

Enti mias agelas: Unifying Theocritus' Idylls
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Studies of Theocritus' poetry have traditionally taken approaches that implicitly or explicitly treat his bucolic *Idylls* as a distinct genre. The generic significance of bucolic poetry, both for Theocritus and for modern scholars, remains an interesting question and ongoing topic of debate. Nevertheless, difficulty in establishing a generic identity for the bucolic *Idylls* has relegated those poems to literary isolation as scholars frequently treat the bucolics as "self-contained" poems that neither interact with Theocritus' non-bucolic *Idylls* nor address contemporary issues. My paper will argue that issues of generic classification, though important, should not discourage such inquires and will demonstrate the point, using an intertextual approach to explore political elements embedded in a bucolic poem.

Theocritus' *Idylls*, though lacking the cohesive quality of a book of poetry, nevertheless contain persistent themes and images that suggest an interconnectedness between poems. Aphrodite provides an example of one such persistent theme as three generically distinct poems (*Idd.* 1, 15, and 17) portray her as resurrecting—or desiring to resurrect—those of her favorites whom death has claimed. In *Idyll* 1, Aphrodite longs to restore Daphnis, but cannot do so (1.138-139). *Idyll* 15 features Adonis' temporary return from death to Aphrodite's embrace, while *Idyll* 17 describes Berenice's apotheosis. As we learn in *Idyll* 15, the festival of the Adonia, which celebrates Adonis' reunion with Aphrodite, is instituted in honor of Berenice's apotheosis (15.106-111), thereby connecting Aphrodite's similar characterization in *Idylls* 15 and 17. Adonis' annual return to Aphrodite appropriately commemorates Berenice's own permanent escape from death, owed to Aphrodite's intervention. If Theocritus' fifteenth *Idyll* is any indication, Berenice's apotheosis and its celebration in the Adonia were events of extreme importance, both depicting Aphrodite's influence over death. Therefore, the goddess' desire to resurrect (*anorthōsai*) Daphnis in *Idyll* 1 easily recalls her role in saving Berenice and Adonis and invites comparison between Daphnis' death, Adonis' annual visit to the mundane world, and Berenice's apotheosis.

Comparison among Berenice, Adonis, and Daphnis, especially in light of Daphnis' presentation as an Adonis figure, raises important questions. Why does Berenice enjoy apotheosis while Daphnis and Adonis are by and large condemned to death? What does the specter of Berenice signify for the programmatic bucolic *Idyll* in which it appears? The ultimate goal of this paper is not to answer questions, but to raise them in the hope that the approach it offers will become a successful avenue of inquiry for Theocritean studies.