember you with another song!" Thyrsis and the composers of the *Hymns* in this way similarly recognize the ephemerality of song, in that any performance is fleeting and the next one will not be quite like the last.

The goatherd similarly shows a concern for reality and in his final lines praises Thyrsis and the cup and concludes with a "pastoral punchline" that alludes to the treatment of Eros by Hermes and Priapus.[416] The generosity of his praise in addition to his gifting of the cup satisfyingly link the goatherd's dialogue from before the ecphrasis (12-27) to the end of the frame and recall that serene harmony of the noonday countryside.[417] Poets are traditionally nourished by bees,[418] and the motif of sweetness has been clearly present throughout the poem but the goatherd surprisingly *wishes* that Thyrsis will have a mouth full of honey. In the twisting of the motif Theocritus provides both a straightforward and naïve interpretation as well as an allusive and traditional one. The goatherd does not recognize the true meaning of the motif and his close to the frame seems to most clearly demonstrate that the dialogue exists on a different plane than the song we just experienced.[419] Aphrodite was unable to ἀνορθῶσαι Daphnis, but here the goatherd comments on the spry ability of the goat to do just that. As Thyrsis alludes to the goatherd's ecphrasis, so here the goatherd alludes to two moments in the song of Thyrsis.

The reference to the springs of the Hours suggests another Hellenistic interpretation. The watery image reminds of the symbolic force of water in these poems, that it has the capacity to act in harmony with mankind as well as destroy it, here we see the goatherd brag about the life-giving force water has provided to his cup; the reference to the "springs of the hours" is surely an erotic connection.[420] The idea of a divine liquid flowing over the cup is perhaps related to the Callimachean motif that the "oil of the graces" flow over his poetry (fr. 7 Pfeiffer = 9 Massimilla) as the cup represents the goatherd's poetic creation (i.e. the ecphrasis). As Daphnis

[416] For "pastoral punchline" see Rosenmeyer 1967: 176. Cf. Also Miles 1977: 152-53.
[417] Ibid.
[418] Waszink 1974 discusses the motif in full.
[419] Hunter 1999: 106.
[420] Hes. *Theog,* 901-903 with West's note. Additionally, it is likely meant to symbolize the same power that the Hours confer upon Aphrodite herself in her *Hom. Hymn* (5-18).

had a mysterious connection with the water of his world, the goatherd attempts to create something similar to wash over his cup and endow it with the divinity that he claims it has.

Finally, as this poem began with a high degree of concern for the euphony of nature in particular here we see a similar emphasis on structure and the sonority of the verses.[421] Thyrsis doubles his farewell χαίρετε (144, 145) and the goatherd multiplies the line beginning of πλῆρές τοι to begin the first and second lines of his final speech (146, 147). Φέρτερ**ον** ᾄδ**ει**ς (148) aligns with the vowel combination that ends the next line καλ**ὸν** ὅσδ**ει** (149). Finally, 151-52 features κι...σαιθα which joins closely with the identically placed κι…σεῖτε. The concern for sonority in these final lines clearly is no match for what opened the poem, but the concern is still very much present and remained so throughout the poem. As is obvious, the sound and rhythm of poetry is what distinguishes it from prose; there even seems to be a discrepancy between a traditionally oral concern for euphony and what we see as more subtle, perhaps Alexandrian, euphony that Theocritus sneaks into his verses. The goatherd seemed to improvise for us and so represented a more typically oral concern for euphony, for example, through the interweaving of the root ἕλ- to simulate the miracle of the *Hom. Hymn. Dion*. Thyrsis, on the other hand, sings a song he rehearsed before, so his euphony is better understood as a textual euphony that shows a concern for things like a *sphragis* while nevertheless pretending to be a traditional "mourning song".[422]

[421] As elsewhere, these observations were provided by Donnet 1988.
[422] Levi 1993: 126.

3.6.7 Conclusion

The conclusion of the poem, while reuniting itself with the opening frame, importantly unites most of the disparate traditions from which the *Idylls* will draw. The Odyssean aspect of the cup is reemphasized and the textual aspect of the song of Thyrsis poses an additional juxtaposition with the composition of the goatherd. The *Homeric Hymns* are alluded to and the concern for the representational force of water and what seems to be a traditional association between Daphnis and nature continues and concludes. It is because Daphnis is an enigma that he is so interesting. His obsession with his craft that leaves him singing "sweet verses" to an audience of his peers and patron divinities shows him performing until the very end. Prior to his death he lets out first a very tragic goodbye to his surroundings and calls on Pan in the form of a *kletic* hymn to come and take his pipe, aligning him closely with the goatherd who is primarily a piper. Despite his inward focus on himself, a high degree of *pathos* is felt and instead of witnessing the fall of a royal household we see the fall of an individual whose household was the countryside and how after his death, nothing will be the same.

General Conclusion

The long recognized programmatic nature of this poem could serve as a basis for further research into the irony inherent in the poetry of Theocritus and his ancient successors. There are elements in every section of the poem that combine to create not only a characteristically Hellenistic interpretation of poetry, but also something entirely new in itself. Theocritus suspends varying interpretations and dangles both the straightforward or naïve and the complex or sentimental in front of his audience. The figure of Daphnis has been shown to largely represent a tragic hero fit for the traditionally marginalized, though now center stage, world of the herdsmen of *epos*. In the first half of the poem, we saw the Goatherd stand in as an intermediary interpreter for the significance of a work of divinely inspired art. Thyrsis seeks to outdo the traditional tragic and epic poets with his own, rustic, song. The goatherd similarly adapts an Iliadic device, that of the ecphrasis, though his outlook is clearly Odyssean. The balance provided to the varying traditions Theocritus draws from is perhaps the most noticeable aspect of his appropriation of earlier poetry; deeper than this, however, is that through juxtaposing and alluding to these traditions, while having the words be sung by herdsmen, Theocritus' created a deceitful *bucolic* irony.

That it is uncertain if there will ever be a unified consensus on how to interpret the whole of Theocritus' poetry is perhaps intentional and part of the point. Nevertheless, it is undeniable that in this programmatic poem there is a surfeit of traditions underpinned by something unique or at least unusual: I call this bucolic irony. The herdsmen are certainly concealing their understanding as it is not really possible for them to be so well versed in a tradition that Theocritus invents before our eyes. The fictionality is palpable and the elevation of traditionally marginalized characters while also imitating the poems, via vocabulary, meter and outlook,

where these characters were marginalized combines to create the core feature of the bucolic genre. Recall that it is difficult to understand a genre as having been "created". But it is the way in which the generic traditions are turned around and create something that approaches the antithesis of epic which creates a bucolic irony and begins to define Theocritus' short-lived genre. Like *Oedipus Rex* certainly has a palpable irony that drives the action throughout the play, so too do we see the drive behind the herdsmen's songs motivated by what can only be described as irony. The element of surprise within the poem, that comes at every turn, further has the potential to be explored in an explicitly humourous light now that a detectable irony in the most programmatic *Idyll* has been established.

Irony certainly had to do with the misrepresentation of knowledge on some level, it seems to the audience that Oedipus should have figured out the truth at least after the second time someone tells him. The herdsmen live in a world separate from the city centers and exist in a pre-literate society where herdsmen take turns piping and singing. Theocritus, while not certainly a scholar as Callimachus or other Hellenistic poets, nevertheless created a poetry that could only come out of a learned and textual education. The library at Alexandria certainly had a hand in this, allowing poets, perhaps for the first time, to have access to authoritative texts of so many important works of Greek literature. The herdsmen themselves, however, do not seem to exist in the same world as the city centers, yet display urban learning. It is almost as if we are seeing the creation of (a faux) tradition where characters who were proverbially uneducated are elevated to the highest poetic degree a contemporary urban education could attain. Not only do they pretend the style is widespread, through, for example, the reference to Chromis the Libyan (26) but the style itself is perhaps a bit above their pay grade. The herdsmen are quite well versed in Homer and offer competing avenues for poetic creation, but both agree that it is sweetness that

reigns. Here we see traditional concerns balanced with contemporary expectations by the herdsmen themselves.

When Daphnis cries out for the final time, he could not help but address his audience with delightfully sweet verses, yet his cry is still tragic. After dedicating his pipe to Pan and bidding farewell to his surroundings, and in particular nature, he "goes to the stream" and is assimilated with the powerfully representative water. In echoing Ajax, remaining stubborn like Prometheus, and failing to fulfill his desire like Phaedra, Daphnis certainly seems to be an amalgam of various characters that combine to create something that pretends to be as traditional as any poetry, though we know little of the Daphnis figure from times prior to Theocritus. He ends his life as he spent it, singing and devoted to Pan, the Nymphs and the countryside, truly the quintessential poet-herdsman.

In the first half of Thyrsis' song we see a cast of visitors come to Daphnis on his deathbed. The first group of visitors are his rustic friends and their cruder deities who provide little detail that aids in a verifiable tradition being coopted by Theocritus. Instead, it is in the rendezvous with Aphrodite that we begin to learn more about the situation that Daphnis is in. The less powerful figures are incapable of interpreting his desire to remain committed to his code of values, that value being his rejection of Aphrodite and Eros as a whole. Daphnis will not give in and become a lover of Aphrodite, though she holds great sway over him, he stoically reminds himself and her of the fates of her previous beloveds among which he includes himself. In the end it is Daphnis that wins when Aphrodite in vain wishes to "rise him up" (139), she now realizes that she was wrong and Daphnis truly bested Eros.

Within the song of Thyrsis there is not only the heroic and epic elements that continue to mingle with each other, but also textual and oral ones that interact in surprising ways. Thyrsis

begins his song with the invocation to the Muses via a refrain that punctuates the variously sized hexameter stanzas that consist of his song. Immediately after calling on the Muses, he provides a *sphragis* to his poem which seems to be something of a textual phenomenon – if he sings a "remembered" song it is likely to change with each rendition but the *sphragis* has typically been interpreted as making a version of a poem "official", insofar as it could have been in the ancient world. On the one hand, the refrain certainly adds a ritualistic and pre-literary solemnity to the song that heightens its orality greatly, yet the allusions and textual concern for euphony still penetrate the song. This clearly textual work of art is deceptively displaying itself as an oral creation, yet one that is rife with textuality.

In the first half of the poem the ecphrasis of the cup served to provide the first real introduction to the type of poetry being created. The three scenes are representative or programmatic in their own ways, not least through their juxtaposition of psychological and physical descriptions. The concern is chiefly one to do with *ēthos*, this is clear through the emphasis on "everyday folk" or "little people". The appropriation of Greek literature's most serious and weighty ecphrasis, that of Achilles' shield, by the cup of a herdsman is part of what is by now understood to be the characteristic irony of the genre. The trial of the two lovers recasts the murder trial on the *Shield of Achilles* and the fisherman is a marginal Hesiodic character elevated to the center of this intricate work of art. Finally, the boy offers the clearest interpretation provided by Theocritus as to the "point" of literature. In childlike fashion, the point is for there to be absorption in your craft and the love of creating poetry for the sake of it. The boy draws us into the world of the poem through the attention given to his lack of care for the material world around him and his desire for either the song of insects or, like the herdsmen, still care about the ephemeral, to trap them and keep them off his grapes. The goatherd describes the

cup as if he is Homer and it seems that the godlike cup is fit for a godlike rustic, much like the shield is for the hero of that world. Thyrsis is rewarded for singing his lament with the cup and in receiving it both characters immediately seem concerned with its functionality rather than the fact that it is a work of high art.

In the opening lines of this poem, there is already a firm foundation built for understanding the literary program that is being initiated. In the first line of this *Idyll* we learn immediately that not only are we reading Doric hexameters, but ones focalizing herdsmen. Additionally, this poetry will not be like other hexameters or even much like other Doric poetry, instead it will be focused on poetic sweetness and the aesthetic effect of poetry. The immediate incongruity between the dialect and meter is detectable, further than this, however, there is an interwoven mosaic of tradition that incorporates both the epic and lyric, the comic and tragic, the everyday and heroic and so many other dichotomies that have been illuminated. In so doing Theocritus has his representative herdsmen initiate a faux tradition where pre-literate rustics competed in contemporary poetics through singing hexameters that really approach the opposite of the hexameter genre of *epos*.

In their performances the goatherd and Thyrsis certainly seem to attempt to enchant or beguile each other with their sweet verses. The term βουκολέω evolved in the archaic and Classical periods to arrive in Hellenistic era to mean something largely metaphorical. It is not an unreasonable assumption to go from something meaning literally "to cowherd" to something like "to beguile", provided one has actually seen cows being herded by a high-pitched call (whether on the *syrinx* or by voice). The term as it has been applied to poetry has come to represent an experiment in the appropriation and inversion of traditions to create something fresh to the canon of Greek literature. Were more poetry of Theocritus' immediate successors, Moschus and Bion,

available to us, it would perhaps be easier to understand not only the evolution of the genre but how it was interpreted by contemporaries. Strictly bucolic ideas did not seem to continue to be the focal point, and later authors, such as Virgil, simply used the term to mean “pastoral”. Virgil initiated into the Western European literary tradition his more pastoral style and so it is perhaps appropriate to assign a shorter lifespan to the broader experiment of Theocritus.

The Hellenistic poets were acutely aware of their position in the Greek literary traditions. They were relative late comers and had to exercise their creativity to come up with new ways of writing about old material. The program outlined in this thesis and undertaken by Theocritus in the 270s B.C. was to use a highly inter- and intra-textual approach that not only borrows from earlier traditions but opposes them ironically. On one level, there is a clear “creation of a tradition”, in the sense that this experiment of rustic or anti-epic poetry had never been tried before. On another level, there is a deceitful irony that flaunts its fictionality through pretending that this style of poetry is just as traditional as any. Having merely scratched the surface of the poetry of Theocritus, there is ample opportunity for similar analyses to be applied to the rest of his corpus. The significance of the explicit scholarly approach to poetry offered by the Alexandrians and exported to Rome and the broader European literary tradition, thereafter, cannot be understated. What we have come to understand as the “point” of poetry in this day and age, that is a high focus on the aesthetic and “childlike” nature of it, was born out of Theocritus and his contemporaries to flourish for millennia to come.

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