

# Ecphrasis and Song in Theocritus' *Idyll* 1

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**I**DYLL 1 is one of the poems in the collection of Theocritus' work in which characters address one another without intervening narration by the poet.<sup>1</sup> It is a dialogue between Thyrsis, a shepherd and singer, and an unnamed goatherd who is also a syrinx player. An introductory conversation between the two (1–14) sets the scene of their encounter, and is followed by a long speech by the goatherd (15–63) in which he describes a decorated bowl or *kissubion* (27–60) which he will give to Thyrsis if the latter will sing "The Sorrows of Daphnis" for him. Thyrsis responds by performing the song (64–145), and his performance is greeted with enthusiastic admiration by the goatherd when it is over (146–152).

Both ecphrasis and song ask us to imagine remarkable works of art. The *kissubion* is "a wonder that would amaze your heart" (56), and Daphnis sings "more sweetly than a cicada" (148). Yet the ecphrasis is a mixture of description, narration, and psychology that will not yield a definite picture of the object itself, and "The Sorrows of Daphnis" is a shepherd's song in hexameters. This paper explores the dramatic presentation of bowl and song, and the demands they make on the audience's imagination.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>In the Platonic schema employed by the scholia it is δραματικόν rather than διηγηματικόν or μικτόν: C. Wendel, ed., *Scholia in Theocritum vetera* (Leipzig 1914) 4–5.

<sup>2</sup>While Thyrsis' performance is the major event in the poem (81 of its 152 lines), the ecphrasis is a secondary focal point (33 lines); cf. P.-E. Legrand,

*The Ecphrasis*

How then does the *kissubion* enter the poem? The goatherd's request that Thyrsis sing begins as a refusal to play the syrinx himself, as this would be a source of irritation to Pan (15–18). He praises Thyrsis for his mastery of bucolic song, and points to a pleasant location for singing (19–23). He reminds Thyrsis again of his preeminence as a singer, and offers a two-part reward for his song (25–28):<sup>3</sup>

αἰγά τέ τοι δωσῶ διδυματόκον ἐς τρὶς ἀμέλξαι,  
 ἃ δὴ ἔχοισ' ἐρίφως ποταμέλγεται ἐς δύο πέλλλας,  
 καὶ βαθὺ κισσύβιον κεκλυσμένον ἀδεί κηρῶ,  
 ἀμφῶες, νεοτευχές, ἔτι γλυφάνοιο ποτόσδον.

I will give you a goat that has borne twins to milk three times,  
 which despite having two kids, fills two pails with milk, and a  
 deep bowl sealed with sweet wax, two-handled, newly-made,  
 still smelling of the knife.

The offer unfolds easily; its two halves are linked by τε and καί, and each is followed by measured expansion (δύ' ... δύο, 26; 28 is a tricolon). Thyrsis is not invited to look at the bowl at this time, nor at any point during the ecphrasis.<sup>4</sup> It is only when the song is over that the goatherd produces the object itself, and with a flourish invites Thyrsis to see if it matches up to his

*Etude sur Théocrite* (Paris 1898) 407; P. Friedländer, *Johannes von Gaza und Paulus Silentarius: Kunstbeschreibungen justinianischer Zeit* (Leipzig 1912) 13; G. Lawall, *Theocritus' Coan Pastorals* (Washington 1967) 30; S. Nicosia, *Teocrito e l'arte figurata* (Palermo 1968) 36; U. Ott, *Die Kunst des Gegensatzes in Theokrits Hirtengedichten* (Spudasmata 22 [Hildesheim 1969]) 132–133.

<sup>3</sup>The Greek text used is A. S. F. GOW, ed., *Theocritus*<sup>2</sup> (Cambridge 1952); translations are my own. Also cited by authors' names: H. L. AHRENS, *Bucolicorum graecorum Theocriti Bionis Moschi reliquiae* (Leipzig 1855); A. MEINEKE, *Theocritus Bion Moschus* (Berlin 1856); WILAMOWITZ, *Bucolici graeci* (Oxford 1905); K. J. DOVER, *Theocritus* (London 1971); C. GALLAVOTTI, *Theocritus quique feruntur bucolici graeci*<sup>3</sup> (Rome 1993); R. HUNTER, *Theocritus: A Selection* (Cambridge 1999).

<sup>4</sup>In the “mimetic-dramatic” type of ecphrasis to which K. J. Gutzwiller, *Theocritus' Pastoral Analogies: The Formation of a Genre* (Madison 1991) 90, refers, joint inspection of an object is always accompanied by invitations to look: ἄθρησον, Theoc. 15.78; οὐκ ὄρης, ὄρη, Herod. *Mim.* 4.23, 27, 35; ἰδοῦ, ἄθρησον, σκέψαι, λεύσσεις, Eur. *Ion* 190, 201, 206, 209.

earlier description (149): “Behold the bowl; see, my friend, how sweetly it smells.”<sup>5</sup>

If the bowl only makes its entrance at the end of the poem this should remind us that the ecphrasis is more a response to a work of art than a description of one.<sup>6</sup> It is the goatherd’s impressions that we hear, as he encourages Thyrsis to imagine the object for himself. He describes its shape and plant motifs briefly (27–31); the figures portrayed on it form the bulk of his description (32–54). The first he describes is a woman (32–33):

ἔντοσθεν δὲ γυνά, τι θεῶν δαίδαλμα, τέτυκται,  
ἀσκητὰ πέπλω τε καὶ ἄμπυκι.

Since this is the first extant occurrence of δαίδαλμα we may wonder what he means by it. The stem might lead one to suppose that the word is simply a metrical alternative to δαίδαλον. The scholia to verse 38—ἐτώσια μοχθίζοντι, “they labor in vain”—appear to look to the suffix -μα, however, for they ask: τίς γὰρ ἂν ἄγαλμα πείσαι δυνήσεται; “for how could anyone persuade a statue?”<sup>7</sup> So δαίδαλμα presents us with a choice: is the woman “a fabrication of the gods,” or is she, more concretely, “a statue of the gods”?

The scholia appear to have been influenced by the following line: ἀσκητὰ belongs to the language of the decorative arts, and in the sense “curiously wrought” (LSJ I.1) is used elsewhere of manufactured objects. Yet there are several levels at which ἀσκητὰ may apply. A statue on which robe and headband are “curiously wrought” may be portrayed on the bowl. A flesh and blood woman may be depicted “bedecked with” robe and

<sup>5</sup>Cf. Dover *ad* 1.144f: “Thyrsis does not get the bowl until 149.” ἠνίδε and θῶσαι are just the kind of invitations that are missing from the ecphrasis.

<sup>6</sup>Cf. G. B. Miles, “Characterization and the Ideal of Innocence in Theocritus’ Idylls,” *Ramus* 6 (1977) 147: “We are not actually shown the bowl. We are presented a version of it as seen through the eyes of an inhabitant of the bucolic world.”

<sup>7</sup>Schol. 1.38e (Wendel 42).

headband.<sup>8</sup> The image of a woman may be “curiously wrought” with robe and headband on the surface of the bowl.

The scholiast’s question seems to mark a rather crude attempt to get a definite picture from the goatherd’s indefinite words. In later usage δαίδαλμα, like its parent δαίδαλον, does not designate a particular object but conveys the wonder that certain objects inspire.<sup>9</sup> Yet perhaps we should ask what impelled this leap. If commentators on poetic texts explain δαίδαλον as δαίδαλμα, why do the scholia gloss δαίδαλμα with ἄγαλμα here? Does it point to something unusual in the goatherd’s use of the word? Hunter compares δαίδαλα at *Iliad* 18.482 (the Shield of Achilles), *Argonautica* 1.729 (the Cloak of Jason), and *Europa* 43 (the Basket of Europa), and suggests “δαίδαλμα belongs to the standard language of *ekphrasis*.”<sup>10</sup> In these passages, however, δαίδαλα is qualified by πολλά; it occurs at the beginning of the *ekphrasis*, and summarizes the images which will be described individually. In *Idyll* 1, by contrast, the word is used to mark out a single figure on the bowl. It separates the woman from her companions, and

<sup>8</sup>Gow *ad* 1.33: “ἄσκητά is used elsewhere of the garment (e.g. 24.140) or the wool (18.32n.) rather than the wearer except in what seems a reminiscence of this passage by Antipater at *A.P.* 6.219, but T.’s use arises naturally from that of the verb at, e.g., Aesch. *Pers.* 182 πέπλοισι Περσικοῖς ἡσκημένῃ.”

<sup>9</sup>The TLG gives twenty-six occurrences in addition to our present passage and its scholia. The only one earlier than *Idyll* 1, Pindar *Paian* 8 fr.52i.81, proves insecure; see S. P. Morris, *Daidalos* (Princeton 1992) 46: “The crucial word is incomplete beyond the restored fourth letter and its syntactical function is unclear.” The remainder are considerably later than Theocritus. The word is used for statues (Lucian *Amores* 13; Eus. *De laudibus Constantini* 11.8; Himer. *Or.* 28.41), and objects of divine manufacture like the walls of Troy (Colluthus *Rape of Helen* 310), ornamentation on a shield made by Hephaestus (Nonnus *Dion.* 37.127), and the “visible adornments of the entire universe” (Eus. *De laudibus Constantini* 11.11). The scholia to Pindar *Pythian* 5.46 write δαιδάλματα τῶν τεκτόνων, where Pindar’s text has τεκτόνων δαίδαλα(α), and Eustathius has δαιδάλματα where *Il.* 18.483 (the Shield of Achilles) has δαίδαλα; cf. his commentary on Odysseus’ brooch at *Od.* 19.226: δαίδαλον δὲ τὸ δαίδαλμα, τὸ ποικίλμα, συγκοπὲν ἐκ τοῦ δαιδάλεον. Cf. Morris 4: “a survey of epic δαίδαλα in terms of metrical, syntactical, and thematic distribution reveals far greater powers of connotation than specific denotation.”

<sup>10</sup>Hunter *ad* 1.32.

suggests that she is somehow more artificial than the other images around her.

Yet the woman is not simply a δαίδαλαμα, she is a θεῶν δαίδαλαμα. Does this mean that she was made by the gods, that she looks like the gods, or that her representation on the bowl resembles the gods' handiwork? The scholia are tempted by the first explanation: τινὲς τὴν Πανδώραν φασί, "some say she is Pandora."<sup>11</sup> The -μα suffix suggests manufacture, manufacture implies a maker, and so γυνά, τι θεῶν δαίδαλαμα will mean a woman made by the gods. Hence, Pandora.<sup>12</sup> If the scholia hesitate it may be because this solution overlooks the goatherd's τι which, they note, belongs with δαίδαλαμα. But how exactly? Some editors understand τι θεῶν δαίδαλαμα as in apposition to γυνά: Ahrens, Gow, and Hunter all place a comma after γυνά. Not punctuating after γυνά does not of course preclude understanding the phrase as appositional, and some editors who print the line without punctuation (Meineke, Wilamowitz, Gallavotti) may intend it to be read in that way. Dover, however, rejects this interpretation, and understands the phrase as predicate.<sup>13</sup> Both constructions point to reflective or interpretive activity on the part of the goatherd. If we accept the majority view, the accent falls on the image: "And within is wrought a woman, such a thing as the gods might fashion" (Gow). If we

<sup>11</sup>Schol. 1.32 (Wendel 40).

<sup>12</sup>A more obvious choice than the *eidolon* of Helen, νεφέλης ἄγαλαμα, Eur. *Hel.* 1219 (cf. 262–263). The scholia may also have in mind Hesiod's description of the creation of Pandora at *Theog.* 578–581, where there is a conjunction of ἀσκήσας and δαίδαλα: ἀμφὶ δὲ οἱ στεφάνην χρυσέην κεφαλῆφιν ἔθηκε, τὴν αὐτὸς ποίησε περικλυτὸς Ἄμφιγυήεις ἀσκήσας παλάμησι, χαριζόμενος Διὶ πατρί. τῇ δ' ἐνὶ δαίδαλα πολλὰ τετεύχαστο, θαῦμα ἰδέσθαι, "And about her head she [Athena] set a golden band, which the glorious [Lame One] made himself, fashioning it with his hands, gratifying Zeus his father. And on it were fashioned many devices, a wonder to behold." Pandora herself, however, is not described as a *daidalon*, nor as the object of daidalic manufacture. The *daidal-* words are used of her crown, as above, and of the πολυδαίδαλον ἵστον which Athena is to teach her to weave at *Erga* 64.

<sup>13</sup>Dover *ad* 1.32: "Punctuation before the postpositive τι, making τι θεῶν δαίδαλαμα a phrase in apposition, is to be avoided."

accept Dover's, it falls on the technique by which it is rendered: "Lit., 'a woman is depicted <as> a-sort-of ...'" Perhaps the π reflects the fact that the goatherd does not have the bowl in front of him, and dramatizes a momentary engagement with the figure in his imagination.<sup>14</sup> The thought, at any rate, is not easily retranslated into image.

After describing the woman the goatherd fills in the scene around her (33–38):

πὰρ δέ οἱ ἄνδρες  
καλὸν ἐθειράζοντες ἀμοιβαδὶς ἄλλοθεν ἄλλος  
νεικείουσ' ἐπέεσσι· τὰ δ' οὐ φρενὸς ἄπτεται αὐτᾶς·  
ἀλλ' ὅκα μὲν τῆνον ποτιδέρκεται ἄνδρα γέλαισα,  
ἄλλοκα δ' αὖ ποτὶ τὸν ῥίπτει νόον· οἱ δ' ὑπ' ἔρωτος  
δηθὰ κυλοιδιώωντες ἐτώσια μοχθίζοντι.

And beside her men with beautiful hair alternately from either side contend with words; yet these do not touch her mind. But at one time she looks at one man smiling and at another she turns her mind to the other. And they long hollow-eyed from love labor in vain.

He describes appearances—the men have “beautiful hair,” they “contend with words”—but also the inner experience which he imagines these appearances reflect: “these things do not touch her mind.” Like the men, he is drawn to the θεῶν δαίδαλα, and translates her indifference into action: “at one time she looks at one man smiling and at another she turns her mind to the other.” The goatherd is making a story out of a picture;<sup>15</sup> he introduces time into the visual representation, and constructs a “back story” to explain what he has seen: the men are hollow-eyed “from love,” and have been so “for a long time.” Finally,

<sup>14</sup>Cf. Gorgo describing the palace tapestries, *Id.* 15.79; she shows no such hesitation: θεῶν περονάματα φασεῖς.

<sup>15</sup>A “narrative response to pictorial stasis,” J. A. Heffernan, *Museum of Words* (Chicago 1993) 4–5.

his description also hints at the likely outcome of the scene: “they labor in vain.”

His narrative leaves much to the imagination. His use of pronouns is sparing in the extreme. While the two men are “long hollow-eyed from love,” he does not spell out that they are in love with the woman.<sup>16</sup> Similarly, “these do not touch her mind” suggests a more than human unconcern; her laughter is the unfathomable γέλαισα of the Aphrodite who will later visit Daphnis (95–96).<sup>17</sup> Perhaps it is not so surprising that the scholia see this δαίδαλμα as Pandora, or a statue.<sup>18</sup> The men’s behavior is also hard to read. Hunter notes that “the scene rewrites the “legal” νεῖκος of the Homeric Shield (*Il.* 18.497–508).”<sup>19</sup> But into what exactly? νεικείουσ’ ἐπέεσσι sounds like a familiar formula, but in Homer verb and noun are accompanied by an adjective that makes clear exactly how the speaker is addressing his interlocutor.<sup>20</sup> Without qualification it is unclear whether the men are chiding, quarreling, or competing, just as the absence of pronouns means that we cannot tell whether their words are directed at each other or the woman. Halperin suggests that νεικείουσ’ ἐπέεσσι might refer to “rivalry in hexameter verses as well as in simple speech,” and that the use of ἀμοιβαδῖς “confirms this impression and looks forward to the convention of ‘amoeban song’ which was destined to become a hallmark of the bucolic poetry of Theocritus and his

<sup>16</sup>Cf. Homeric desire at *Il.* 3.438–446 (Paris and Helen) and 14.313–328 (Zeus and Hera). The abundance of pronouns leaves no doubt about who is feeling what for whom.

<sup>17</sup>Hunter *ad* 1.36–37.

<sup>18</sup>As Lucian *Amores* 13 indicates, erotic infatuation with statuary was not beyond the ancient imagination. On *agalmatophilia* see D. T. Steiner, *Images in Mind: Statues in Archaic and Classical Greek Literature and Thought* (Princeton 2001) 185–207 Cf. Ott (*supra* n.2) 105 n.296: “Außerdem soll der Vergleich einem Standbild die Ungerührtheit der Frau bezeichnen.”

<sup>19</sup>Hunter *ad* 1.34–35.

<sup>20</sup>ὄνειδείοις, *Il.* 2.277, 21.480; αἰσχροῖς, *Il.* 3.38, 6.325; χολωτοῖσιν, *Il.* 4.241, 15.210, *Od.* 22.26, 225; μελιχίοις, στερεοῖς, *Il.* 12.267; ἐκπάγλοις, *Od.* 8.77 where the verb δηρίσαντο is preceded by νεῖκος, 75.

imitators."<sup>21</sup> Hunter, on the other hand, notes that while at *Id.* 7.48 "ἐτώσια μοχθίζοντι is used of unsuccessful poets," in other Idylls "lovers do not ... 'contest' before their rivals."<sup>22</sup> Once again the goatherd is more sure than we can be about what he is describing.

His description of the scene supplies "more 'than is actually there' (the thoughts and emotions of the figures for example)."<sup>23</sup> Yet this excess is puzzling; it is an interpretive response which we cannot compare with the object itself. The goatherds' interpretations invite interpretations of our own. The scholia disambiguate at the level of individual words: by deciding that the woman is a statue, or Pandora, they see something specific on the bowl. Their approach seems crude, a violation of the poem's suggestive vagueness. Yet the desire for clarity is hardly to be separated from reception; even Hunter's modest summary is clearer than the goatherd himself: "The woman laughs while the men suffer from the *eros* for which she is responsible."<sup>24</sup>

The next scene is easier to picture (39–44):

τοῖς δὲ μετὰ γριπεύς τε γέρων πέτρα τε τέτυκται  
λεπράς, ἐφ' ᾧ σπεύδων μέγα δίκτυον ἐς βόλον ἔλκει  
ὁ πρέσβυς, κάμνοντι τὸ καρτερὸν ἀνδρὶ εἰκῶς.  
φαίης κεν γυίων νιν ὅσον σθένος ἔλλοπιεύειν,  
ᾧδὲ οἱ ᾠδήκωντι κατ' αὐχένα πάντοθεν ἴνες  
καὶ πολὺ περ ἔονται· τὸ δὲ σθένος ἄξιον ἄβας.

<sup>21</sup>D. M. Halperin, *Before Pastoral: Theocritus and the Ancient Tradition of Bucolic Poetry* (New Haven 1983) 178, cf. 242–243.

<sup>22</sup>Hunter *ad* 1.34–35 also compares Longus 1.15.4–17.1; yet surely this is more interpretation than imitation of *Idyll* 1?

<sup>23</sup>Hunter p.63.

<sup>24</sup>Hunter *ad* 1.36–37. Cf. Friedländer (*supra* n.2) 14 on the bowl's layout. He notes that it has undergone a twofold reduction compared with the Shield of Achilles. Firstly, many fewer scenes are portrayed, and secondly there are many fewer figures within those scenes. This facilitates synoptic perception, and induces a sense of symmetry in the insets: "Denn liegt es freilich nicht allzu fern, den Fischer in ein emblemartiges Mittelfeld zu setzen und die beiden Dreifigureszenen antithetisch an den Rand. Aber gesagt wird davon nichts, und der Dichter hat wohl ein ganz scharfes Bild weder gehabt noch geben wollen."



Next to them is fashioned an old fisherman and a steep rock, on which the old man eagerly drags a large net for a cast, looking like a man who is laboring hard. You would say that he is fishing with all the strength of his limbs, the tendons bulge so all over his neck, even though he is grey-haired. But his strength is worthy of youth.

Here there is no conflict between visual representation and narration; the present tense of ἔλκει is not combined with temporal markers like ὅκα μὲν ... ἄλλοκα δ(έ) and δηθά. Similarly the goatherd's inferences are more obviously derived from the visual information; if the fisherman resembles "a man who is laboring hard," and "you would say that he is fishing with all the strength of his limbs," this is because "the tendons bulge so all over his neck." Only in the final verse does he add something to the image: "his strength is worthy of youth." Here, as in the conclusion to the previous scene, he seems to anticipate how events will turn out.

He also anticipates his audience's response: "you would say that he is fishing with all the strength of his limbs." But to whom is he talking? Gutzwiller thinks the words are intended for Thyrsis alone: "To remove any doubt that φαίης in 42 is addressed to Thyrsis rather than an anonymous 'you,' we need only compare Gorgo's remarks on the tapestries in *Idyll* 15.79, 'you would say (φασεῖς) they are garments fit for the gods.' Even Gorgo's θεῶν περονάματα recalls the goatherd's τι θεῶν δαίδαλμα (32), both conveying the speaker's subjective impression of an art object."<sup>25</sup> Yet the scene does not unfold dramatically as in *Idyll* 15, or Herodas *Mim.* 4, to which Gutzwiller also refers. In these poems, when one character invites another to respond to an image, we are given the companion's response. In *Idyll* 15, after Gorgo's initial reaction (78–79)—"Praxinoa, look at the tapestries first, how fine and

<sup>25</sup>Gutzwiller (*supra* n.4) 92.

delightful they are, you would say they were garments of the gods"—we hear Praxinoa's reply (80–83): "Lady Athena, what sort of weavers worked on them. What sort of artists drew the exact shapes. How true they stand and how true they move, living, not woven. People are so clever!" Similarly in Herodas *Mim.* 4, after Phile's first reaction (20–22)—"what beautiful statues, dear Kynno; what craftsman fashioned this stone and who set it up?"—we hear, after the names of the artist and dedicator, further commentary by Kynno (28–29): "look at that girl looking up at the apple; wouldn't you say she will faint soon if she can't get the apple?"<sup>26</sup> Moreover, their responses are brief; in *Idyll* 15 the description of the tapestries lasts nine verses (78–86), and in Herodas 4 the women respond succinctly to a succession of objects. Both poems ask us to focus on the characters, as by question and answer they formulate a shared response to what they are viewing; the object itself is less important than their reaction to it.<sup>27</sup>

The dramatic interaction between object, first viewer, and respondent in these poems is quite different from *Idyll* 1. The goatherd describes a single object in great detail, yet that detail creates a conflict between his description and the object it represents. After the first scene there are two bowls in the audience's mind: the one the goatherd describes, and the one we picture on the basis of his description. The two are bound to be different, since the second cannot incorporate all the informa-

<sup>26</sup>The ecphrastic scene at the temple in Euripides' *Ion* (184–218) is also a series of questions and answers between the chorus members.

<sup>27</sup>Gutzwiller (*supra* n.4) 90. How we should react to their reaction is another question. Recent work on *Idyll* 15 has distanced itself from ironic treatment of Gorgo and Praxinoa. S. Goldhill, "The Naive and Knowing Eye: Ecphrasis and the Culture of Viewing in the Hellenistic World," in S. Goldhill and R. Osborne, edd., *Art and Text in Ancient Greek Culture* (Cambridge 1994) 217–222, and J. B. Burton, *Theocritus's Urban Mimes* (Berkeley 1995) 103–104, analyze the women's use of Hellenistic art theory. For a judicious overview of the issues, see R. L. Hunter, "Mime and Mimesis: Theocritus, *Idyll* 15," in M. A. Harder et al., edd., *Theocritus* (Groningen 1996) 149–169.

tion included in the first. Yet in the second scene the goatherd's interpretation is less intrusive; the image seems to offer itself to us more directly. Similarly, while φαίης κεν is apparently addressed to Thyrsis, it is not to elicit a response from his companion like Gorgo's φασεῖς, for he goes on with his description without a pause. φαίης κεν looks beyond the poem's dramatic illusion, and finesses the *kissubion* in the audience's mind. The first scene gives us the goatherd's interpretive narration of whatever clues he has picked up from the images on the bowl. The second gives us just the images, and so lets us find clues of our own.<sup>28</sup>

The final scene is the longest of the three (45–54):

τυτθὸν δ' ὅσον ἄπωθεν ἀλιτρώτοιο γέροντος  
 περκναῖσι σταφυλαῖσι καλὸν βέβριθεν ἄλωά,  
 τὰν ὀλίγος τις κῶρος ἐφ' αἰμασιαῖσι φυλάσσει  
 ἥμενος· ἀμφὶ δέ νιν δύο ἄλώπεκες, ἃ μὲν ἀν' ὄρχως  
 φοιτῆ σινομένα τὰν τρώξιμον, ἃ δ' ἐπὶ πῆρα  
 πάντα δόλον τεύχοισα τὸ παιδίον οὐ πρὶν ἀνησεῖν  
 φατὶ πρὶν ἢ ἀκράτιστον ἐπὶ ξηροῖσι καθίξει.  
 αὐτὰρ ὄγ' ἀνθερίκοισι καλὰν πλέκει ἀκριδοθήραν  
 σχοίνῳ ἐφαρμόσδων· μέλεται δέ οἱ οὔτε τι πῆρας  
 οὔτε φυτῶν τοσσῆνον ὅσον περὶ πλέγματι γαθει.

And a little way off from the sea-worn old man a vineyard is nicely laden with dark clusters which a little boy is guarding as he sits on a dry-stone wall. And about him are two foxes; one roams among the vine rows, damaging what is ready to be eaten, the other, fashioning every scheme against his wallet, thinks that she [will not let the boy go until she has sat down having

<sup>28</sup>Cf. Ott (*supra* n.2) 103 n.290: "Die 'Momentaufnahme' des Fischers zeigt nur seine Anstrengung, die Frage, ob ihm Erfolg oder Mißerfolg beschieden ist, muß der Leser für sich selbst beantworten. M. E. gibt jedoch die in beiden andern Szenen thematisierte Erfolglosigkeit den entscheidenden Hinweis: auch der Fischer müht sich vergebens, das volle Netz ist zu schwer. Aber diese Meinung ist subjectiv." My own subjective opinion would be that "his strength is worthy of youth" points to success.

feasted upon dry food].<sup>29</sup> But he is weaving a lovely cage for crickets, fitting together asphodels and reeds. And he has no concern at all for his wallet or the plants, his pleasure in the weaving is so great.

The description begins with a still image. The two foxes are more animated; one “roams among the vine rows,” the other makes plans on the boy’s wallet. The figures come to life because the goatherd imagines their inner world on the basis of their appearance: *σινομένα* suggests deliberate mischief,<sup>30</sup> *πάντα δόλον τεύχοισα* and *φατί* (if this is correct) are overtly humanizing. There is no conflict between visual representation and narration as there is in the first scene; the grapes and the wallet are easily pictured as objectives of the foxes’ actions. Similarly, the description of the cricket cage gives the materials of its construction, and a clear sense of how they are being used, and it is from this picture that the goatherd projects the boy’s inner experience: “And he has no concern at all for his wallet or the plants, his pleasure in the weaving is so great.” Unlike the second scene, we are aware that the goatherd is interpreting, yet his interpretations seem to harmonize with the visual information; they do not create the puzzles of the first scene.

Having considered the content of the individual scenes let us now consider how they relate to one another. The bowl, we are told, has ivy decoration around its lip (29–31), and “within” (*ἔντοσθεν*, 32) is the first of the figures the goatherd describes. Beside this woman (*πάρ*, 33) stand the two men, and “contend in words from either side” (*ἄλλοθεν ἄλλος*, 34). “By (or with) these” (*τοῖς δὲ μετά*, 19) is the fisherman. “A little way off” from him (*τυτθὸν δ’ ὅσον ἄπωθεν*, 45) are the vineyard and

<sup>29</sup>Verse 51 is almost certainly corrupt. I have supplied the stopgap translation of Hunter *ad* 1.50–51, based on the “minimum necessary change” of *ἀκράτιστον* to *ἀκράτιστος*.

<sup>30</sup>LSJ I gives pirates, Cyclopes, Scylla and marauding armies as subjects of this verb.

the boy, and “about him” (ἀμφὶ δέ νιν, 48) are the foxes. Finally, acanthus spreads “in every way around” the bowl (55).

The ivy and acanthus belong exclusively to the bowl’s visual surface, and do not participate in the scenes which they surround. While ἔντοσθεν may indicate either that the two men and the woman are inside the bowl, or that they are inside an ivy frame, it clearly separates the decorative plant motif from the human figures. But how are we to understand the bowl’s other spatial markers? Do τοῖς δὲ μετὰ and τυτθὸν δ’ ὅσσον ἄπωθεν mark divisions within a single scene, or is each scene a world of its own? And how should we understand πᾶρ and ἄλλοθεν ἄλλος? Do we picture the two men standing beside the woman within a pictorial space which they share, or does she, the θεῶν δαίδαλμα, occupy a different visual field? Does the goatherd see the men as in love with an image that lies between them, and is this why their words can never touch her mind? Is this what the scholia mean by their question, τίς γὰρ ἂν ἄγαλμα πεῖσαι δυνήσεται; Any attempt to reconstruct the bowl as a physical object must decide questions which the goatherd’s language leaves open, just as all attempts to do so necessarily share one fundamental assumption: that the goatherd has told us everything there is to see.<sup>31</sup>

Rather than as guides to turning an imaginary object into an actual one, it would perhaps be better to understand the frequent spatial markers as a reminder that what we are listening to is a fiction; ἔντοσθεν, πᾶρ, ἄλλοθεν ἄλλος, τοῖς δὲ μετὰ,

<sup>31</sup>See Gow *ad* 1.27–56, C. Gallavotti, “Le coppe istoriate di Teocrito e di Virgilio,” *ParPass* 21 (1966) 421–436, Nicosia (*supra* n.2), Ott (*supra* n.2), and F. Manakidou, *Beschreibung von Kunstwerken in der hellenistischen Dichtung* (Stuttgart 1993) 15–47. The difficulties that lie in wait for the attempt were already well appreciated by Friedländer (*supra* n.2) 14: “Betrachten wir nun die Einlage selbst genauer, so zeigt sich, daß der Dichter eine Vorstellung vom Ganzen besitzt und dem Leser übermittelt. Allein diese Vorstellung ist alles andere als exakt. Das Gefäß heißt “zweihenklig,” aber es wird mit einem homerischen Kunstwort (κισσόβιον) benannt, das keine bestimmte Form vor das Auge stellt.”

τυτθὸν δ' ὄσσον ἄπωθεν, and ἀμφὶ δέ νιν never let us forget that the characters we are hearing about are figures on the surface of a bowl. This is what J. A. Heffernan calls “representational friction” in the Shield of Achilles: “By explicitly noting the difference between the medium of visual representation (gold) and its referent (cattle), Homer implicitly draws our attention to the *friction* between the fixed forms of visual art and the narrative thrust of his words.”<sup>32</sup> Heffernan also suggests that because of the length of the narrative sequences in the description of the Shield, the conversion of image to narration is at times so thorough that “we can hardly see a picture through Homer’s words.”<sup>33</sup> The scenes on the bowl, by contrast, are of much smaller scope: seven, six and ten lines apiece. Concentration emphasizes the power of the fiction; we assent to the narrative illusion even as we are reminded that what we are hearing about is a two-dimensional surface.

One might also approach the question of voice in the passage as a deliberate, even ostentatious, fiction. A goatherd describes an object that belongs to his rustic world, and yet what Theocritus has placed in his mouth is epic ecphrasis that has its place beside Apollonius’ description of Jason’s cloak, and Moschus’ description of Europa’s basket. Gorgo and Praxinoa describe the palace tapestries briefly and in character, but what the goatherd speaks is an emulation of Homer’s Shield of Achilles and Hesiod’s Shield of Heracles. While *Idyll* 1 is dramatic in form, the ecphrasis is anti-mimetic, and strongly marks the poem as fiction. Even the word *kissubion* belongs to literature not life.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>32</sup>Heffernan (*supra* n.15) 4.

<sup>33</sup>Heffernan (*supra* n.15) 13. Cf. *Il.* 18.491–515, 523–549, 579–606, which, as Heffernan (20) observes, close with, or are followed by, reminders that the Shield is a physical object.

<sup>34</sup>Friedländer (*supra* n.2) 14, see *supra* n.31; Halperin (*supra* n.21) 167–177. Hunter *ad* 1.41 compares εἰκῶς with Hes. *Aspis* 215, Aratus *Phaen.* 63–67, and Ap. Rhod. *Argon.* 1.739, and notes (*ad* 1.42) that this verse is Theocritus’

The ecphrasis, then, is a manifest fiction, and what it offers its audience is a concentrated experience of fictional involvement. In twenty-three verses we enter and leave three microcosmic scenes in succession, with new settings, new characters, and new stories to imagine each time. Moreover, the goatherd's narration leaves us in no doubt that what we are listening to is in part invention. The ecphrasis is a fictional character's imaginative response to an object in his invented world, and lies somewhere between description and fantasy.<sup>35</sup> The succession of scenes surely makes us aware that our own willingness to participate in these fictional worlds rivals that of the goatherd himself.<sup>36</sup> We may feel that a desire for meaning differentiates our response from his.<sup>37</sup> The goatherd interprets the bowl

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only use of the Homerism φαίης κεν: "Here the form plays against the precious poeticisms γυίων and ἔλλοπιεύειν: would *anyone* 'say' such a thing?"

<sup>35</sup>In this respect the ecphrasis may remind us of *Idyll* 1 itself; its herdsmen are manifest fictions who yet incorporate recognizable pieces of reality. L. Dällenbach, *The Mirror in the Text* (Chicago 1989) 94–106 and *passim*, is the most complete treatment of ecphrasis as a figure (*mise en abyme*) of the framing text. R. F. Thomas, "Virgil's Ecphrastic Centerpieces," *HSCP* 87 (1983) 184, considers this figure in *Aeneid* 1: "At the center of the murals we find a work of art within a work of art within a poem."

<sup>36</sup>*Cf.* W. Iser's analysis of readers' self-conscious involvement in a text as they correct false impressions formed earlier in their reading, *The Act of Reading* (Baltimore 1978) 133–134: "It is at this point that the discrepancies produced by the reader during the gestalt-forming process take on their true significance. They have the effect of enabling the reader actually to become aware of the inadequacy of the gestalten he has produced, so that he may detach himself from his own participation in the text and see himself being guided from without. The ability to perceive oneself during the process of participation is an essential quality of the aesthetic experience; the observer finds himself in a strange, halfway position: he is involved, and he watches himself being involved. However, this position is not entirely nonpragmatic, for it can only come about when existing codes are transcended or invalidated. The resultant restructuring of stored experiences makes the reader aware not only of the experience but also of the means whereby it develops."

<sup>37</sup>Miles (*supra* n.6) 156: "Thyrsis and his friend fail to appreciate the significance of the content of their art ... The effect of *Idyll* 1 is ... to reveal how alien the herdsmen's way of looking at things is from ours and how unbridgeable is the gulf that separates them from us." D. Fowler, "Narrate and Describe: The Problem of Ecphrasis," *JRS* 81 (1991) 33, and B. W. Boyd, "Non enarrabile textum: Ecphrastic Trespass and Narrative Ambiguity in the *Aeneid*," *Virgilius* 41 (1995) 74, discuss the relationship between characters' and readers' points of view in the ecphrastic scene of *Aeneid* 1.

insofar as he endows its two-dimensional figures, human and animal, with thoughts and feelings appropriate to the stories in which he thinks they are participating. He does not, however, reflect on their significance, either individually or as a whole, whereas a sense that the *kissubion* is in some way symbolic has been a staple of the poem's more recent critical reception.<sup>38</sup> Yet if our hermeneutics are enabled or even invited by the limitations in his, then our response to the ecphrasis looks very much like his response to the *kissubion*. As he reads narrative and psychology into the figures on the bowl so we read allegory into his narration. By seeking to go beyond his response we in fact resemble it most.

### *The Song*

The goatherd's offer of the bowl is intended to elicit a song from Thyrsis. Frequent references to his skilful singing (7–8, 19–20, 61–62), including a previous victory in a song contest against Chromis from Libya (23–24), anticipate his performance. The *sphragis* with which he begins his song (65)—“I am Thyrsis of Etna, and the voice of Thyrsis is sweet”—praises his own singing, and, as he sings, the refrain is a constant reminder that we are listening to a song. After its first appearance at verse 63, βουκολικᾶς ... ἀοιδᾶς recurs at verses 70, 73, 76, 79, 84, 89, 94, 99, 104, 108, 111, 114, 122, 127, 131, 137, and 142: eighteen times in eighty-one lines. When Thyrsis has finished

<sup>38</sup>A selection: For Lawall (*supra* n.2) 30, the three scenes represent not merely the three ages of man, but their “essential psychological condition”; for H. Edquist, “Aspects of Theocritean Otium,” *Ramus* 4 (1975) 106, “the totality of significant human experience from childhood to old age.” For Miles (*supra* n.6) 146–149 the bowl depicts grim scenes of Hesiodic realism which are systematically misread by the goatherd; for Halperin (*supra* n.21) 186 they “represent the themes of bucolic poetry itself.” For F. Cairns, “Theocritus' First Idyll: The Literary Programme,” *WS* 97 (1984) 102–104, the final scene is a climactic symbol of poetic composition within an object that has “literary programmatic significance” (101). Cf. Gutzwiller (*supra* n.4) 92: “analogical readings, which seek to find meanings insinuated by the author and unintended by the character, have predominated over mimetic ones.”



singing the goatherd greets his performance with lavish praise and the promised gift of the *kissubion* (146–150); the song has evidently lived up to his expectations. “The Sorrows of Daphnis,” then, is a supreme display of pastoral singing, and the poem strongly marks the fiction that its hexameters are a song.<sup>39</sup> So how are we to imagine the performance that the goatherd so admires?

After the *sphragis* Thyrsis continues with questions addressed to the Nymphs (66–69):

πᾶ ποκ' ἄρ' ἦσθ', ὅκα Δάφνις ἐτάκετο, πᾶ ποκα, Νύμφαι;  
 ἦ κατὰ Πηνειῶ καλὰ τέμπεα, ἦ κατὰ Πίνδω;  
 οὐ γὰρ δὴ ποταμοῖο μέγαν ῥόον εἶχετ' Ἀνάπω,  
 οὐδ' Αἴτνας σκοπιάν, οὐδ' Ἄκιδος ἱερὸν ὕδωρ.

Where were you then, when Daphnis was dying, where were you, Nymphs? In the lovely valleys of Peneius or Pindus? For surely you did not keep to the great stream of the river Anapus, or the peak of Etna, or the holy water of Acis.

His tone is passionate; ἄρ', as Hunter observes, “marks an urgent question,”<sup>40</sup> and the effect is heightened by repetition of πᾶ ποκ(α). Similarly οὐ γὰρ, with which Thyrsis responds to his own question, is not so much an answer as a show of indignation, surprise, or even contempt.<sup>41</sup> At the same time the sonorous geography—Peneius, Pindus, Anapus, Etna, Acis—is a counterpoint to the emotional display; each location is a pleasant distraction from the scene of Daphnis' death.

In the verses that follow, Thyrsis shifts from direct address to

<sup>39</sup>Wilamowitz, *Die Textgeschichte der griechischen Bukoliker* (Berlin 1906) 137, “ein Reflex des Liedes in einer anderen poetischen Gattung”; Gow *ad* 1.64–142, “the ‘songs’ which T. puts in the mouth of his characters can do no more than suggest in another medium the verses which they actually sang”; T. G. Rosenmeyer, *The Green Cabinet* (Berkeley 1969) 147, “Theocritus suggests the music instead of putting it on the boards.” This suggestion is, however, insistent.

<sup>40</sup>Hunter *ad* 1.66.

<sup>41</sup>J. D. Denniston, *The Greek Particles*<sup>2</sup> (Oxford 1950) 77–79.

narrative, evoking the animals' response to Daphnis' death through their various cries: jackals and wolves "howled" (71), the lion "lamented" (72), cattle "wept" (75). Having suggested these inhuman voices, Thyrsis introduces a series of articulate visitors. Hermes, the first to arrive, does not grieve like the animals, but speaks (εἶπε, 77) to Daphnis as one sensible fellow remonstrating with another (77–78): "Daphnis, who is wearing you out? Who are you so enamored of, my good friend?" The words of the cowherds, shepherds, and goatherds who arrive next are reported indirectly—"everyone asked him what was the matter" (81)—and are followed by the appearance of Priapus. Priapus speaks directly, like Hermes, but appears more sympathetic (82): "Poor Daphnis, why are you wasting away?" The scholia call his speech a consolation—παρηγορητικὸς ὁ λόγος<sup>42</sup>—but his rhetoric appears to miss its mark. Daphnis is not reconciled to his fate, and does not reply (92).

His silence is theatrical.<sup>43</sup> Yet if Daphnis' unwillingness to respond is a kind of acting, will this not be reflected in Thyrsis' performance? Should we not imagine some kind of pause for effect here, to communicate this silence to the goatherd? For there are other signs of communication between performer and audience. Hunter notes<sup>44</sup> that the goatherd's approval of the song is not impaired by Priapus' satirical portrait of his profession in verses 86–88:

“βούτας μὲν ἐλέγευ, νῦν δ’ αἰπόλῳ ἀνδρὶ ἔοικας.  
ὠπόλος, ὅκκ’ ἐσορῆ τὰς μηκάδας οἶα βατεῦνται,  
τάκεται ὀφθαλμῶς ὅτι οὐ τράγος αὐτὸς ἔγεντο.”

<sup>42</sup>Schol. 1.82–85f (Wendel 60). Cf. 1.82–85k: παρηγορησαι θέλων τοῦτό φησι πρὸς αὐτόν.

<sup>43</sup>Lawall (*supra* n.2) 20–21 compares Daphnis to Aeschylus' Prometheus. G. B. Walsh, "Seeing and Feeling: Representation in Two Poems of Theocritus," *CP* 80 (1985) 9, cites *Ar. Ran.* 832–834, 912–920: "Even [Daphnis'] silence seems theatrical, a way of miming significance, the trick for which Aeschylus was famous." For Gutzwiller (*supra* n.4: 96) Daphnis resembles Phaedra in Euripides' *Hippolytus*, "because it is *love* that compels both of them to their fate" (241 n.61).

<sup>44</sup>Hunter *ad* 1.86–91.

“You used to be called an cowherd, but now you resemble a goatherd. For the goatherd, when he sees how the females are mounted, cries because he himself was not born a goat.”

He concludes that “the framing context never completely disappears”; the world portrayed in “The Sorrows of Daphnis” reflects the world of *Idyll* 1 in which the song is performed. But Thyrsis’ repetition of αἰπόλος is emphatic; it appears to be a deliberate jest incorporating the goatherd into the song.<sup>45</sup> The verses are a fiction of oral composition, and dramatize the singer’s adaptation of his song to fit its performance context.<sup>46</sup>

Thyrsis’ portrayal of Aphrodite is also conditioned by his audience. Unlike the previous visitors, whose attitude towards Daphnis is expressed through their speech alone, Aphrodite’s feelings are narrated by Thyrsis (95–96):

ἦνθέ γε μὴν ἀδεῖα καὶ ἅ Κύπρις γελάοισα,  
λάθρη μὲν γελάοισα, βαρὺν δ’ ἀνὰ θυμὸν ἔχοισα.

And yes, Cypris too came smiling sweetly, smiling secretly, but bearing heavy anger in her heart.

These verses, and their relationship to verses 138–139, are of course famously difficult. Yet if we examine them in light of the interaction between Thyrsis and the goatherd perhaps their difficulty will seem less oppressive. As Hunter observes, “γε μὴν marks the climactic point of an enumeration,”<sup>47</sup> and the

<sup>45</sup>Gow *ad* 1.86 draws the opposite conclusion: “T. has probably forgotten that the sole audience of Thyrsis’ song is himself a goatherd.”

<sup>46</sup>Cf. R. Pretagostini, “Tracce di poesia orale nei carmi di Teocrito,” *AevAnt* 5 (1992) 71: “la performance di Tirsi sulla morte di Dafni ... mostra come un componimento ... poteva essere adattato dall’autore-esecutore alle mutate necessità e circostanze della nuova esecuzione: il riferimento finale alla libagione in onore delle Muse con il latte appena munto è un esempio molto interessante di un’aggiunta estemporanea, dettata dal contesto situazionale relativo al momento dell’esecuzione.” While the end of the song is the clearest indication of Thyrsis’ adaptation of “The Sorrows of Daphnis” to its performance context, it is not the only one. Incorporation of the audience into the song is most fully dramatized in the song contest of *Idyll* 5, where mockery of the other singer is an essential ingredient of the performance. Cf. R. H. Finnegan, *Oral Poetry* (Cambridge 1977), especially Ch. 3 “Composition,” 52–87.

<sup>47</sup>Hunter *ad* 1.95–96.

effect is heightened by καί. Thyrsis is increasing the tension as the most important visitor arrives. Yet his creation of suspense surely plays upon the goatherd's knowledge that Aphrodite has a crucial role in Daphnis' death. As we might guess from his request to hear "The Sorrows of Daphnis" specifically (19), he already knows the story; verse 95 is addressed to a listener who (unlike us) understands what lies behind Aphrodite's behavior.

The words which Thyrsis has Aphrodite address to Daphnis also presuppose his audience's knowledge of this "back story" (97–98):<sup>48</sup>

κείπε "τύ θην τὸν Ἔρωτα κατεύχεο, Δάφνι, λυγιξείν·  
ἦ ῥ' οὐκ αὐτὸς Ἔρωτος ὑπ' ἀργαλέω ἐλυγίχθης;"

And she said, "Daphnis, did you not indeed assert that you would bind Love, and have you not now been bound by fierce Love yourself?"

This speech finally provokes a response. It begins with an ascending tricolon of reproach (100–101), and by aposiopesis hints at Aphrodite's relations with Anchises (105): "Don't they say about Cypris that the cowherd ... ?" The figure is theatrical, and we should no doubt imagine another pause here. Daphnis then orders Aphrodite to "'begone to Ida, begone to Anchises,'" and ironically sketches the pastoral scene she can expect to find upon arrival (106–107). He reminds her that Adonis too is "in season" (109), and tells her, in language reminiscent of comedy (112),<sup>49</sup> "ἀὐτίς ὅπως στασῆ Διομήδεος ἄσσον ἰοῖσα," "'go and stand next to Diomedes again.'" He

<sup>48</sup>R. M. Ogilvie, "The Song of Thyrsis," *JHS* 82 (1962) 106: "[the song] is throughout allusive, seeming to assume from the listener familiarity with the story." (Although Ogilvie means the poem's audience, rather than the goatherd, on which see *infra*.) Cf. Ott (*supra* n.2) 112: "Die Vorgeschichte bleibt außerhalb des erzählten Geschehens."

<sup>49</sup>Ar. *Nub.* 824, 1177, *Ran.* 378, 627, *Av.* 131, *Pax* 77, etc. Cf. Gow *ad* 1.112: "The proposal to regard ὅπως στασῆ as a final clause dependent on ἔρπε in 106, and to treat what intervenes as parenthesis, gives unsatisfactory sense, and its gross clumsiness is accentuated by the imperative in 113."

even puts into her mouth the words which she is to speak to him (113).

From here on Daphnis addresses his mute companions. He bids farewell to the wild animals in another tricolon (115–116), and then to the spring Arethusa and the rivers of Thybris (116–117). After his colloquial abuse of Aphrodite, Daphnis now sounds like a tragic hero.<sup>50</sup> Envisioning his death, he composes an epitaph for himself (120–121):

“Δάφνις ἐγὼν ὄδε τῆνος ὁ τὰς βόας ὦδε νομεύων,  
Δάφνις ὁ τὸς τάρως καὶ πόρτιας ὦδε ποτίσδων.”

“I am that Daphnis who herded his cows here, the Daphnis who watered his bulls and calves here.”

Its form recalls the *sphragis*, and so associates Daphnis with Thyrsis himself.<sup>51</sup> The resemblance becomes closer in the invocation of Pan which follows (123–126):

“ὦ Πάν Πάν, εἴτ’ ἐσσι κατ’ ὄρεα μακρὰ Λυκαίω,  
εἴτε τύγ’ ἀμφιπολεῖς μέγα Μαίναλον, ἔνθ’ ἐπὶ νᾶσον  
τὰν Σικελάν, Ἑλίκας δὲ λίπε ρίον αἰπύ τε σᾶμα  
τῆνο Λυκαονίδαο, τὸ καὶ μακάρεσσιν ἀγητόν.”

“O Pan, Pan, whether you are on the high mountains of Lycaeus, or whether you wander great Maenolus, come to the island of Sicily, and leave the peak of Helice, and that steep tomb of the son of Lycaon, which is a wonder even to immortals.”

The list of locations in which the god might be found is a standard feature of kletic hymns, but the blend of heightened emotion and geography recalls the address to the Nymphs with which the song began: the Daphnis created by Thyrsis’ performance resembles the performer who created him.

<sup>50</sup>Ott (*supra* n.2) 126 n.365 compares Soph. *Aj.* 856–865, *Phil.* 936–940. Cf. Walsh (*supra* n.43) 9: “What Thyrsis uncovers as he tries to reach the hidden parts of Daphnis’ ‘tragic’ consciousness is a public performance, a substitute for the inner man.”

<sup>51</sup>Hunter *ad* 1.120–121.

The prayer continues with Daphnis offering his syrinx to the god (128–130):

“ἔνθ’, ὦναξ, καὶ τάνδε φέρει πακτοῖο μελίπνου  
ἐκ κηρῶ σύριγγα καλὸν περὶ χεῖλος ἐλικτάν·  
ἦ γὰρ ἐγὼν ὑπ’ Ἔρωτος ἐς Ἄιδαν ἔλκομαι ἤδη.”

“Come, lord, and carry off this pipe, honey-scented from the pressed wax, well bound around its mouth. For I myself am now being dragged off to Hades by love.”<sup>52</sup>

The pathos of the appeal to the absent pastoral divinity is emphasized by the repeated ἔνθ’ (124, 128), the verb which marks the arrival of Daphnis’ unsolicited visitors (77, 80, 81, 95). Moreover, the demonstrative τάνδε suggests that a gesture from Daphnis accompanies the offer. We know from the opening of the poem that the syrinx is the goatherd’s instrument (1–3); Thyrsis asked him to play it for him, and the goatherd refused because it might anger Pan (12–16). Thyrsis, then, has Daphnis point to the goatherd’s pipe as he offers his own to Pan. By indicating that they are both syrinx players, Thyrsis suggests that Daphnis resembles the goatherd as well as himself. It is an adaptation of his song in performance which celebrates his listener’s skill even as it acknowledges his refusal to play.

Yet why does Thyrsis spend two verses describing the pipe’s look and smell as he approaches the song’s emotional climax? Does this not risk frigidity?<sup>53</sup> The verses seem to be a miniature ecphrasis echoing the goatherd’s description of the bowl: the syrinx is πακτοῖο μελίπνου ἐκ κηρῶ, just as the *kissubion* is κεκλυσμένον ἀδεί κηρῶ and ἔτι γλυφάνοιο ποτόσδον (27–28); it is καλὸν περὶ χεῖλος ἐλικτάν, just as on the bowl χεῖλη μαρύ-

<sup>52</sup>My translation follows Hunter *ad* 1.129: “καλὸν is adverbial, περὶ ... ἐλικτάν in tmesis, and χεῖλος accusative of respect.”

<sup>53</sup>Demetrius *Eloc.* 119: the use of an elevated style in small matters is a source of frigidity.

εται ὑπόθι κισσός (29), and καρπῶ ἔλιξ εἰλεῖται (31).<sup>54</sup> While it is natural for the goatherd to dwell on the *kissubion*'s decoration, rather than its function, since this is what makes it remarkable, Thyrsis' emphasis upon the pipe's appearance, rather than its music, seems best explained as a response to the goatherd's description.

Daphnis ends his speech by inviting the world to change because he is dying (132–136). The last disorder he invokes is an unprecedented song contest (136): “let owls sing against nightingales from the mountains.”<sup>55</sup> The image reminds us that the herdsmen look to nature for paradigms of their music (*cf.* 1–3, 7–8).<sup>56</sup> As the nightingale is more melodious than the owl, so the quality of the singing is all-important when they judge their own songs.<sup>57</sup> Thyrsis begins by celebrating his ἀδέα φωνά (65), and in conclusion promises the Muses not that he will remember another song, but that he will sing to them more sweetly on another occasion (145). The singing is also what the goatherd admires in his performance (146–148):

πλήρες τοι μέλιτος τὸ καλὸν στόμα, Θύρσι, γένοιτο,  
πλήρες δὲ σχαδόνων, καὶ ἀπ' Αἰγίλω ἰσχάδα τρώγοις  
ἀδεῖαν, τέττιγος ἐπεὶ τύγα φέρτερον ᾄδεις.

May your lovely mouth be filled with honey, Thyrsis, and filled with honeycomb, and may you eat the sweet figs of Aegilus, since you sing better than a cicada.

We might tell as much from the form of the song. Thyrsis' de-

<sup>54</sup>The resemblance is noted by Cairns (*supra* n.38) 101–102, who sees both objects as symbols of bucolic poetry.

<sup>55</sup>Hunter *ad* 1.136: “cry in competition with ...”, i.e. ‘rival.’”

<sup>56</sup>For Miles (*supra* n.6) 154 the herdsmen's delight in “inarticulate sound” here and in the opening of the poem emphasizes “the superficiality of their response to the very art which they value so highly.”

<sup>57</sup>*Cf. Id.* 5.136–137, where Comatas appears to win the song contest because he is a better singer than Lacon: “it is not right for jays to compete with a nightingale, Lacon, nor hoopoes with swans.” Note also how he taunts Lacon at 5.29 as “a wasp buzzing against a cicada.”

clamatory opening gives his own voice center stage as one half of a supposed dialogue with the Nymphs. After this there are several kinds of vocal representation: narration for animals, indirect speech for human beings, dramatic impersonation for the gods and Daphnis. Each new speaker's entrance is marked, though no exits are reported.<sup>58</sup> In contrast with drama, the characters are present only as long as Thyrsis is singing their part, and the most important part is Daphnis. This is the centerpiece of the performance, the means by which the celebrated pastoral singer stages his resemblance to his legendary predecessor: of the eighty-one verses of the song, eighteen are refrain, twenty-nine impersonation of Daphnis.<sup>59</sup>

The song is also a stylistic medley. It incorporates tragedy, comedy, epitaph, and hymn in a rhetorical *bricolage* held together by the performance itself. This performance is responsive to its audience, but Thyrsis' singing is the real source of the goatherd's pleasure. To understand his enthusiasm we must imagine what only he can hear. His grasp of the story also appears superior to our own; at any rate, the identity of the *kora* at verse 82, the role of Aphrodite (95–98, 138–139), and the nature of Daphnis' death (139–141) are not obstacles to his enjoyment. Even if we accept that the poem's original audience would have enjoyed piecing the myth together from allusions in the song,<sup>60</sup> this pleasure is hardly that of the goatherd himself.<sup>61</sup>

<sup>58</sup> ἦνθ' Ἐρμῶς, 77; ἦνθον τοὶ βοῦται, τοὶ ποιμένες, ὀπόλοι ἦνθον, 80; ἦνθ' ὁ Πρίηπος, 81; ἦνθε ... ἅ Κύπρις, 95.

<sup>59</sup> Cf. Lycidas in *Idyll* 7, where the archetypal goatherd sings of Daphnis and Comatas. Here too the voice is emphasized (7.82, 88).

<sup>60</sup> Ogilvie (*supra* n.48) 110: the song contains "clues—no doubt intentionally difficult clues—to lead [Theocritus'] well-read and educated readers to fill in the gaps for themselves and to admire his ingenuity of allusion." Cf., however, Gow II 1: "T.'s story was no more intelligible to his scholiasts than to us." For modern responses see W. G. Arnott, "The Preoccupations of Theocritus: Structure, Illusive Realism, Allusive Learning," in Harder (*supra* n.27) 63, "mysterious and elusive"; M. Fantuzzi, "Theocritus and the Demythologizing of Poetry," in M. Depew and D. Obbink, edd., *Matrices of Genre* (Cambridge [Mass.] 1998) 146, "obscure presentation."

<sup>61</sup> Cf. Miles (*supra* n.6) 156, see *supra* n.37.



Finally, since the song is in hexameters this pleasure cannot be recreated by performing *Idyll* 1. Whether spoken, chanted, or sung, “The Sorrows of Daphnis” can never be the shepherd’s song it represents.<sup>62</sup> Like the ecphrasis, the song is a manifest fiction, and together they are an ideal introduction to the fiction of pastoral itself.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>62</sup>The representation of the human voice within the poem can only contrast with “l’intervention de la voix humaine dans sa publication,” P. Zumthor, *La lettre et la voix* (Paris 1987) 37.

<sup>63</sup>I would like to thank the *GRBS* reader and Jackie Elliott of Columbia University for their valuable suggestions regarding an earlier version of this paper.