The Hierarchy of Pleasures in Longus' *Daphnis and Chloe* and Thucydides' *Peloponnesian War*

Rory O'Sullivan

The proem of *Daphnis and Chloe* alludes to the opening pages of the *Peloponnesian War*—particularly the lines in which Thucydides explains his reasons for having written it (1.22.4). Scholars have long noticed the allusion.[1] In his proem, Longus calls his own work "an enjoyable possession for all human beings" (1.pr.3, κτῆμα δὲ τερπνὸν πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις), loudly echoing the famous phrase of 1.22.4 "a possession for always" (κτῆμά τε ἐς αἰεὶ). Earlier Longus writes: "After seeking out an interpreter of the image I worked hard to put together four books" (1.pr.3, ἀναζητησάμενος ἐξηγητὴν τῆς εἰκόνος τέτταρας βίβλους ἐξεπονησάμην)—with ἐξεπονησάμην recalling the ἐπιπόνως δὲ ηὑρίσκετο of Thuc. 1.22.3, and ἀναζητησάμενος repeating ζήτησις, a key word Thucydides uses to characterize his investigative practice (1.20.3, 1.23.5).[2] The most thorough identifi-

[1] Stephen M. Trzaskoma, "A Novelist Writing 'History': Longus' Thucydides Again," *GRBS* 45 (2005) 75–90, at 75 n.1 calls it "universally accepted." On Thucydides in the proem of *Daphnis and Chloe* see Robert Luginbill, "A Delightful Possession: Longus' Prologue and Thucydides," *CJ* 97 (2002) 233–247. Cf. Paul Turner, "Daphnis and Chloe: An Interpretation," *G&R* 7 (1960) 117–123; J. R. Morgan, in J. R. Morgan and R. Stoneman (eds.), *Greek Fiction* (London 1994) 73–77; Edmund P. Cueva, "Longus and Thucydides: A New Interpretation," *GRBS* 39 (1998) 429–440; E. Bowie, *Daphnis and Chloe* (Cambridge 2019) 98.

[2] See Bowie, *Daphnis and Chloe* 97. C. C. de Jonge, in R. K. Balot et al. (eds.),

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cation of these parallels has been made by Luginbill, who also observes several more of them, as well as an overarching symmetry between the structure of Longus' proem and Thucydides 1.22.4.[3]

Critics have also observed a connection—again, with varying degrees of emphasis—between the Mytilene revolt in Book 3 of the *Peloponnesian War* and the subplot culminating in almost-war between Mytilene and Methymna in the first two chapters of Book 3 of *Daphnis and Chloe.*[4]

An allusion necessarily involves a degree of both comparison and contrast: Longus, by alluding to Thucydides, establishes that, in some way, *Daphnis and Chloe* is like the *Peloponnesian War,* and in some other way it is not. Scholars interpreting the allusion have argued that since, generally, the ancient novels tend to mask themselves ironically as histories, that is likely also Longus' intended comparison.[5] They interpret the contrast by arguing that Longus rejects Thucydides' diametric opposition between pleasure and knowledge.[6] Here is Turner for example:

The Oxford Handbook of Thucydides (Oxford 2017) 641–658, homes in on this word (quoting 1.20.3) in an essay on the ancient reception of Thucydides: "Thucydides was regarded as the champion of the truth" (641).

[3] Luginbill, *CJ* 97 (2002) 233–247.

[4] This is the thrust of Cueva, *GRBS* 39 (1998) 429–440, as well as, in some depth, Trzaskoma, *GRBS* 45 (2005) 75–90. Bowie, *Daphnis and Chloe* 221–223, agrees with their assessment but prefers to look for the influence of Herodotus and Xenophon in Longus' choices of phrasing.

[5] B. E. Perry, *The Ancient Romances* (Berkeley 1967) 67–68: historical prose, i.e. the works of Herodotus, Thucydides, Polybius, etc., "is the governing framework within which, throughout the long period that separates Homeric epic from latter-day epic, all prose fiction in the form of narration is contained and controlled in respect to its length, the extent and nature of its invention, and its general orientation." In *Callirhoe,* Chariton alludes to Greek historians extensively, cf. G. Schmelling, *Chariton* (New York 1974) 24: "Few pages go by without Chariton imitating the three great Greek historians, Herodotus, Thucydides and Xenophon."

[6] S. Goldhill, *Foucault's Virginity* (Cambridge 1995) 6–7, reads a turn back towards Gorgias into this apparent privileging of pleasure.

> [Longus] was saying that his purpose was quite as serious as that of the great historian (i.e. to make people understand human life), that he too had tried to produce something of universal significance ("a possession for all men"), but that instead of excluding the mythical element and thus making his work "less pleasant to read," he had conveyed his teaching in the form of a myth, so that it would be 'pleasant' as well as instructive.[7]

This reading inadequately interprets both the comparison and the contrast in Longus' allusion. The comparison is inadequate, first, because even in the other novels such allusions to historical works are often thematically or conceptually grounded; second, because it does not sufficiently explain why Longus compares himself to Thucydides specifically.[8] The contrast as usually made involves either a simple or a complex interpretation. The simple interpretation assumes that *Daphnis and Chloe* is simply or essentially a pleasing and beautiful text, as opposed to the *Peloponnesian War,* which is not. Although some have interpreted *Daphnis and Chloe* as nothing more than a pleasing and beautiful text, this is clearly a misreading.[9] Certainly, in an important

[7] Turner, *G&R* 7 (1960) 117–118. In the same vein see Luginbill, *CJ* 97 (2002) 245: "Wars will continue because human beings are what they are … In Longus' world, Eros is likewise in command and it is similarly pointless to resist. Beauty, whether objective or subjective, will always trump reason in the same way that men generally follow their instincts in war, rather than their intelligence. But it is both a pleasurable consolation and a healing delight to experience the former truth at work throughout Longus' 'History of Love', in contrast to the sobering and cautionary experience of observing the devastating effects of the latter in Thucydides' work." And Trzaskoma, *GRBS* 45 (2005) 88: "The whole mechanism of history and warfare … is introduced by Longus only to point up its irrelevance."

[8] E.g., with Chariton there are those who see in his use of Thucydides a deep conceptual engagement: see Robert Luginbill, "Chariton's Use of Thucydides' *Peloponnesian War* in Introducing the Egyptian Revolt (*Chaireas and Callirhoe* 6.8)," *Mnemosyne* 53 (2000) 1–11.

[9] Goethe for example said of *Daphnis and Chloe* that "You should read it anew each year to learn from it over and over again and be influenced by its beauty" (in conversation with Johann Peter Eckermann; quoted by F. Zeitlin,

sense, *Daphnis and Chloe* is beautiful. Winkler remarks on the "sophisticated [rhetorical/literary] techniques" on display in Longus' sentences, particularly the avoidance of hiatus so that words roll together.[10] Another example is the text's gorgeous specificity of detail (e.g. 1.9.1, 2.1.1–3, 4.2.2–3).[11] But historically there has also existed another interpretation of *Daphnis Chloe* focusing on the novel's harshness, boorishness, indiscretion, insincerity, sense of cliché, sense of danger, sorrow, and violence.[12] Those scholars emphasize features of the novel such as the self-conscious falseness of its depiction of pastoral life, the number of near misses and chance escapes, and the ambiguity of its final resolution.

If a reader admits that the novel has this second side that cannot be resolved or wished away (the complex interpretation), he/she is forced into one of two claims about the meaning of the

"The Poetics of *Eros*: Nature, Art, and Imitation in Longus' *Daphnis and Chloe*," in R. Halperin et al. (eds.), *Before Sexuality: The Construction of Erotic Experience in the Ancient Greek World* (Princeton 1990) 417–464, at 420.

[10] J. Winkler, *The Constraints of Desire* (New York 1990) 106. See also Michael David Reeve, "Hiatus in the Greek Novelists" *CQ* 21 (1971) 514–539, on the avoidance of hiatus in Greek novels in general (cf. his ironic tone at 538: "Authors who avoided hiatus and took trouble over rhythm would have been surprised to hear that their works were addressed to the 'juvenile' and 'poor in spirit'"). See also Bowie, *Daphnis and Chloe* 14–17.

[11] Bowie, *Daphnis and Chloe* 261, compares 4.2.2 with the garden of Alcinous in *Od.* 7.112–132.

[12] For a good survey of scholarly trends on Longus and other novelists see S. Swain, "A Century and More of the Greek Novel ," in *Oxford Readings in the Greek Novel* (Oxford 1999) 3–38. In general, there exist so to speak a 'softer' and 'harder' reading. The 'softer' one—boorishness, indiscretion, insincerity, cliché—goes back at least as far as Erwin Rohde (*Der griechische Roman und seine Vorläufer* [Leipzig 1876]), who links the self-conscious literary fantasy of the book's image of pastoral life—"The ideal of this sort of impression of nature is of nature as a *garden*" (545: "Das Ideal dieser Art der Naturempfindung ist die Natura als *Garten*")—with the deceptive naivety with which it represents Eros (548–549). For a 'harder' reading see Goldhill, *Foucault's Virginity* 1–45. For an even harder one see Winkler's *Constraints of Desire* 101–128, which Swain (30) calls "a magisterial essay."

allusion in the proem: (1) Longus wanted to adorn his harsh lesson with pleasures because unlike Thucydides he believed in pleasure's autonomous worth (the standard interpretation). (2) The superficial pleasures of *Daphnis and Chloe* are self-consciously false, and therefore the text's lesson is very close in substance to that of Thucydides.

(1) and (2) are not completely opposed alternatives, but my goal here is to shift the conventional emphasis from (1) towards (2): in both texts there is a hierarchy of pleasures drawn on roughly the same lines, despite appearances, and this is what Longus alludes to in the proem. In both texts, easier but false pleasures are rejected and contrasted with more difficult but true ones. What is different is their way of achieving this: Longus fills his text ironically with false pleasures, whereas Thucydides mostly excises them. Beneath these alternative façades there is a fundamentally shared outlook. I first read closely the two passages directly joined by Longus' allusion—Thucydides' statement of purpose and Longus's proem—then more generally I discuss how in both texts the hierarchy of pleasures is of central thematic significance.

Pleasure in Thucydides 1.22.4 and Longus' Proem

Thucydidean scholars and others reading his statement of purpose have long interpreted the distinction between pleasure and usefulness in starker terms than the passage warrants:

> καὶ ἐς μὲν ἀκρόασιν ἴσως τὸ μὴ μυθῶδες αὐτῶν ἀτερπέστερον φανεῖται· ὅσοι δὲ βουλήσονται τῶν τε γενομένων τὸ σαφὲς σκοπεῖν καὶ τῶν μελλόντων ποτὲ αὖθις κατὰ τὸ ἀνθρώπινον τοιούτων καὶ παραπλησίων ἔσεσθαι, ὠφέλιμα κρίνειν αὐτὰ ἀρκούντως ἕξει. κτῆμά τε ἐς αἰεὶ μᾶλλον ἢ ἀγώνισμα ἐς τὸ παραχρῆμα ἀκούειν ξύγκειται.
>
> And as far as listening is concerned maybe the lack of storytelling will seem less pleasurable, but in future anyone who wants to look into the reality both of what happened and of what will happen again sometime in accordance with the human condition—these sorts of things and similar ones—if they find these helpful, will be enough for me. This is brought together as a possession for all time rather than just a competition piece to listen to on the spot.

Most scholars read the first sentence of 1.22.4 as a series of hard dichotomies scaling up like concentric circles: the opposition (1) between sight and hearing,[13] (2) between fiction and truth, and (3) between pleasure and utility.[14] But they take it as if all three of these oppositions are cast in equally strong terms, whereas in fact they are given in descending order of strength. The word order, combined with the force of the *men/de* distinction, clarify that the passage's chief opposition is the first one (ἐς μὲν ἀκρόασιν / ὅσοι δὲ βουλήσονται … τὸ σαφὲς σκοπεῖν). This opposition delimits a pair of mutually exclusive entities, although they are not simply hearing and sight—the second half is not *es de opsin*—rather, sight is designated by σκοπεῖν, "look into," with its frequent Thucydidean sense of "investigate" or "enquire," and has ethical connotations: one must choose to do it. This is partly because listening is passive and uncritical, in this configuration, whereas sight is active and critical: listening is a noun, "looking into" is a verb. In fact—as the second distinction will show—the uncritical/critical distinction is much more relevant for the contrast Thucydides makes than the hearing/sight distinction.[15]

If the opposition between hearing and sight is, so to speak, on the subject's side of the act envisioned by the passage, the object's side is designated by two substantivized neuter nouns: τὸ (μὴ) μυθῶδες and τὸ σαφές. These words have received a great deal of study and I do not wish to dwell on them here. But importantly the contrast they make is between two forms of

[13] On the programmatic function of σκοπεῖν in the *Peloponnesian War,* and its fusion of eyesight and intellectual enquiry, see E. Bakker, "Contract and Design: Thucydides' Writing," in A. Rengakos et al. (eds.), *Brill's Companion to Thucydides* (Leiden 2006) 109–126, at 116–123.

[14] O. Longo, "Scrivere in Tucidice: communicazione e idiologia," in E. Livrea et al. (eds.), *Studi in Onore di Anthos Ardizzoni* I (Rome 1978) 517–554, esp. 523–524.

[15] On the "emergence of the critical reader" as an ideal in late fifth- and early fourth-century Athens see H. Yunis, in *Written Texts and the Rise of Literate Culture in Ancient Greece* (Cambridge 2003) 199–202 (with further references at 199 n.31).

discourse experienced by a reader who is also a listener: the uncritical one whose object is the fiction internal to the discourse itself, and the critical one whose object leads beyond its own discourse towards simple reality.[16] Moreover the experience of the former term is easier—that is, more pleasant and comfortable, less emotionally demanding, than the latter.[17] This second distinction clarifies that the thrust of the first distinction is less between hearing and sight than between an uncritical mode of discursive engagement on the reader's part and a critical one.

The passage's third distinction, between pleasure and usefulness, is further qualified in three ways.[18] First, it includes the adverb ἴσως, "maybe/probably," which has been widely ignored.[19] Second, the comparative form, ἀτερπέστερον, weakens the sense: not "unpleasurable," but "less pleasurable." Third, Thucydides uses the verb φανεῖται, "will seem/appear to be," as opposed to e.g. ἔσται, "will [actually] be," which suggests that the pleasure will only appear to be missing, and perhaps that anyway the missing pleasure is an illusory one (i.e. not truly pleasurable).

So: as far as uncritical listening is concerned, maybe/probably the lack of storytelling will seem less pleasurable. But this qualifi-

[16] See Hunter R. Rawlings, "κτῆμά τε ἐς αἰεὶ … ἀκούειν," *CP* 111 (2016) 107–116.

[17] Stewart Flory, "The Meaning of τὸ μὴ μυθῶδες (1.22.4) and the Usefulness of Thucydides' *History*," *CJ* 85 (1990) 193–208.

[18] The first and third of these are remarked on by John R. Grant, "Toward Knowing Thucydides," *Phoenix* 28 (1974) 81–94, at 81–82. All three are translated without comment by Morgan, in *Greek Fiction* 74.

[19] Rood notes this, observing that "[Thucydides'] condemnation [of pleasure] is strongly qualified": *Narrative and Explanation* 292 n.22. But the word is absent from most discussions of the passage: Robert Lisle, "Thucydides 1.22.4," *CJ* 72 (1977) 342–347; Flory, *CJ* 85 (1990) 193–208; Thomas Scanlon, "'The Clear Truth' in Thucydides 1.22.4," *Historia* 51 (2002) 131–148. Rawlings, *CP* 11 (2016) 110, and J. de Romilly, *The Mind of Thucydides* (Ithaca 2005 [1966]) 191, both put the word in ellipsis in essays which maintain that the passage opposes pleasure and truth.

cation does not affect the critical activity of the eyes (for those who engage in it), which, the passage implicitly suggests, will have the less comforting but more authentic pleasure of τὸ σαφὲς σκοπεῖν, and Thucydides himself will gain the pleasure of satisfaction at helping us engage in this activity. Finally, the closing sentence's distinction, between a possession for all time and a competition piece, is couched weakly in the phrase "rather than just" (μᾶλλον ἢ), implying that it is conceivable that both contrasted possibilities are true together.[20] Thucydides therefore does not reject or condemn pleasure itself. Instead, the Greek's central contrast establishes a relative hierarchy between two pleasures, both of which might conceivably be gotten from the text: the low and illusory pleasure of passively receiving false stories, and the high and genuine one of critically contemplating the clear sign of the truth.

Scholars who have read 1.22.4 in terms of a binary distinction between pleasure and usefulness have been overly schematic. Strictly there is no reason to think Thucydides' ideal readers, "anyone who wants to look" (ὅσοι δὲ βουλήσονται), will not find pleasure in his account of the war. Indeed, stepping back from this passage and taking the text of the *Peloponnesian War* as a whole, it is worth noting that many readers have found a great deal of pleasure in its pages. In antiquity Plutarch praised its ἐνάργεια, "vividness" (*De glor. Ath.* 347A–C), Dionysius of Halicarnassus its idiosyncratic poetic style (*Comp.* 22), Ps.-Longinus its ability to make highly dramatic scenes arise with a sense of naturalness (*Subl.* 38.3–4). In modern times the Nobel laureate Peter Handke has repeatedly cited Thucydides as an influence on his style and outlook, and even named one of his books after him.[21]

Connor has linked this sense of vividness with the *Peloponnesian War*'s thematic contents. He called Thucydides "a writer of intense and complex emotions and a determination to transmit

[20] S. Hornblower, *A Commentary on Thucydides* I (Oxford 1991) 61–62.

[21] P. Handke, *Noch Einmal für Thukydides* (Salzburg 1990).

those emotions to his readers, even if their expression involves the shattering of conventional forms of thought, language and literature."[22] In his subsequent book he wrote that the text's ultimate emphasis is on "the *pathos* of war—not just its emotional power, but its way of undermining planning, outmaneuvering prediction, and making sufferers out of those who thought they would be in control."[23] Connor thus interprets the vivid textual experiences, so beloved by many of Thucydides' readers, to be centrally part of the critical process by which they develop an informed understanding of the historical events, which—Thucydides has told us—are likely to recur in some form, owing to the human condition.

Most likely, therefore, what is at stake in the passage of Thucydides is simply a hierarchy of pleasures.[24] The basis of that hierarchy is a combination of truth and difficulty: pleasures deceitful but less difficult (because less emotionally and intellectually demanding) are disparaged and opposed to more difficult but authentic ones.

Longus' proem begins with the sight of a painting: a sumptuous representation of a love-story. The painting is a γραφή, more pleasurable than its leafy surrounds because of the worked form of its decoration and the meaning of its content. In other words, its pleasure is textual: the viewer reads it. In comparison with its surrounds the painting is, τερπνοτέρα, 'more pleasurable', a word contrasting with the one at Thucydides 1.22.4, but whose sense actually accords with the terms on which Thucydides builds his own distinction, because Longus locates the source of pleasure in sight and more specifically in active reading. The densest part of the proem in terms of allusions to Thucydides is 1.pr.3:

[22] W. R. Connor, "A Post Modernist Thucydides?" *CJ* 72 (1977) 289–298, at 291.

[23] W. R. Connor, *Thucydides* (Princeton 1984) 246.

[24] Versions of this appear elsewhere: cf. Pl. Phlb. 12D.

ἰδόντα με καὶ θαυμάσαντα πόθος ἔσχεν ἀντιγράψαι τῇ γραφῇ· καὶ ἀναζητησάμενος ἐξηγητὴν τῆς εἰκόνος τέτταρας βίβλους ἐξεπονησάμην, ἀνάθημα μὲν Ἔρωτι καὶ Νύμφαις καὶ Πανί, κτῆμα δὲ τερπνὸν πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις, ὃ καὶ νοσοῦντα ἰάσεται, καὶ λυπούμενον παραμυθήσεται, τὸν ἐρασθέντα ἀναμνήσει, τὸν οὐκ ἐρασθέντα προπαιδεύσει.

I saw [these] and wondered at them and a desire took me to write down a counterpart to the painting; and, after seeking out an interpreter of the image, I worked hard to put together four books: an offering to Eros and the Nymphs and Pan, a pleasurable possession for all human beings, that will heal anyone who is sick, and comfort whoever is upset, and for someone who has been in love will recall it to mind, and for a person who has not will teach them.[25]

The proem and Thucydides 1.22.4 describe what they offer in the same terms: with a declaration that the text is a permanent possession for all time (ἀνάθημα … κτῆμα / κτῆμά τε ἐς αἰεὶ), with truths common to every person (πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις / κατὰ τὸ ἀνθρώπινον); which has something to teach people about its subject-matter and—because this subject is common to all persons—about their own circumstances (τὸν ἐρασθέντα ἀναμνήσει, τὸν οὐκ ἐρασθέντα προπαιδεύσει / τῶν τε γενομένων τὸ σαφὲς σκοπεῖν καὶ τῶν μελλόντων ποτὲ αὖθις), and which bears a direct relation to those circumstances (because it recalls to mind the past: ἀναμνήσει / because things repeat, τοιούτων καὶ παραπλησίων); that to put such a thing in a piece of writing is very hard work (ἐξεπονησάμην / 1.22.3 ἐπιπόνως), but also useful and helpful (ὃ καὶ νοσοῦντα ἰάσεται, καὶ λυπούμενον παραμυθήσεται / ὠφέλιμα).

Thus, the proem of *Daphnis and Chloe* not only alludes to the *Peloponnesian War* but repeats, with little alteration, the conceptual terms in which it characterizes its own relation to both pleasure and understanding. In general, Thucydides' language is more modest than that of Longus, who removes the qualifi-

[25] On this passage's dedication to the gods see Winkler, *Constraints of Desire* 125–126.

cations of 1.22.4. Perhaps this is because, unlike Thucydides, who, in setting out on the *Peloponnesian War*, did not know if he would succeed in what he was aiming for, it seemed obvious to Longus that he had succeeded—enough that, intentionally or unintentionally, these qualifications were removed between the earlier text and the later. In any case, both authors denigrate what they perceive as lower pleasures—Longus implicitly by means of parody and baroque excess, Thucydides more explicitly. If Thucydides in his preface says, I offer you no false comforts but the pleasure of contemplating what is true and general, Longus, beneath his ironic and parodic surface-tone, seems to say, I offer the same thing as Thucydides but also plenty of self-consciously false comforts.

Pleasure and vividness in Longus and Thucydides

The rest of this paper attempts to describe more fully (though inevitably in rather broad terms) what characterizes low and high pleasures in each text, and thus more generally what informs each of the two prefatory passages.

Here I will claim that the thematic arc of *Daphnis and Chloe* has not primarily to do with the characters growing up, as some scholars believe, but with the reader growing out of socially furnished, common but inadequate ways of seeking pleasure. I begin with the novel's ending (4.40.3):

> Δάφνις δὲ καὶ Χλόη γυμνοὶ συγκατακλιθέντες περιέβαλλον ἀλλήλους καὶ κατεφίλουν, ἀγρυπνήσαντες τῆς νυκτὸς ὅσον οὐδὲ γλαῦκες· καὶ ἔδρασέ τι Δάφνις ὧν αὐτὸν ἐπαίδευσε Λυκαίνιον, καὶ τότε Χλόη πρῶτον ἔμαθεν ὅτι τὰ ἐπὶ τῆς ὕλης γινόμενα ἦν ποιμένων παίγνια.
>
> Daphnis and Chloe lay down naked together and embraced each other and kissed, more sleepless that night even than owls, and Daphnis did some of the things Lykainion had taught him, and then for the first time Chloe found out that what had gone on in the woods were shepherds' games.

John Winkler's famous interpretation of the novel reads this

ending as an allusion to sexual violence.[26] Earlier, Lykainion tells Daphnis this after seducing him by promising to teach the skill of love (3.19.2–3):

> "Χλόη δὲ συμπαλαίουσά σοι ταύτην τὴν πάλην καὶ οἰμώξει καὶ κλαύσεται κἀν αἵματι κείσεται πολλῷ [καθάπερ πεφονευμένη]. Ἀλλὰ σὺ τὸ αἷμα μὴ φοβηθῇς, ἀλλ' ἡνίκα ἂν πείσῃς αὐτήν σοι παρασχεῖν, ἄγαγε αὐτὴν εἰς τοῦτο τὸ χωρίον, ἵνα, κἂν βοήσῃ, μηδεὶς ἀκούσῃ, κἂν δακρύσῃ, μηδεὶς ἴδῃ, κἂν αἱμαχθῇ, λούσηται τῇ πηγῇ·"
>
> "When Chloe wrestles with you like this she will scream and cry out and lie there in a lot of blood [as if she had been killed]. But don't be afraid of the blood—just, whenever you convince her to give herself up to you, bring her to this place, where even if she screams no one will hear, and if she cries no one will see; and even if she is bloodied she can wash herself in the stream."

Lykainion's previous brutal description terrifies Daphnis enough that afterwards he avoids sex with Chloe (3.20.1–2). Goldhill takes this as a joke in light of "the pervasive imagery linking violence and penetration throughout Greek culture, and the pervasive imagery associating the wedding night with violent seizure and even death."[27] These 'facts of life' are after all what Daphnis learns eventually, and what Chloe herself must learn on their wedding night.[28] The joke seems to be that Daphnis does not realize how a certain amount of violence is bound up with Eros inextricably. But the fact that there is a joke does not

[26] Winkler, *Constraints of Desire*, esp. 124–126, has the best reading of this passage. A few scholars—in particular see D. Konstan, *Sexual Symmetry* (Princeton 1994) 90, and Giulia Sara Corsino, "Progress of Erotic Customs in the Ancient Novel: Three *Parthenoi* and Chloe in Longus' *Poimenikà*," in E. Cueva et al. (eds.), *Rewiring the Ancient Novel* I (Eelde 2018) 29–44, esp. 38–39—have argued that the last line does not suggest Chloe feels any pain. There are certainly some reasonable qualifications to be made of Winkler's assessment (Goldhill makes them, see below), but it is hard to see here no implication of pain at all. In their analyses Konstan and Corsino do not take on Winkler's close reading of the Greek.

[27] Goldhill, *Foucault's Virginity* 35.

[28] Goldhill, *Foucault's Virginity* 35–41.

straightaway clarify the novel's attitude to this violence or characterization of its place within nature (or culture). The language of 4.40.3, with its indefinite pronoun and partitive genitive, is vague enough that the connection it draws with 3.19 and its surrounding scene need not evoke anything violent.[29] On the other hand, the adverb πρῶτον ("for the first time"), with the verb ἔμαθεν ("learned"), suggests that Chloe will learn this lesson again; and that there is more to come, maybe for the rest of her life—though perhaps, like Lykainion, she will get used to it. Like war, sex in both form and content is a "violent teacher" (Thuc. 3.82.2 βίαιος διδάσκαλος).

The ambiguous and even sinister tone of the final sex-scene is struck repeatedly throughout the novel. In general, as Goldhill observes, the language of Lykainion's seduction of Daphnis links pleasure and pedagogy.[30] But pleasure and pedagogy follow a pattern. The teacher begins by promising pleasure and seduces the student into learning from her, but when the seduction is completed, she subverts the pleasure with a harsh lesson that may cause it to become painful (cf. 3.20.1–2). Here is Lykainion earlier in 'seduction' mode, with the underscored words clearly echoing both Thucydides and the proem (3.17.3):

> "Εἰ δή σοι φίλον ἀπηλλάχθαι κακῶν καὶ ἐν πείρᾳ γενέσθαι ζητουμένων τερπνῶν, ἴθι, παραδίδου μοι τερπνὸν σαυτὸν μαθητήν· ἐγὼ δὲ χαριζομένη ταῖς Νύμφαις ἐκεῖνα διδάξω."

> "If you desire to be free from your troubles and come to be in the experience of those sought-for pleasures, then come on, give yourself up to me as a pleasing student; with the blessing of the Nymphs, I will teach you these things."

What makes the turn from pleasure to harshness even more bitter is that Lykainion promises Daphnis something greater than simply pleasure: she promises him the realization of his desire. The words ἀπηλλάχθαι κακῶν echo the start of Aeschylus'

[29] See Goldhill, *Foucault's Virginity* 41.

[30] Goldhill, *Foucault's Virginity* 23.

Agamemnon, ἀπαλλαγὴν πόνων (*Ag.* 1).[31] There is an obvious comparison between keeping a long, dull watch and the frustration of someone who is sexually turned on but does not achieve orgasm. But precision is important: it is not simply a release that Lykainion offers Daphnis. What the watchman at the beginning of the *Agamemnon* is doing, exactly, is waiting in the dark for a fire-signal announcing the return of Agamemnon (*Ag.* 21–25): *waiting for something to appear*. Similarly, what Daphnis desires is not a release or end of desire as much as its realization, the making-manifest of something that has not emerged (a sexual joke, perhaps: this might be semen).[32] Thus when the narrative describes the sex between Daphnis and Lykainion it uses the word ἐνεργεῖν, "make real."[33]

But the bitterness comes when the 'making-real' of Daphnis' desire, his ἀπηλλάχθαι κακῶν, does not follow sex with Lykainion. Indeed, what makes Daphnis suffer in the first place is not his desire for *orgasm*, but his desire for *Chloe* (Lykainion pretends that the Nymphs have told her this in a dream: "'Daphnis'," she said, 'you desire Chloe'" ["ἐρᾷς" εἶπε "Δάφνι, Χλόης"], 3.17.1). What Lykainion claims to teach Daphnis is "the technique through which he can do what he wishes with regard to Chloe" (3.17.1, τὴν τέχνην, δι' ἧς ὃ βούλεται δράσει Χλόην). Lykainion is an acculturating figure, someone who makes Daphnis "a man" (3.19.3, σε ἄνδρα … πεποίηκα), acquainting him with the ordinary and accepted procedures for handling an erotic situation.[34]

[31] Bowie spots this too: *Daphnis and Chloe* 239.

[32] Cf. A. Carson, *Eros the Bittersweet* (Princeton 1986) 17: "Eros is a verb."

[33] This word has commonly been associated with Thucydides in particular: see T. Rood, *Thucydides: Narrative and Explanation* (Oxford 1998) 3 ff.

[34] Cf. Winkler, *Constraints of Desire* 103: *Daphnis and Chloe* "is not about the natural growth of erotic instinct but about the inadequacy of instinct to realize itself and about the many kinds of knowledge, education, and training required both to formulate the very meaning of spontaneous feelings and then to express them in appropriate action." In that regard the warning of Lykainion, which Winkler thinks it is important to take with some reservation

You could represent what occurs between Daphnis and Lykainion in five parts:

the Desiring Subject (Daphnis)
the Desired Object (Chloe)
the To-be-made-manifest Relation (*Eros*)
the Learned Method of Achieving that Relation (Sex)
the Teacher of that Method (Lykainion)

In seducing Daphnis, Lykainion conflates the third and fourth of these using what Bowie calls a "periphrastic" phrase: "to come to be in the experience of those sought-for pleasures" (3.17.3, ἐν πείρᾳ γενέσθαι ζητουμένων τερπνῶν).[35] The effect is to remove from the "pleasures" all predicates apart from ζητουμένων. The experience Daphnis is supposed to gain is general, his knowledge transferable; it is not specifically *his own* pleasures that he will experience, but those whose very nature is to be "sought-for." Lykainion draws an equivalence between Eros and sex, but in fact for Daphnis sex is only significant as a means of navigating his troubles. He does not want to have sex *per se*; he wants somehow to make manifest his erotic connection with Chloe. Indeed after returning from Lykainion he eschews sex altogether as a means of reaching (3), choosing the equally unsatisfying but familiar alternative method (4) of picking flowers for Chloe and kissing her (3.20.2). In the Lykainion episode sex is like a Siren's Song, promising vivid pleasure and a sort of knowledge to the hearer but ultimately leaving him with a sense of distaste and anxiety.[36]

In general, every erotic contact between Daphnis and Chloe —and every other means by which they attempt to realize their erotic connection—follows this same procedure in which the promise of pleasure ends with dissatisfaction and frequently the threat of violence. For example, in a flush of erotic feeling they

because of her previous dishonesty (122), is perfectly intelligible as a fulfilment of her promise.

[35] Bowie, *Daphnis and Chloe* 239.

[36] "Anxiety": Zeitlin, in *Before Sexuality* 423–424.

swear oaths respectively by Pan and the Nymphs that when the other dies they will kill themselves (2.39.1–2). Chloe makes Daphnis swear a second oath that he will not leave her (2.39.4), and that if she ever wrongs him, he will kill her (he instead swears to kill himself: 2.39.5). But the oath, sworn upon his goats, does not give her any comfort and she laments its uselessness later when she believes he has abandoned her; she resolves to kill herself (4.27.2). Like sex, the oaths come from a place of erotic need: they promise, not only pleasure, but the concretization of love; yet they result in awkwardness and pain.

Some readers may argue that these oaths do not raise a serious threat of violence, but that would be to misinterpret how violence in the novel functions. The novel is full of terrible events, which, from within the ancient Greek novel genre, may be classed as ordinary events—piracy (1.29), kidnapping (1.29.2, 2.20.3), war (3.1), brutal punishment of slaves by masters (4.8.4), and above all the novel's unfulfilled acts of sexual violence, by Dorkon (1.21), Gnatho (4.12–19), and Lampis (4.28)—that nearly happen, but do not. To some degree this is standard. In Xenophon's *Ephesiaca*, for example, Habrocomes is crucified twice; each time he prays, and the gods save him (4.2). But in *Daphnis and Chloe* this is taken to an extreme, as anything that may seriously disrupt the happiness or cause the separation of the main couple is thwarted or else quickly undone. This protects Daphnis and Chloe, but not the reader, for whom a dynamic of surface and depth comes into play with these suggestive non-events.

This ambiguous dynamic becomes most forceful in the novel's final pages, culminating in sex between Daphnis and Chloe within the institution of marriage, and more broadly that of civic society.[37] Corsino argues that the couple's marriage at the end is

[37] Winkler, *Constraints of Desire* 117: *Daphnis and Chloe* "is about the painful confrontation of unsocialized youth with the hostilities of real life."

a subjugation of Eros.[38] But Chloe is also subjugated, as Winkler has argued.[39] More broadly a narrative of subjugation begins when Daphnis must move to the city after his parentage is discovered (4.25.1–2). When Chloe's parentage is also discovered, their new parents agree that Daphnis and Chloe must marry (4.36). Unable to bear the way of life in the city (4.37.1, μὴ φέροντες τὴν ἐν ἄστει διατριβήν), they return to celebrate their wedding in the countryside. The presence of the community at the wedding and afterwards, outside the doors of the bedchamber, playing the syrinx and the aulos, holding torches, striking the earth, designates Daphnis and Chloe once and for all as members of the group with a prescribed place and a formal relation within it (4.40.1–2). But the rest of their lives, we are told, are both completely happy and defined by a pastoral way of life eating fruit and milk, and worshipping the Nymphs, Eros, and Pan, with their children suckled by animals (4.39.1–2).

Daphnis and Chloe end the novel in the exact same idyllic circumstance where they started, but more fulfilled—yet the encroachment of domination by the civic space, and the novel's parting words, suggestively indicate to the reader that this fulfillment comes not from their marriage but from escaping the social world to which marriage makes their relationship acceptable.[40] The fulfilment of Eros in the novel is not marriage, but a new orientation towards the world at large that results from erotic

[38] Corsino, in *Rewiring the Ancient Novel* 29–44, who argues that after the marriage Eros is more or less tamed.

[39] Winkler, *Constraints of Desire* 118–126, notices that one of the trajectories of the novel is towards Chloe's increasing silence; her thoughts apparently become closed to the reader.

[40] J. R. Morgan, *Longus: Daphnis and Chloe* (Oxford 2004) 15–16, argues that Longus subverts "the facile antithesis of town and country … behind the narrator's back." Morgan is right that the country is often made to seem far from idyllic (a violent place). But this is not to the town's benefit. Rather, the novel's true contrast is between the social forces and institutions that reach across both the country and the town, and the world beyond these in which Daphnis and Chloe attempt to live.

experience. This is foreshadowed from an early stage. When Chloe falls in love with Daphnis, she says (1.14.1–3):

> "Νῦν ἐγὼ νοσῶ μέν, τί δὲ ἡ νόσος ἀγνοῶ· ἀλγῶ, καὶ ἕλκος οὐκ ἔστι μοι· λυποῦμαι, καὶ οὐδὲν τῶν προβάτων ἀπόλωλέ μοι· κάομαι, καὶ ἐν σκιᾷ τοσαύτῃ κάθημαι. Πόσοι βάτοι με πολλάκις ἤμυξαν, καὶ οὐκ ἔκλαυσα· πόσαι μέλιτται κέντρα ἐνῆκαν, ἀλλὰ ἔφαγον· τουτὶ δὲ τὸ νύττον μου τὴν καρδίαν πάντων ἐκείνων πικρότερον. Καλὸς ὁ Δάφνις, καὶ γὰρ τὰ ἄνθη· καλὸν ἡ σῦριγξ αὐτοῦ φθέγγεται, καὶ γὰρ αἱ ἀηδόνες. Ἀλλ' ἐκείνων οὐδείς μοι λόγος. Εἴθε αὐτοῦ σῦριγξ ἐγενόμην, ἵν' ἐμπνέῃ μοι· εἴθε αἴξ, ἵν' ὑπ' ἐκείνου νέμωμαι. Ὦ πονηρὸν ὕδωρ, μόνον Δάφνιν καλὸν ἐποίησας, ἐγὼ δὲ μάτην ἀπελουσάμην."[41]

> "I am sick, but with what, I don't know: I am in pain, but have no wound; I am grieving, but none of my flocks have died; I am burning even though I am sitting in the shadow. How many times have the bushes scratched me, but I did not cry? How many times have the bees stung me, but I still ate? But this point in my heart is more piercing than all of those. Daphnis is beautiful, but so are the flowers; the sound of his syrinx is beautiful, and so are the nightingales. But these mean nothing to me. If only I could become a syrinx, and he could blow into me; or a goat, and be driven around by him. Wretched water—you made only Daphnis beautiful—I wash myself uselessly!"

The lines are full of references and allusions.[42] But for my purpose there are three important things: (1) Although Chloe begins by saying she does not know what her illness is, later she does recognize that the only way to be rid of it is somehow to alter her life's circumstances so that her erotic feelings can find expression (1.14.3), even if she does not come up with any realistic means of doing so. (2) One such expression is the very speech we are reading, addressed to herself and the Nymphs:

[41] I have omitted the end of the speech, where Chloe alludes to the possibility that her "'lovesickness" will cause her death: "who will look after you when I am gone?" she asks the Nymphs; she also rebukes them for not helping her (1.14.4).

[42] See Bowie, *Daphnis and Chloe* 123–126; an obvious one is the notion of love as a sickness, already familiar from Euripides and Plato (123).

however inadequate on its own, it is presented as an important moment of self-realization, a necessary step to becoming without sickness.[43] (3) Even in this speech, her feelings for Daphnis cause Chloe to pay attention to what surrounds her. The bushes, the bees, the nightingales do not have the same impact as Daphnis; but they are brought to mind by his existence. This recurs throughout the novel, as repeatedly what Daphnis and Chloe find in each other is externalized and noticed —by them, by us— in what surrounds them.[44] In these moments even the pain of Eros, potential and actual, for Daphnis and Chloe does not reduce their pleasure but augments it and makes it more vivid.

The lives of Daphnis and Chloe are not within their control: repeatedly they are under threat of either death or violence. Rape (1.21, 4.12–19, 4.28), kidnapping and abduction (1.28.2, 2.20.3, 4.12–19), theft (1.28.1, 2.13.1), vandalism (4.7), murder (1.29–30.1), war (3.1–2): these thematically deepen the significance of Eros (as well as clarify its relation to broader society), and introduce a sense of contrast between pain and pleasure, making the novel's sweetest moments all more intense, surrounded as they are by these allusions to bitterness. The reader joins in all the innocent pleasures Daphnis and Chloe experience, but with the greater wisdom of understanding how the work's more difficult moments reframe their upbringing in terms of a wider reality at which the novel gestures.

Against this wider reality, the novel's depiction of Eros emerges as a subversive and liberating awareness of the intense and the beautiful.[45] The sheep, goats, milk, fruits, Nymphs, Pan,

[43] Bowie, *Daphnis and Chloe* 123, notes that "monologues are a common device in Attic drama for unburdening emotion."

[44] E.g., 1.24, 1.27.1, 2.32, 2.39.4–5, 3.13.1–3, 3.21–22, 3.24.1–2, 3.33–34, 4.37–38.

[45] Hence it is important at least to remain open to the argument of H. H. O. Chalk, "Eros and the Lesbian Pastorals of Longos," *JHS* 80 (1960) 32–51, that *Daphnis and Chloe* is an Orphic text. Zeitlin, in *Before Sexuality* 418, draws attention to two words from the proem: "*panta erōtika,* everything to do with

and Eros at the end of the novel are not ancillary elements to Daphnis and Chloe's love, but (the) essential ones. When Philetas tells the children about his meeting with Eros, he says that the god took credit not only for his love of Amaryllis but also for his garden's beauty (2.5.4–5), that Eros was with Philetas while he tended cattle and played the pipe (2.5.3), and that he is older than time itself (2.5.2).[46] Philetas tells them (2.7.1–3):

> "νεότητι χαίρει καὶ κάλλος διώκει καὶ τὰς ψυχὰς ἀναπτεροῖ … Τὰ ἄνθη πάντα Ἔρωτος ἔργα, τὰ φυτὰ πάντα τούτου ποιήματα, διὰ τοῦτον καὶ ποταμοὶ ῥέουσι καὶ ἄνεμοι πνέουσιν."

> "He rejoices in youth and chases beauty and gives wings to souls … all flowers are the work of Eros, all trees are his doing, because of him the rivers stream and winds blow."

This awareness is what the novel's acculturating forces (such as its tacit procedures for familiarizing young people with sex, and of joining them together in marriage) suppress—at the same time as they confer stability and safety upon Daphnis and Chloe as propertied aristocrats in Mytilene—so that their love, though ostensibly permitted, can play out only on fixed lines carefully designated by pre-ordained symbols. For certain people, society may offer protection against some of the precariousness of existence, but in *Daphnis and Chloe* it is also a veil held in front of Eros.

My point is not to draw a simplistic connection between the novel's pastoral clichés and the promise of a brighter, clearer world.[47] It is to say that, like the novel's moments of threatened

erōs, is the tantalizing phrase with which the narrator concludes his brief description of the beautiful painting he sees and which in fact might summarize the entire work to come." Cf. Morgan, *Daphnis and Chloe* 183: "the ἔργα of Love are wider and greater than the mechanics of human sexual intercourse."

[46] 'Philetas' may be a reference to the Hellenistic poet Philitas and thus a highly important figure in the novel's background of allusions. See J. R. Morgan, "Poets and Shepherds: Philetas and Longus," in K. Doulamis (ed.), *Echoing Narratives: Studies of Intertextuality in Greek and Roman Prose Fiction* (Groningen 2011) 139–160.

[47] See n.12 above.

violence, these clichés are suggestive and not merely literal. For example, at one point, in a cliché-ridden imitation of Sappho's poetry (3.33–34), Daphnis climbs a tree and picks an apple for Chloe as a symbol of their love.[48] Carson writes: "Daphnis is a lover who takes literary motifs literally. Here he woos his beloved with the very symbol of wooing and acts out the paradigmatic reach of desire."[49] Yet the scene has an elaborate build-up which invites the reader to contemplate rich details. Daphnis finds Chloe as she squeezes milk into pails, sets cheese in its frames, puts the lambs and kids in their pens (3.33.2); they wash and go to find something to eat. It is fruit season: there are wild-pears, pears, and apples, some already fallen, some still on the branch: the former fragrant, the latter verdant; the former like wine, the latter gold (3.33.3). Then and only then is the cliché introduced as our attention turns to the one most lustrous, gold-like apple at the top of the tree and how Daphnis plucks it to give to Chloe. The cliché spoils the erotic scene by pulling the reader back from it and making it about something else (the allusions); the details sublate the scene by charging it with a different kind of erotic energy.

Interpretively a great deal hangs on what to do with tropes like this, whether to take the novel in sympathy with or contempt of them; whether to side, as Bierl puts it, with Goethe or Rohde.[50] Bierl claims, using some vocabularies and theories of French para-philosophers, that *Daphnis and Chloe* is simply a book of tropes, a setting-up of symbols from the literary past like mirrors facing each other, signifying nothing but a zig-zag between them that Bierl calls by another trope: the "deferred 'trace'" of deconstruction.[51] But in scenes like this it is not deferred, it is simply there, in the details and the feelings they expound: ignoring neither the reality of romance nor violence (in other moments),

[48] See Morgan, *Daphnis and Chloe* 221–222.

[49] Carson, *Eros the Bittersweet* 88.

[50] A. Bierl, "Longus' Hyperreality," in *Rewiring the Ancient Novel* 3–28, at 3.

[51] Bierl, in *Rewiring the Ancient Novel* 23.

nor the beautiful nor the ridiculous (in this one), setting them together in an overarching perspective based on a vivid, erotically charged evocation of the novel's world.

And that is why, as Zeitlin has argued in some brilliant pages, *Daphnis and Chloe*'s solution to the problem of Eros is the work itself, or more broadly the practice of symbolic representation and imitation in which it engages.[52] The novel's purpose—including both painting and literature, since the story of Daphnis and Chloe supposedly begins as a painting (1.pr.)—in using these symbols is to transcend them so that in the end novelist, reader, and viewer all see the world more clearly for what it is, causing them pleasure and pain both: it directs them to be in love with the world. Zeitlin (436): "The erotic paradigm itself … expands from its literal sense of sexual desire and consummation to embrace a vision of life that makes a place in the broadest sense for the subtle interweaving of those terms we refer to as 'nature' and 'art'." As I have argued, one thing *Daphnis and Chloe* calls into question is precisely the literalness of sexual desire as a definition of the erotic. It implies that sex is but one of several kinds of erotic expression—and not the privileged one insofar as it is shaped by socially conditioned impulses and repressions.

In *Daphnis and Chloe* there is a surprising commitment to truth: not factual accuracy, but a rigor of awareness. This awareness stands at the peak of the novel's implicit hierarchy of pleasures and is what connects the different kinds of lovers mentioned in the preface, just as much as it connects—for example, Longus and Thucydides—different kinds of texts.

This enhanced, erotically tinctured awareness is (the) high pleasure for Longus—but for Thucydides? I want to suggest that the answer, perhaps surprisingly, is Yes. The *Peloponnesian War* has sequences which are long, dull, and detached from all personal experience (e.g. the one that centers around Argos during the peace of Nikias: 5.23–84.1). Yet there are moments that break through the wall of narrative with such force that they

[52] Zeitlin, in *Before Sexuality* 433–457.

have made the text's lasting reputation among admirers for vividness. Often these are moments of great suffering and devastation. Hornblower remarks for example of night battles that "paradoxically they bring out some of [Thucydides'] most brilliant writing."[53] Hornblower and Rawlings both suggest that the beautiful and terrible description of *stasis* in Corcyra (3.82–83) might have been a performance piece to entertain audiences at symposia.[54] The English Whig historian Thomas Babington Macaulay called the cataclysmic Book 7, "the *ne plus ultra* of human art."[55] These responses indicate what my reading of 1.22.4 has shown: the *Peloponnesian War* does indeed offer pleasure to its readers, as well as promise it. Huitink, in two recent studies of ἐνάργεια in ancient literature ("vividness"—for which Plutarch praised Thucydides), has grounded the concept in a sense of enactment: one feels, hears, moves one's body with a sense of experiential plenitude.[56] As Huitink shows, this was a very common aspiration of ancient literature in the fifth century and beyond.

A paradigmatic passage is Thucydides' description of the Athenians watching the battle in the Great Harbor of Syracuse, some moving their bodies in sympathy with events (7.71.3): they are completely captivated observers. Here is an extract from the battle-description (7.70.6):

> ξυνετύγχανέ τε πολλαχοῦ διὰ τὴν στενοχωρίαν τὰ μὲν ἄλλοις ἐμβεβληκέναι, τὰ δὲ αὐτοὺς ἐμβεβλῆσθαι, δύο τε περὶ μίαν καὶ

[53] *A Commentary on Thucydides* III (Oxford 2008) 618.

[54] Hornblower, *Commentary* I 478; Hunter R. Rawlings III, "Thucydides' ΕΡΓΑ," *Histos* 15 (2021) 189–205, at 201. Hornblower refers to the "generalising fireworks" of the Corcyra description.

[55] T. Pinney, *The Letters of Thomas Babington Macaulay* III (Cambridge 1976) 154.

[56] L. Huitink, "*Enargeia*, Enactivism and the Ancient Readerly Imagination," in M. Anderson et al. (eds.), *Distributed Cognition in Classical Antiquity* (Edinburgh 2019) 169–189, and "*Enargeia* and Bodily *Mimesis*," in J. Grethlein et al. (eds.), *Experience, Narrative and Criticism in Ancient Greece* (Oxford 2020) 188–209.

ἔστιν ᾗ καὶ πλείους ναῦς κατ᾽ ἀνάγκην ξυνηρτῆσθαι, καὶ τοῖς κυβερνήταις τῶν μὲν φυλακήν, τῶν δ᾽ ἐπιβουλήν, μὴ καθ᾽ ἓν ἕκαστον, κατὰ πολλὰ δὲ πανταχόθεν, περιεστάναι, καὶ τὸν κτύπον μέγαν ἀπὸ πολλῶν νεῶν ξυμπιπτουσῶν ἔκπληξίν τε ἅμα καὶ ἀποστέρησιν τῆς ἀκοῆς ὧν οἱ κελευσταὶ φθέγγοιντο παρέχειν.[57]

Everywhere because of the narrowness of the space the ships were ramming one side, rammed on the other, two to one and sometimes even more ships forcibly stuck together with the helmsmen protecting one side, threatening the other, these not one at a time but all together at the same time, and the huge noise from so many of them crashing together led to terror as well as drowning out the orders of the captains.

The surge of energy through the sentences of 7.70 conveys something of the battle's confused immediacy among soldiers fighting for their lives. But this immediacy, experienced by us without the risk of death, brings more than simple confusion. It brings pleasure. The pleasure comes, I think, from two places. First, the sonority and the number of parallels, the fast-moving clauses in the Greek, all work together to build an array of images and sounds to overwhelm sense; second, the specificity of details makes the scene vivid in the mind's eye.[58] That is, it brings pleasure by its intensity. It is a scene that builds from its details and figures into a reader's simulated experience. The poignancy of how the world is soon to be extinguished in death for many of the soldiers makes more palpable the sense of life that fills its description. It is frenetic and static. Moments in the *Peloponnesian War* like this, of great suffering with the destruction of individual lives, are frequently portrayed by this means to wield a mimetic pleasure. For some this may seem like nothing more than a literary pleasure caused by great writing: but what readers are responding to in the writing is its mimetic quality of vividness.

[57] "A magnificent sentence": C. Pelling, *Thucydides: The Peloponnesian War, Book VII* (Cambridge 2022) 221.

[58] For an argument that the scene is meant to be like a picture, specifically a funerary monument, see Rachel Bruzzone, "Thucydides' Great Harbour Battle as Literary Tomb," *AJP* 139 (2018) 577–604.

Just as with *Daphnis and Chloe*, there is a thematic and ethical importance to this quality which is opposed to other things. The war itself is completely opposed to this where Thucydides chooses to represent it with a sense of lifelessness—until it comes rushing back with devastating effect. But the war is also a theatre of false promises. An important study by Victoria Wohl highlights the centrality of Eros to the ideology and practice of Athenian democracy, including Pericles' Funeral Oration.[59] Pericles instructs those present to "admire the city's power day by day in your actions and fall in love with it" (2.43.1, "τὴν τῆς πόλεως δύναμιν καθ' ἡμέραν ἔργῳ θεωμένους καὶ ἐραστὰς γιγνομένους αὐτῆς"). Pericles establishes a hierarchy of pleasures that rejects the imposition of one's own values or customs upon others (2.37.2–3), the love of beauty or wisdom without qualification (2.40.1), the false enchantments of pleasurable speech (2.41.4), the enjoyment or pursuit of riches (2.42.4), and the attachment of one's family (2.44.1–3). But he does this only to encourage people to fight on behalf of the city, to go to war, and for that reason he turns out to be more like Lykainion than Longus. His speech promises pleasure with its beautiful and elaborate oppositions, its flurries of sound, but is a speech honoring the dead that encourages the living to become dead.[60] Death in behalf the city according to Pericles is quick and painless, even a sort of climax (2.42.4). Indeed, the deaths in battles of the Athenians whose bones are in front of him he describes using the same verb with which Lykainion alludes to ejaculation (2.42.4 ἀπηλλάγησαν / 3.17.3 εἰ δή σοι φίλον ἀπηλλάχθαι).

In Book 7 the actual description of deaths refutes this idea. In the night battle at Epipolae they attack their own side in the dark (7.42.7) or flee from the enemy and jump off steep ridges to their death or get lost on the road and are found and slaughtered by

[59] V. Wohl, *Love among the Ruins: The Erotics of Democracy in Classical Athens* (Princeton 2002), esp. ch. 1.

[60] See Wohl, *Love among the Ruins* ch. 4, for how this death-drive becomes increasingly pronounced later in the text.

Syracusan cavalry (7.42.8). When the Athenians' last-ditch effort to escape fails and they are defeated in the Great Harbor of Syracuse, they are so utterly stricken they do not think to collect the corpses (7.72.2). After some bloody days in which the retreating force is slowly annihilated and split in two, finally Nicias surrenders while his last remaining soldiers are slaughtered gruesomely at the Assinarus River, where the water becomes foul with blood and the Athenians are killed as they fight each other to drink it (7.84–85.1).[61] This is equaled only by the desolation with which those captured die of malnourishment and disease in the Syracusan quarries (7.87.1–2).

But the beauty of specific details and vivid description in the *Peloponnesian War* is not exclusively confined to scenes of horror and disaster. At a climactic moment near the end of Book 3, Thucydides interrupts the narrative to describe some Athenian activity on Delos and indulges in a description of a festival.[62] Here is part of that description (3.104.3–4):

> ἦν δέ ποτε καὶ τὸ πάλαι μεγάλη ξύνοδος ἐς τὴν Δῆλον τῶν Ἰώνων τε καὶ περικτιόνων νησιωτῶν· ξύν τε γὰρ γυναιξὶ καὶ παισὶν ἐθεώρουν, ὥσπερ νῦν ἐς τὰ Ἐφέσια Ἴωνες, καὶ ἀγὼν ἐποιεῖτο αὐτόθι καὶ γυμνικὸς καὶ μουσικός, χορούς τε ἀνῆγον αἱ πόλεις. δηλοῖ δὲ μάλιστα Ὅμηρος ὅτι τοιαῦτα ἦν ἐν τοῖς ἔπεσι τοῖσδε, ἅ ἐστιν ἐκ προοιμίου Ἀπόλλωνος:
>
> ἀλλ' ὅτε Δήλῳ, Φοῖβε, μάλιστά γε θυμὸν ἐτέρφθης,
> ἔνθα τοι ἑλκεχίτωνες Ἰάονες ἠγερέθονται
> σὺν σφοῖσιν τεκέεσσι γυναιξί τε σὴν ἐς ἀγυιάν·
> ἔνθα σε πυγμαχίῃ τε καὶ ὀρχηστυῖ καὶ ἀοιδῇ
> μνησάμενοι τέρπουσιν, ὅταν καθέσωσιν ἀγῶνα.
>
> Previously and in ancient times there was a large gathering of people from Ionia and the surrounding islands: they celebrated

[61] On this scene and its imagery see A. Vivian, "Entanglement at the Assinarus: Destructive Liquids and Fluid Athenians in Thucydides," *CJ* 116 (2021) 385–408.

[62] Connor, *Thucydides* 107: "a most unusual passage." S. Hornblower, *Thucydides and Pindar* (Oxford 2004) 276, compares it to the description of Achilles' shield in *Iliad* 18.

together with women and children, just like the Ionians today at the Ephesia, and they held contests in athletics and music, and the cities brought choruses. Above all Homer makes clear what it was like with the following lines from the hymn to Apollo:

But, Phoebus, when you were happiest, in Delos[63]
there the long-robed Ionians gather
with their children and women in the street
where they remember you with contests of boxing
and dance and singing—and make you glad.

This scene has all the elements of detail one might expect from Longus, though some of them are ventriloquized through the speaker of the *Hymn to Apollo,* which creates a sense of distance from the narrative proper. In this vision of women in the street —and particularly the subsequent flirtatious exchange between the poetic speaker and a Delian chorus (3.104.5) —there is both a sense of peace and a light eroticism. This eroticism, however, is not attached to any specific person or act: it is atmospheric.

The pleasure in this scene is none of those rejected by Pericles —neither is it death which he avows. It is a full experience taken with the enhanced awareness produced by the awful circumstances of the surrounding narrative. For readers the result is like a full gamut of experiences, with which they can compare their own lives in fulfillment of the authenticity-principle laid out at 1.22.4, and equally of its pleasure principle. Thus, although the content and emphasis of the *Peloponnesian War* is very different from *Daphnis and Chloe,* the readerly experience it attempts to evoke, and the thematic principles behind this experience, are closely analogous.

Conclusion

In the proem of *Daphnis and Chloe* Longus does not distinguish himself from Thucydides, but suggests they are alike. Specifically, he likens Thucydides' distinction, between the high pleasure of a fuller awareness and the low one of indulging in

[63] "When … there" does not make much sense but is what the Greek text says as quoted. Editions of the *Hymn to Apollo* tend to print a different version of this line: see N. Richardson, *Three Homeric Hymns* (Cambridge 2010) 105.

socially accepted fantasies, to the similar distinction on which his own work is based. This hierarchy of pleasures informs both Longus' and Thucydides' understanding of why their texts are worth reading, and how to read, and therefore what it means to write. Some scholars dispute whether Thucydides meant the *Peloponnesian War* simply to be a history of a particular time or else to contain more generally a theory about all times.[64] But already Longus has transcended this dispute by interpreting the *Peloponnesian War* as an exploration of the place from which facts and theories derive and against which they are set: the authentic world, the elusive and mysterious but palpable reality of existence. Against this, differences of genre and subject-choice are immaterial. So too, differences of detail: for Longus the eye may catch an apple, for Thucydides the sound of ships. But in approaching these they cultivate the same sort of awareness.

Both authors present their text to the reader as a κτῆμα, "a possession." For Longus, I have argued, this κτῆμα is an erotic lesson that warns readers off false pleasures, instead accepting some measure of pain and suffering so as to contemplate the contingent beauty of all things, as well as to some extent the brutal mechanism of society which excludes such insights and subordinates its participants to their prescribed function. As scholars have shown, the *Peloponnesian War* also demonstrates an interest in society as a sphere beyond the individual in which human fictions about the world are developed and human actions determined—usually with perverse causes and consequences.[65] The text's catastrophic moments of heightened beauty are all in some sense linked to the collapse of this sphere:

[64] For an overview of this debate, as well as a convincing illustration of its intractability and basis in myopia on the part of believers on each side, see N. Morley, "Contextualism and Universalism in Thucydidean Thought," in C. Thauer et al. (eds.), *Thucydides and Political Order* I (London 2016) 23–40.

[65] See for example Virginia Hunter, "Thucydides, Gorgias and Mass Psychology," *Hermes* 114 (1986) 412–429; E. Greenwood, "Making Words Count: Freedom of Speech and Narrative in Thucydides," in I. Sluiter et al. (eds.), *Free Speech in Classical Antiquity* (Leiden 2004) 175–196.

literally in the case of Corcyra (3.70–81), and with great figurative emphasis in the parts of Book 7 discussed above. I have speculated, therefore, that one reason why those passages of extreme violence and disaster are so finely wrought—to read by interpreting backwards from Longus to Thucydides—is that, perhaps perversely, like Eros in *Daphnis and Chloe,* they inculcate an awareness of the beautiful as encompassed by the true.[66]

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Trinity College, Dublin
osullr13@tcd.ie

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