

Musical Ekphrasis and Diegema in Longus' *Daphnis and Chloe*

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1. THAT MUSIC plays a key role in *Daphnis and Chloe* has been noted in scholarship on the novel, and it could not be otherwise if we take into account the enormous influence that the genre of bucolic poetry had in its shaping.¹ Topics have included the frequent references to music in the work—performances, contests, accompaniment to the daily tasks of the idealized shepherds who are the main characters, explanations of the origins and making of pastoral musical instruments through various etiological legends, and the symbolic and structural function of music in the couple's process of falling in love.² While it is true that the very musicality of Longus' style has

¹ E. Vaccarello, "L'eredità della poesia bucolica nel romanzo di Longo," *MC* 5 (1935) 307–325; G. Rohde, "Longus und die Bukolik," *RhM* 86 (1937) 23–49; M. C. Mittelstadt, "Longus: Daphnis and Chloe and the Pastoral Tradition," *ClMed* 27 (1966) 162–177, and "Bucolic-lyric Motifs and Dramatic Narrative in Longus' Daphnis and Chloe," *RhM* 113 (1970) 211–227.

² P. Liviabella Furiani, "La musica nel romanzo erotico greco tra natura e cultura," *QJFP* 1 (1984) 27–43; T. Amado, "Notas al papel estructural de la música en Dafnis y Cloe," *Euphrosyne* 26 (1998) 287–292; J. Maritz, "The Role of Music in Daphnis and Chloe," in H. Hofmann (ed.), *Groningen Colloquia on the Novel IV* (Groningen 1991) 57–67; T. K. Hubbard, "The Pipe that can Imitate all Pipes: Longus' *Daphnis and Chloe* and the Intertextual Polyphony of Pastoral Music," in M. Skoie and S. Bjørnstad Velázquez (eds.), *Pastoral and the Humanities: Arcadia Re-inscribed* (Bristol 2006) 101–106; S. Montiglio, "The (Cultural) Harmony of Nature: Music, Love, and Order in *Daphnis and Chloe*," *TAPA* 142 (2012) 133–156.

only been superficially addressed, and that it is based on Gorgian parison, homeoteuton, and isocolon of bicola and tricola paragraphs framed in symmetrical scenes which in turn are framed within mutually responsive sections,³ it is unquestionably no less important when considering the work's musical value.

Ekphrasis in the Greek novel, for its part, has become a recurrent subject of study.⁴ In the case of *Daphnis and Chloe* attention has focused on the painting of the Nymphs' grotto, which from the very preface serves as the compositional framework of the novel.⁵ The ekphrasis of the successive seasons of the year through which the youthful love story of the main characters develops has also been addressed.⁶ However, the description of an art object most frequently used both in the novel and in other genres is not the type of ekphrasis used in this case, but rather a very specific kind of ekphrasis, namely, of circumstances, among the varieties offered by progymnastic theory.

According to that theory, ekphrasis is one of the most complex and advanced of the fourteen introductory exercises to the study of rhetoric, or progymnasmata, whose theory was elaborated between the first and fifth centuries, although partially composed earlier,⁷ with the preserved parts ascribed to the

³ H. H. O. Chalk, "Eros and the Lesbian Pastorals of Longos," *JHS* 80 (1960) 32–51; A. M. Scarcella, *Struttura e tecnica narrativa in Longo Sofista* (Palermo 1968); Montiglio, *TAPA* 142 (2012) 133–156.

⁴ S. Bartsch, *Decoding the Ancient Novel. The Reader and the Role of Description in Heliodorus and Achilles Tatius* (Princeton 1989); A. Billault, "L'inspiration des ἐκφράσεις d'œuvres d'art chez les romanciers grecs," *Rhetorica* 8 (1990) 153–160.

⁵ J. Kestner, "Ekphrasis as Frame in Longus' *Daphnis and Chloe*," *CW* 67 (1973) 166–171.

⁶ J. A. Fernández Delgado, "Sentimental Education and Rhetoric in *Daphnis and Chloe*: Seasonal Ekphrasis," in M. P. Futre Pinheiro et al. (eds.), *Modern Critical Theory and the Ancient Novel: Poetics and Rhetoric* (Groningen forthcoming).

⁷ H. Rabe, *Rhetores Graeci* X (Leipzig 1926) 52 ff.; G. A. Kennedy, *Progym-*

rhetors Aelius Theon of Alexandria (1st–2nd cent.), Hermogenes (2nd cent.), Aphthonius, a disciple of Libanius (4th cent.), and Nicholas of Myra (5th cent.).⁸ The educational stage at which the progymnasmata were taught is believed to have come at the end of the class of the *grammatikos* and the beginning of that of the *rhetor*. This level of learning (unlike that of rhetoric in the strictest sense) would be attained by most of the few citizens schooled—even in the Roman period, when teaching was more consolidated.⁹ The seasonal ekphrasis, more specifically the one involving spring, is one of the examples systematically provided by the authors of progymnasmatic theory,¹⁰ as well as by the repertoire of progymnasmata attributed to Libanius himself, the sole surviving such repertoire.¹¹

This work is framed within that approach to the study of the novel, namely, the influence of school rhetoric, which has been little studied, although it has been extolled by leading scholars, and we are certain that it will be very fruitful.¹² Nonetheless,

nasmata: Greek Textbooks of Prose Composition and Rhetoric (Atlanta 2003) ix–xiii. (whose translations are used here).

⁸ Kennedy, *Progymnasmata* 45 ff. (Theon), 86 (Hermogenes), 117 ff. (Aphthonius), 166 ff. (Nicholas).

⁹ See J. A. Fernández Delgado, “Influencia literaria de los *progymnasmata*,” in *Escuela y literatura en Grecia Antigua* (Frosinone 2007) 273–306.

¹⁰ Theon 118: “There is ecphrasis of persons and events and places and periods of time ... Ecphrasis of events includes, for example, descriptions of war, peace, a storm, famine, plague, an earthquake; of times, for example, spring, summer, a festival, and the like.” Hermog. 22: “There are ecphrases of persons and actions and times and places and seasons and many other things...” Aphth. 37: “One should describe both persons and things ... occasions, like spring and summer...” Nicol. 68: “We compose ecphrases of places, times, persons, festivals, things done ... of times, for example, spring, summer.”

¹¹ C. A. Gibson, *Libanius’s Progymnasmata. Model Exercises in Greek Prose Composition and Rhetoric* (Atlanta 2008) 443 ff.

¹² R. F. Hock, “The Rhetoric of Romance,” in S. E. Porter (ed.), *Handbook of Classical Rhetoric in the Hellenistic Period* (Leiden/New York 1997) 445–465; C. Ruiz Montero, “Caritón de Afrodísias y los ejercicios preparatorios de Elio Teón,” in L. Ferreres (ed.), *Treballs en honor de Virgilio Bejarano* (Bar-

our approach to ekphrasis in Longus' novel (assumed to be prior to the third century) seeks to go one step beyond what has been broached so far by progymnasmatic theory and illustrated by the examples pertaining to the repertoire attributed to Libanius. The most extolled virtue of this exercise according to that theory is its clarity and vividness (*enargeia*), whereby it manages to conjure up the object described right before the listener/reader (cf. Theon 119–120). What we wish to show is that Longus' ekphrasis also frequently addresses other sensory aspects besides the visual, beginning with hearing, which is what concerns us here; and that this was possibly an aspiration that was implicitly understood in the virtue *enargeia*, which the theorists did not make explicit, perhaps because progymnasmatic theory is too schematic, being intended for use by teachers rather than students, as Theon suggests (66–71).

Regarding the diegema or narrative, a progymnasma that is simpler than ekphrasis but complementary to it like *narratio* and *descriptio*, its influence has been much less dealt with for the novel or in other genres. It is one of the first progymnasmata in the series, and Theon (78–96) devotes extensive theoretical attention to it. Of the three classes into which it is usually divided according to the rhetors, plus a mythical one according to Hermogenes (4),¹³ one is dramatic-fictional (cf. Hermog. 4, Aphth. 2–3, Nicol. 12–13), which both in the example of the colour of the rose offered by Aphthonius (3: the only rhetor who illustrates each of the progymnasmata with an example), and in most of the mythical-fictional ones in Libanius'

celona 1991) 709–713; R. González Equihua, “Heliodoro de Émesa y los *Ejercicios preparatorios* de Elio Teón,” *Nova Tellus* 31 (2014) 147–158; R. Fernández Garrido, “Etiópicas de Heliodoro y los *progymnasmata*: la ékfrasis,” in J. de la Villa et al. (eds.), *Ianua Classicorum. Temas y formas del mundo clásico II* (Madrid 2015) 123–130; M. A. Vinagre Lobo, “Áquiles Tacio y los *progymnasmata*: la *synkrisis*,” in *Ianua Classicorum II* 303–310; Fernández Delgado, forthcoming in *Modern Critical Theory*.

¹³ “They want there to be four species of narrative: one is mythical.”

repertoire¹⁴ consists of an etiological narration that includes metamorphosis. We will find the diegema simply in connection with some etiological stories of musical metamorphoses or instruments narrated by Longus.

2.1. Thus, the seasonal ekphrasis, which serves as the mechanism for ordering the story told by Longus, not only mentions the visual aspects of spring (1.9), but also that “there was the murmur of bees, the twittering of birds ... the bees were buzzing in the meadows, the thickets echoed with the trill of birds,” in such a way that the adolescent couple “began to imitate all they could hear and see. If they heard the birds sing, they also sang ...”¹⁵ In the description of the beginning of summer (1.23), the author points out how “sweet was the chirp of the cicadas, (sweet the aroma of the fruit,) how pleasing the bleating of the sheep. One could imagine that even the rivers with their placid flow were singing a song, that the winds were playing the pipes when blowing among the pine trees...” This emphasis on the sweet and pleasurable aspect of the sensations undoubtedly responds to the theoretical precept of ekphrasis that prescribes “beauty, usefulness, and pleasure” (Theon 119) as goals; and an expression such as “one could imagine” (εἴκασεν ἄν τις) applied to the music is akin to the well-known “as if one were seeing it” (τοῦ σχεδὸν ὀράσθαι τὰ ἀπαγγελόμενα) in the progymnastic definition of visual *enargeia* (Theon 119).¹⁶

In 3.12, the description of the beginning of the second spring of the love story and the couple’s return to shepherding after the winter, includes an offering made to the rural gods in which “they also devoted the first notes of their pipes as if in a melodious challenge to the nightingales, who gradually responded

¹⁴ Gibson, *Libanius’s Progymnasmata* 9 ff.

¹⁵ Cf. Fernández Delgado, forthcoming in *Modern Critical Theory*.

¹⁶ The equivalent formula in the school-model ekphrasis (cf. Theon 118) of the Hesiodic *Scutum* or the Achilles’ shield is: *tertium comparationis* in the dative + ἵκελος/εἰκώς: *Sc.* 182, 198, 206, 209, 211, 215, 244, 314, etc.; *Il.* 18.591; but also ὡς εἰ ζωοί (περ ἐόντες) “as if...,” *Sc.* 189, 194.

to them from the thicket, and little by little they refined their song to Itys, as if recalling their memory of the trills after a long time.” The couple’s song contest with the birds in 1.23 is replaced here by one between the music of the pipes and the song of the nightingales. The two comparative expressions “as if...” in the acoustic description are undoubtedly a reproduction of the typical “as if it talked” or “as if you were seeing it” in the visual ekphrasis (Theon 119). The same expression can be found in 4.3, where the ekphrasis describing the garden¹⁷ of the masters of Lamon, Daphnis’ foster father, rounds off with the description of a temple¹⁸ of Dionysus containing paintings of (among others) “satyrs <treading in the winepress> ... Bacchantes in their dances” and “Pan ... with his pipes, sitting on a stone, just as if he were intoning a shared song (ὄμοιος ἐνδιδόντι κοινὸν μέλος) for the stompers and the dancers.”

2.2. At other times, the musical reference appears in connection with an etiological story, specifically the metamorphosis of a girl either into an animal that emits a characteristic sound, or into a musical instrument: thus the diegema, both in the example of the rose offered by Aphthonius (3) and in most of the mythical-fictional ones in Libanius’ repertoire.¹⁹ Moreover, Daphnis’ narration to Chloe at 1.27, in order to explain to her the cooing of the wood pigeon that reached them from the forest, is that a pretty girl fond of singing was grazing her cows and entertaining them with her song, the song of Pan and Pitys which tells the story of this nymph who managed to escape the unwanted amorous attentions of the god by turning into a pine tree (*pitys*). A couple of versions of this story are in diegemata 4 and 32 in Libanius’ repertoire of progymnasmata,²⁰ which shows that this theme was deeply rooted as a school exercise,

¹⁷ A characteristic topic of progymnasmatic ekphrasis: see Gibson, *Libanius’s Progymnasmata* 447 ff.

¹⁸ Also a characteristic topic of progymnasmatic ekphrasis: Aphth. 38.

¹⁹ Gibson, *Libanius’s Progymnasmata* 9 ff.

²⁰ Gibson, *Libanius’s Progymnasmata* 12, 35.

and of whose early thematic variety Libanius' repertoire in the fourth century must be only a selection, to judge by other themes found on papyri.²¹

Daphnis' story continues: a cowherd, also handsome and song-loving, began to compete with the girl in song, and used his charm to draw eight of her cows away to join his own herd. The girl then felt sorry for herself for the humiliation and loss and begged the gods to turn her into a bird before she went home. So the gods turned her into that pastoral bird, melodious like the girl, which laments her misfortune with its cooing, summoning her cows.

Another etiological-musical story that includes the metamorphosis of a girl, in this case into a syrinx, is the one told by Lamon during a sacrificial feast given in thanks to Pan and the Nymphs for the release of Chloe from the Methymnian sailors (2.34). In this story the ox-herd Philetas ordered his son Tityrus to bring him his pipes. Not for nothing does Longus clarify that Lamon had heard the story when it was sung by a goat-herd from Sicily, the cradle of the pastoral genre. According to the story, in the beginning the syrinx was not a musical instrument but rather a beautiful young girl with a pretty voice who was watching over goats, playing with the Nymphs, singing, and grazing her flock, when Pan approached her and promised that if she consented to his wishes, all her goats would give birth to two kids. She rejected him, arguing that she would not accept love from someone who was neither goat nor man. Pan then tried to force her, and in her flight she hid among some reeds, which Pan cut down in his anger; although unable to find her, he invented the instrument by joining the uneven reeds with wax, in imitation of the unequal passion between the two. Even though the two stories are quite distant from each other in the novel, and appear in such different contexts (which is not to say that they are not perfectly crafted for the moment in which they are situated), it is not difficult to see that the story is

²¹ C. Iturralde, *Progymnasmata en papiro y otros materiales* (diss. Univ. Navarra 2015).

parallel to the one told about the song of Pan and Pitys, of which two progymnastic versions are preserved.²² Such a parallelism between both stories, like the one between one of them and the two progymnastic versions of Libanius' collection, as well as the presence of another in Achilles Tatius, and already in Ovid,²³ is a witness for a common narrative pattern of diegema practiced and transmitted in the schools.

A third etiological-musical story, like the last two in that it also includes metamorphosis into a musical instrument, in this case the echo, and the presence of Pan as the divine agent who causes it, is told by Daphnis to Chloe (3.23). As she knew nothing about the phenomenon, he explains to her why when the crew of a certain fishing boat that was passing by were chanting a rhythm, one could hear the forest reply to their song (without there being another sea, another boat, or other sailors singing, which is what she had thought). Previously (3.21) the author describes in detail how the coxswain of the boat would intone rowing chants or songs, and the others, like a chorus, would enter in unison when it was their turn. When they sang on the open sea, their voices would fade away, but if they were in an inlet, the chants marking the rhythm of the oarsmen could be heard clearly on land, where the plain spread out from a box canyon, which receiving the sound, as if it were an instrument, returned the echo of each of the sounds produced in a delightful concert, as all the sounds that came from the sea were followed by their echoes on land, which faded just as they had started. This magnificent ekphrasis of a fact or circumstance, as the theory of this progymnasma would define it,²⁴ as unusual as the echo itself, clearly obeys a very important norm in its argument: beauty or pleasure, and two of their principal

²² The story of Pan and the Syrinx is also found in Achilles Tatius 8.6.7 ff. and Ovid *Met.* 1.689 ff.

²³ The *Heroides*, for instance, are considered to use the progymnasma ethopoia: see P. Knox, *Ovid's Heroides: Select Epistles* (Cambridge 1995) 16.

²⁴ Theon 118; Hermog. 3; Aphth. 37; Nicol. 68.

virtues, clarity or vividness (*enargeia*), as well as the complete adaptation of the expression to the topic without elaborating unnecessary aspects (Theon 119; Hermog. 23). Thus Longus' story of echo combines the influence of the two progymnasmata in question here, ekphrasis and diegema.

According to the story in *Daphnis and Chloe*, Echo was the daughter of a Nymph, beautiful like her mother and mortal like her father. Brought up with the Nymphs and the Muses, she learnt to play the shepherd's pipes and flute and to accompany herself on the lyre and the cithara, playing all kinds of songs, and participating in the dances of the Nymphs and Muses. She avoided men, and Pan, jealous of her musical talent and furious for not possessing her beauty, drove the men in the fields mad, and they tore her to pieces and dispersed them all over the land, and her remains still intone her songs. Although the soil covers her remains, her voice can still be heard, and it imitates every sound as she did before: gods, men, instruments, and animals; even Pan himself when he plays his pipes, and when he hears the echo, pursues it across the mountains in search of his elusive disciple.²⁵

In addition to the presence once again of a narrative pattern of diegema that is basically the same in the several authors schooled in rhetoric, these three musical stories clearly fulfil the requirements established by the corresponding progymnastic theory, according to which six elements must accompany the narration: character(s), deed, time, place, manner, and cause; and four virtues must define it: clarity, conciseness, purity, and linguistic correctness.²⁶

2.3. As soon as Lamon finishes his story about the Syrix (2.34), Tityrus arrives with the pipes of his father, Philetas, and the musical narrative culminates in a triple ekphrasis (again the combination of both progymnasmata): first (35) the musical

²⁵ The myth of Echo appears in Ovid, *Met.* 3.356 ff., in a more detailed and different version (in which she is in love with Narcissus); and earlier, fleetingly, in Moschus fr.2, in which she is in love with a satyr.

²⁶ Theon 78–79; Aphth. 3; Nicol. 13–14.

instrument, the process of its tuning, and playing the entire pastoral musical repertoire; second (36) a mimetic dance of the grape harvest performed by Dryas; third (37) another dance that tells the story of Pan and Syrinx, with Daphnis and Chloe playing the parts. Thus the section on music, which closes the decisive Book 2 of the novel, is important in that, together with the couple's love oath (2.39), it concludes with the most important stage of their falling in love. This now closes in a ring-like structure using the theme of Pan and Syrinx with which it began: the telling of the story ends with the dance that illustrates the story. The musical programme also contains a *gradatio* that moves from the mythical history of the pastoral instrument par excellence, as told by Lamon, to its choreographed version danced by the novel's protagonists (with the dramatic risk of identification with the couple in the myth that this implies), by way of the instrumental performance of pastoral music by Philetas and the mimetic dance of the grape harvest by Dryas. The characters involved are the most important ones, or among the most important, in the novel: apart from the main couple themselves, Lamon is Daphnis' foster father and Dryas is Chloe's, and Philetas is the drover who mentors the couple in their sentimental journey, in which some have seen a likeness of the pastoral master Philetas of Cos.²⁷ The occasion, the feast in honour of Pan and the Nymphs, is also important. Thus the rhetorical procedures employed by the narrative in this near-apotheosis of pastoral music are first diegema and then ekphrasis, one of whose typical themes consists precisely of the description of a feast, according to progymnasmatic theory (Nicol. 68).

After the mythic story of the metamorphosis of Syrinx, the description of the instrument (2.35) invokes its large size and its long reeds, its wax fastenings reinforced with bronze, such that "one could imagine it was the one assembled by Pan," says the narrator, using a hyperbolic comparison and introductory turn

²⁷ R. Herzog, "Der Traum des Herodas," *Philologus* 79 (1924) 386–433.

of phrase highly typical of the progymnasmatic ekphrasis.²⁸ As to Philetas' playing of it, after verifying that the air could pass freely through the reeds, he blew them so powerfully that they sounded like several pipes together. He then gradually tempered his vigour until it was transformed into the most delicate melody, covering the complete pastoral repertoire: the music that corresponds to a herd of cows, to a flock of goats or sheep, sweet for the sheep, sonorous for the cows, and high-pitched for the goats, whereby a single set of pipes could stand in for all different kinds. In addition to the virtue of *enargeia*, the sources for invoking beauty and pleasure extolled by progymnasmatic theory are palpable in the description.

The description of the dance goes on to say that Dryas stood up (2.36), asking for a Dionysian tune, and performed the grape harvest dance, during which at certain moments he imitated picking grapes, at others carrying the baskets, then treading on the grapes, filling the buckets, and drinking the must, all with such grace and vitality, says the author, that they thought they could see the grapevines, the winepress, the casks, and Dryas actually drinking. Once again we have the invocation of pleasure and the characteristic progymnasmatic formula "so that they thought they were seeing..." to heighten the virtue of *enargeia*.

Finally (2.37), the loving couple got up to dance, performing the story told by Lamon, with Daphnis playing Pan and Chloe playing Syrinx. He insisted, seeking to seduce her, but she smiled in disdain; he pursued her relentlessly, running on tiptoe as if with hooves, she looked tired from her fleeing. Then Chloe hid in the forest as if it were a swamp, and Daphnis, with Philetas' large set of pipes, played a melody that was plaintive, portraying someone in love—passionate, a seducer; solicitous, like someone pursuing something—to the point that Philetas, in admiration, got up to kiss him and give him the set of pipes as a gift, insisting that he hand it on to a successor with similar

²⁸ Theon 119; Hermog. 23. Cf. n.16 above.

merit.²⁹ The explanatory comparisons and the admiration produced by the beauty described are also characteristic of the progymnastic theory on ekphrasis.³⁰ However, in the ekphrasis of both dance scenes, the music's acoustic *enargeia* is combined with the dance's visual *enargeia*, which in the case of Daphnis and Chloe in turn includes the nuanced melody of the lover with Philetas' large set of pipes, culminating the description within a description.

3. With these examples and their parallels in progymnastic theory, we believe we have shown how at least a selection of the abundant references to music in Longus' novel express the refined artistic creation of two of the progymnasmata with which the Greco-Latin teaching system prepared students for the transition from secondary education to the higher education of rhetoric: stories or diegemata, and above all descriptions, or ekphrases, in this case mainly in their modality of events or times. The etiological stories in the novel about various musical elements respond to a type that is well represented in the progymnasma diegema, and the most compact musical descriptions address two characteristic themes of what progymnastic theory calls the ekphrasis of occasions—in this case the seasons, on the one hand, and a feast, on the other.

Given the peculiarity of the ekphrastic material in question, however, the virtue of *enargeia* or clarity that this exercise strongly recommends cannot be applied here to the quasi-

²⁹ A similar description of a mimetic dance of a couple in love (Dionysus and Ariadne, illustrated too in an artistic tradition, visible in Pompeii, which is supposed to have influenced the configuration of scenes in Longus' novel), and in advance of the pantomime genre that began in the Hellenistic age and was highly popular in Roman times, already served to conclude Xenophon's *Banquet*, as does the dance of Daphnis and Chloe in Book 2. Xenophon's scene could then serve as a school model for this kind of ekphrasis, like so many other classical literary scenes (cf. Theon 66, 68, where Xen. *Mem.* 2.7.13–14 is recommended as an example of the *progymnasma mythos*).

³⁰ Theon 119; Hermog. 23; Nicol. 69.

visual liveliness of the description, which one assumes progymnastic theory is considering, but rather to its capacity to make one imagine what is being heard. This surely was contemplated also by the rhetorical exercise, although, perhaps due to its schematic character, the theory does not make this explicit. Thus, the novelist not only demonstrates perfect knowledge of the resources pertinent to the rhetorical technique he was practicing, but also of those which could best invite the admiration of listeners/readers who, like him, were also educated in a teaching method such as progymnasmata, which systematically fostered creating “the most difficult one yet,” by virtue of which it is present in so many masterpieces of epideictic rhetoric and literary creation in the Second Sophistic.³¹

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