

Echoes of Latin Elegy in *Daphnis and Chloe*

Longus' novel *Daphnis and Chloe*, in the words of Froma Zeitlin, is both “ancient and recent, well-worn and original, mimetic and creative” (Zeitlin 2020). Scholars widely accept the diversity of Greek literary influence on *Daphnis and Chloe* (Valley 1926; Hunter 1983; Bowie 2019; et.al.), but the prospect that Latin literature had a role to play in its composition has historically encountered resistance, when entertained at all (Hunter 1983, e.g.). Fortunately, the tide appears to be turning: multiple books published in recent decades, including those by Tilg (2010) and Jolowicz (2021), contain strong arguments for the influence of Latin writing on both Longus and the Greek novels in general. Still, rather little attention has been paid to the specific possibility of the presence of Latin elegiac language and themes in *Daphnis and Chloe*.

In this paper, I hope to show that Longus engages with both Latin authors writing elegy and Latin Elegy as a genre. Across the novel, he deploys a variety of well-worn literary *topoi*; but, as I will argue, he does so in some cases specifically with an eye to their Latin-elegiac adaptations. Secondly, I will argue more broadly that a distinctive Latin-elegiac *topos* may be at work in one of the central conceits of the novel.

The first of these *topoi* is the characterization of Eros. As Jolowicz and others have noted, the Eros of Longus' novel is much like the ‘playful thief’ of Philetas. He is also, however, the literary architect of the Latin elegists. He directs the action of some of the key moments in the plot: it is Eros who appears to Dryas and Lamon in their dreams and “commands that, for the rest of their lives, the boy tend goats and the girl tend sheep” (κελεῦσαι λοιπὸν ποιμαίνειν τὸν μὲν τὸ αἰπόλιον, τὴν δὲ τὸ ποιμνιον, 1.7.6-8). He also creates the situation that leads to Chloe seeing Daphnis naked for the first time (τοιαῦτα δὲ αὐτῶν παιζόντων τοιάνδε σπουδὴν Ἔρωος

ἀνέπλασε, 1.11.1). Near the end of the novel, Eros also appears in the dream of Daphnis' real father, Dionysophanes, and orders him (κελεῦσαι) to host the noble families of Mitylene at a feast in order to determine Chloe's parentage and enable her marriage to Daphnis. His responsibility for driving the erotic plot is strongly reminiscent of his presentation in Latin elegy as the driver and architect of the poets' own writing.

Longus also reworks the theme of the mid-day epiphany for his own purposes. Daphnis and Chloe's erotic epiphany in 1.23 (Τῆς δὲ **μεσημβρίας** ἐπελθούσης ἐγένετο ἤδη **τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν ἄλωσις** αὐτοῖς, 1.23.3), in particular, welds many variations on this type into one, including that of Ovid in *Amores* 1.5. Ovid's contribution to Longus' presentation of this scene, and to the *topos* at large, is the situation of a uniquely erotic epiphany at midday (*aestus erat, mediamque dies exegerat horam...ecce, Corinna venit...1.5.1-3*).

Another *topos*, most familiar from Vergil but first apparent in ps.-Moschus' *Lament for Bion*, is a questioning lament, typically marked by the repetition of an interrogative pronoun, in which a mourner wonders about the future after the death of the one for whom they grieve. I argue that Longus' presentation of it (**τίς** ὑμᾶς στεφανώσει μετ' ἐμέ; **τίς** τοὺς ἀθλίους ἄρνας ἀναθρέψει; **τίς** τὴν λάλον ἀκρίδα θεραπεύσει... 1.14.3-4) is indebted additionally to that of Propertius 2.12 in its choice of speaker, perspective, and chief concern—erotic suffering.

Finally, I explore the possibility that one of the fundamental conceits of *Daphnis and Chloe*—the titular lovers' ignorance of the name and nature of Eros—is itself inspired by an occasional feature of Latin elegy. Namely, the poets distinguish themselves, as experienced in the pain which Amor inflicts on his victims, from those who are more, if not entirely, unfamiliar with it (Propertius 2.12; *Amores* 1.2, 1.9) Ovid, in particular, in *Amores* 1.2, explores the ignorance of one struck by Amor for the first time.

Selected Works Cited

- Chalk, H. H. O. (1960). "Eros and the Lesbian Pastorals of Longos." *The Journal of Hellenic Studies*, 80, 32–51.
- Gutzwiller, K. (2015). "Eros and Amor: Representations of Love in Greek Epigram and Latin Elegy." *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies. Supplement*, 125, 23-44.
- Hunter, R.L. (1983). *A Study of Daphnis and Chloe*. Cambridge.
- Jolowicz, J. (2021). *Latin Poetry in the Ancient Greek Novels*. Oxford.
- Papanghelis, T.D. (1989). "About the Hour of Noon: Ovid, 'Amores' 1.5." *Mnemosyne*, 42(1), 54-61.
- Tilg, S. (2010). *Chariton of Aphrodisias and the Invention of the Greek Love Novel*. Oxford.
- Whitmarsh, T. (2005). "The Lexicon of Love: Longus and Philetas Grammatikos." *The Journal of Hellenic Studies*, 125, 145-148.