

Such parallels as are available for the tenet concerned with "coming to be from Nothing" in *MXG* ch. 1 and the problematical reference to Athenagoras in ch. 2 suggest, say, the middle or even the later part of the second century CE as *t.p.q.*; this independent evidence agrees rather well with the post-Agrippean date argued in the present paper\*).

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## THE FUNCTION OF THE *LOCUS AMOENUS* IN THEOCRITUS' SEVENTH POEM\*)

### I

One reason for the compelling interest which is aroused by Theocritus' seventh poem would seem to be the fact that it contains both realistic and unrealistic elements. The presence in the poem of elements of both kinds gives it a certain richness of texture. This paper will be concerned more with the unrealistic than

\*) I am greatly indebted to Sir Kenneth Dover for some helpful comments. *Abbreviations:* The following works are referred to by the surname of the author: W. G. Arnott, *Lycidas and Double Perspectives: A Discussion of Theocritus' Seventh Idyll, Est. Clas.* 87 (1984) 333 ff.; E. L. Bowie, *Theocritus' Seventh Idyll, Philetas and Longus, Cl. Q.* 35 (1985) pp. 67–91; Archibald Cameron, *The Form of the Thalyssia, Miscellanea di Studi Alessandrini in Memoria di A. Rostagni, Turin* 1963, 291–307; K. J. Dover, *Theocritus, Select Poems, London* 1971; G. Giangrande, *Théocrite, Simichidas et les Thalysies, Ant. Class.* 37 (1968) 491 ff.; A. S. F. Gow, *Theocritus, edited with a translation and commentary, vol. 2, Cambridge, reprinted* 1965; S. Hatzikosta, *A Stylistic Commentary on Theocritus Idyll VII, Amsterdam* 1982; A. Kambylis, *Die Dichterweihe und ihre Symbolik, Heidelberg* 1965; Charles Segal, *Theocritus' Seventh Idyll and Lycidas, Wien. Stud.* 8 (1974) 22 ff. (also in *Poetry and Myth in Ancient Pastoral* 110 ff., Princeton 1981); G. Schönbeck, *Der locus amoenus von Homer bis Horaz, Diss. Heidelberg* 1962.

with the realistic aspects of the poem. Not that the former are in any way more important than the latter, rather the two are of equal importance, as is implied in the following formulation by Arnott<sup>1</sup>): 'The narrative portion of the poem juxtaposes two perspectives: one of natural realism, in which three walkers meet an ordinary goatherd, and the other perspective blurred by veiled allusions to an earlier literary tradition in which gods appeared to men in human disguise and endorsed their poetic careers.<sup>2</sup> In particular the goatherd Lycidas is presented with such detailed and uncompromising realism that it might seem vain to look for any non-realistic motifs in him. It appears, however, that 'from the very first a supernatural atmosphere surrounds Lycidas'<sup>2</sup>). Indeed it has been shown, especially by Cameron<sup>3</sup>), that Theocritus has modelled the story of the meeting of Lycidas and Simichidas on stories of encounters of gods with human beings. Some of the features which Theocritus' story shares with encounter stories are its setting on the road between city and country, the fact that Lycidas converses with Simichidas alone, and not also with his companions, the significant time of day, which in our poem is noon, and the giving of a gift.

The two perspectives, to use Arnott's term, can be seen in Lycidas' offer and presentation of the *λαγωβόλον* to Simichidas<sup>4</sup>). The story is fully intelligible on the plane of realism, but, as Arnott and many other scholars have shown, it 'can be seen to translate into everyday, human terms an old tradition revived in Hellenistic times which sanctified the moment when a poet came of age with the image of a divine encounter and sometimes also a divine gift'<sup>5</sup>). Immediately after he has given Simichidas the *λαγωβόλον* Lycidas goes off by himself *ἐπὶ Πύξας*, and Simichidas and his friends arrive at the farm of Phrasidamus without him. The departure of Lycidas resembles the abrupt departure of a god from the human scene, a regular feature of stories of divine encounter, after he has delivered his message and, in some cases, given his gift. Cameron remarks that 'it is characteristic of scenes of encounter that they are complete in themselves and end on a note of finality which separates them from their context'<sup>6</sup>).

1) Arnott p. 344.

2) Segal p. 31.

3) Cameron *passim*.

4) Arnott pp. 341 f.

5) Arnott p. 342.

6) Cameron p. 305.

Although this is true, such a formulation might be misleading if it were to obscure the fact that in such stories the departure of the god is regularly followed by some indication of the result of his visitation. This sequel to the encounter can be regarded as an essential element in the story. It will be worth looking at a few stories of encounter to observe the connection of the sequel with the encounter itself. Some of the examples will be especially relevant to Theocritus 7.

In Suetonius' story<sup>7</sup>), the *iuvenes gemini augustiore forma* stroke the cheeks of Nero's ancestor, L. Domitius, thus making his beard the colour of bronze. That their departure does not mean the end of their influence is clear from the sequel: *quod insigne mansit et in posteris eius, ac magna pars rutila barba fuerunt*. In Herodotus<sup>8</sup>) a change in appearance is also the result of a divine encounter. The wife of Agetus, later of Ariston, was ugly as a baby. Every day her nurse took her to the temple of Helen in Therapne. One day a woman, whom we must suppose to be Helen, appeared to the nurse: τὴν δὲ (Helen) καταψῶσαν τοῦ παιδίου τὴν κεφαλὴν εἶπαι ὡς καλλιστεῦσει πασέων τῶν ἐν Σπάρτῃ γυναικῶν. ἀπὸ μὲν δὴ ταύτης τῆς ἡμέρας μεταπεσεῖν τὸ εἶδος.

In Iliad 24 Hermes appears to Priam disguised as a young man, and escorts him to Achilles' hut. He tells Priam to enter the hut, and clasp Achilles' knees (465). He then departs to Olympus, and Priam carries out his instructions. Here the sequel is of a common type, in which a mortal obeys a command he has received from a god during his encounter with him.

In the next four examples the encounter is the occasion for the giving of a gift, as in Theocritus 7. In Odyssey 5.346 ff. Ino gives Odysseus the κρηδεμνον with instructions for its use. Gift and command are here two different aspects of the same action; in general, it will be seen that these two features of an encounter are likely to go closely together. After making her gift, Ino immediately sinks into the sea. Odysseus obeys her in binding it round him (373), and in returning it to her (459 ff.), after benefiting from its protection. In Odyssey 10.302 Hermes, disguised as a young man as in Iliad 24, gives Odysseus the μῶλυ, and then departs for Olympus. In the sequel the herb protects Odysseus from the wiles of Circe, as Hermes had foretold.

In Pindar's Fourth Pythian a god appears to the Argonaut Euphamus and gives him a clod of earth (γαῖαν 21, βύλακα δαίμο-

7) Nero 1.

8) Herodotus 6.61.

νίαν 37). The sequel is that it is washed ashore on Thera (42 f.), thus effecting the colonization of Cyrene from Thera (14–16, 19 f., 50–57). Pindar calls the clod of earth ξείνια (22) and ξένιον (35); similarly the λαγωβόλον which Lycidas gave to Simichidas was a ξεινήϊον (Theocritus 7.129). The god who appeared to Euphamus wore the guise of a man (θεῶ ἀνέρι εἰδομένῳ 21, cf. 28 f.), like Hermes in *Iliad* 24 and *Odyssey* 10. Similarly, when Odysseus returns to Ithaca Athene meets him in the form of a young noble shepherd (*Odyssey* 13.221 f.). The adoption of human disguise by the gods makes a partial parallel with Theocritus 7, in which Lycidas is wholly human. Nevertheless 'the words used to introduce Lycidas' physical appearance (οὐδέ κέ τις νιν / ἠγνουήσεν ἰδὼν, ἐπεὶ αἰπὸλῳ ἔξοχ' ἔφκει 13 f.) recall, with a typically Hellenistic combination of verbal precision and connotative ambivalence, the language used by Homer and other early poets in the epic tradition to describe the sudden appearances of gods – never of humans – on the scene (*Iliad* 1.537, 2.807, 13.28; *Odyssey* 5.78; H. Hermes 243; Hesiod, *Theog.* 551)<sup>9</sup>).

Pindar's Thirteenth Olympian also contains the story of an encounter in which a god makes a gift to a man. This particular encounter takes place in a dream. In spite of their importance in ancient literature Cameron gives no examples of dream encounters, so it may be appropriate to consider this genre briefly, though an exhaustive study is beyond the scope of this paper. In *Ol.* 13 Bellerophon slept on the altar of Athene (75 f.), and she appeared to him in his sleep. She gave him the χρυσάμπυξ χαλινός (65 f., 78) with which to tame Pegasus. On hearing her words, he woke up (72). He seized the bridle, and on the advice of the seer Polyidus, obeyed Athene's instructions and succeeded in taming Pegasus. It will be seen that the sequel is of the type in which the human being carries out the instructions he has received from the god in the encounter<sup>10</sup>).

Accounts of dreams inevitably exhibit two of the features which Cameron has shown are typical of divine encounters. The first of these is the presentation of scenes of encounter as self-contained, and separated from their context<sup>11</sup>). It is general human experience that when we dream, we feel that our dreams are imme-

9) Arnott p. 339 and n. 25.

10) Dreams in which a respected personage reveals to the dreamer what he should do belong to the class of dreams called χρηματισμοί (E. R. Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational* pp. 107 ff.).

11) Cameron p. 305.

diately followed, or interrupted, by waking up. So in the case of dream encounters, the discontinuity between the encounter and its sequel is grounded in ordinary experience, although it may also be dramatically effective, as in Pindar's story of Bellerophon. This discontinuity is sometimes expressed very simply, as for example in Od. 19.551, at the end of Penelope's account of the dream in which an eagle kills twenty of her geese: ὡς ἔφατ' (the eagle), αὐτὰρ ἐμὲ μελιηδῆς ὕπνος ἀνήκε, and in Cicero, at the end of Scipio's dream: *ille discessit; ego somno solutus sum* (Rep. 6.29). But sometimes the drama of the moment is heightened, as in Virgil, Aen. 5.740 ff., with the pathos of the vanishing of the ghost of Anchises and Aeneas' passionate response: *dixerat et tenuis fugit ceu fumus in auras. / Aeneas 'quo deinde ruis? quo proripis?' inquit, / 'quem fugis? aut quis te nostris complexibus arceat?'*

Dreams also show another of the features which Cameron mentions as typical of divine encounters<sup>12</sup>). He remarks that it is when men are alone that gods appear to them, or, if they are not alone, their presence is perceived only by those to whom they have chosen to appear, and not by the other people who are present<sup>13</sup>). This belief is reflected in Theocritus 7 in the fact that Lycidas addresses Simichidas alone (21 ff.), not his companions as well, who are ignored throughout the conversation between Lycidas and him, and reappear only after the departure of the former (131 f.). A dream is an experience which only an individual, and not a group of people, can have, so dream encounters inevitably conform to the general pattern of divine encounters in this respect. The fact that accounts of dreams show some of the features of divine encounters inevitably, and not as a result of artistic choice, might seem to reduce their importance in a consideration of the encounter as a literary motif. However dreams were taken seriously in the ancient world as a source of divine guidance, and so they cannot be ignored here. Indeed their importance was so great that they may have moulded the conception which the ancients had of divine encounters which took place in waking life, though this possibility cannot be fully explored here.

12) Cameron p. 300.

13) Cf. A. W. Bulloch on Callimachus, Hymn 5.101 f. (p. 213) 'Gods could ... appear to some while remaining invisible to others'. Longus (2.29.1) makes playful use of this motif: καὶ ταῦτα μὲν περιστάται κύκλω τὴν Χλόην ὡσπερ χορὸς, σμιρτάντα καὶ βληγώμενα καὶ ὅμοια χαίρουσιν· αἱ δὲ τῶν ἄλλων αἰπῶν αἴγες καὶ τὰ πρόβατα καὶ τὰ βουκόλια κατὰ χώραν ἔμενον ἐν κοίλῃ νηϊ, καθάπερ αὐτὰ τοῦ μέλους (the sound of Pan's flute) μὴ κηλοῦντος.

In none of the passages mentioned so far is the dream stated to have been seen at any particular time of the night. But Achilles says that the ghost of Patroclus was by his side for the whole night (*Iliad* 23.105f.): παννυχίη γάρ μοι Πατροκλήος δειλοῖο / ψυχὴ ἔφεστήκει γοώσά τε μυρομένη τε. Then, almost immediately after he wakes up, dawn appears (*Il.* 23.109). Clearly, it is dramatically effective for the end of the dream to coincide both with waking and with the coming of the dawn.

In post-Homeric times there are many examples of dreams occurring at the end of night, just before dawn. Europa saw her dream νυκτὸς ὅτε τρίτατον λάχος ἴσταται, ἐγγύθι δ' ἠώς (*Moschus* 2.2), that is at a time when, according to a conventional belief, dreams were reliable (cf. *Moschus op.cit.* 5 εἴτε καὶ ἀτρεκέων ποιμαίνεται ἔθνος ὄνειρων). W. Bühler<sup>14</sup>) comments that although other examples of this belief are not found until later than *Moschus*, the way in which he expresses it shows that it was already widespread in his days. It seems likely that the fact that it is dramatically effective for dreams to appear before dawn contributed to the growth of the convention associating them with this time of night, quite apart from the influence of the belief in the veracity of such dreams. With Bühler's examples compare also *Longus* 3.28.1 αἱ μὲν (Νύμφαι) ταῦτα εἰποῦσαι τῇ νυκτὶ συναπῆλθον: γενομένης δὲ ἡμέρας ἀναπηδήσας ὁ Δάφνις περιχαρῆς ἤλαυνε ῥοίζω πολλῶ τὰς αἴγας εἰς τὴν νομῆν. Here *Daphnis* on waking seeks immediately to carry out the instructions of the Nymphs.

Some traditional features also appear in *Apuleius'* presentation of *Lucius'* vision of *Isis*. *Lucius* first went to sleep at the beginning of the night: *nam et ultimam diei metam curriculum solis deflexerat, et vespertinae me quieti traditum dulcis somnus oppresserat* (*Met.* 10.35). He then woke *circa primam ferme noctis vigiliam* (*ib.* 11.1). After praying to the *regina caeli* he went to sleep again (*ib.* 11.3). *Isis* then appeared to him, addressed him, and left him: *sic oraculi venerabilis fine prolato numen invictum in se recessit. nec mora, cum somno protinus absolutus pavore et gaudio ac dein sudore nimio permixtus exsurgo, summeque miratus deae potentis tam claram praesentiam, marino rore respersus magnisque imperis eius intentus monitionis ordinem recolebam* (*ib.* 11.7). Here also the dreamer wakes at dawn. The vision brings

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14) Winfried Bühler, *Die Europa des Moschos* (*Hermes Einzelschriften* 13) Wiesbaden 1960, p. 52.

Lucius mental relief (cf. *marcentem animum* ib. 11.3), and he resolves to carry out the instructions of the goddess.

To return to the consideration of encounter stories in general, an appearance of a god to a man would seem pointless if it had no consequences, and in fact it seems impossible to find any such stories which lack a sequel. It sometimes happens, however, that the sequel is indicated in advance, when the god is still on the scene, and not after his departure. Consider the following story of Athene strengthening Achilles (Il. 19.350–356):

ἡ δ' ἄρπη εἰκυῖα τανυπτέρυγι λιγυφώνῳ  
 οὐρανοῦ ἔκκατέπαλτο δι' αἰθέρος. αὐτὰρ Ἀχαιοὶ  
 αὐτίκα θωρήσσοντο κατὰ στρατόν· ἡ δ' Ἀχιλλῆϊ  
 νέκταρ ἐνὶ στήθεσσι καὶ ἄμβροσίην ἐρατεινὴν  
 στάξ', ἵνα μὴ μιν λιμὸς ἀτερπῆς γούναθ' ἴκηται,  
 αὐτὴ δὲ πρὸς πατρὸς ἐρισθενέος πυκινὸν δῶ  
 ὄχετο.

After saying that the goddess returned to her father's house, Homer does not add that Achilles felt relief from hunger. But this was superfluous, for we are left in no doubt that Athene accomplished her purpose ἵνα μὴ μιν λιμὸς ἀτερπῆς γούναθ' ἴκηται.

An example on a larger scale is offered by the Homeric hymn to Aphrodite. The last line of the poem (apart from the poet's valediction) records Aphrodite's leaving Anchises: ὡς εἶπουσ' ἤϊξε πρὸς οὐρανὸν ἠνεμόνευτα (291). No statement of a sequel to her visit follows, but this is unnecessary, because she has in her final speech to Anchises (192–290) foretold the birth of Aeneas, and described the arrangements for his upbringing (256–280).

Compare also Herodotus' story<sup>15</sup>) of Helen improving the appearance of the baby who grew up to be the wife of Ariston. Here the sequel comes in the normal place at the end of the narrative: ἀπὸ μὲν δὴ ταύτης τῆς ἡμέρης μεταπεσεῖν τὸ εἶδος. But the nature of the transformation would not be clear without the indications given earlier, one of which is Helen's prophecy ὡς καλλιστεύσει πασέων τῶν ἐν Σπάρτῃ γυναικῶν.

Finally, we may consider some encounters concerned with the writing of poetry, which for this reason, as it may appear later, are of particular relevance to Theocritus 7. Most important is the appearance of the Muses to Hesiod in the *Theogony* (22 ff.), because Lycidas' gift of the stick to Simichidas 'could not fail to

15) 6.61 cf. p. 278 above.

remind any Greek<sup>16</sup>) of the Muses' gift of a branch of laurel to Hesiod on that occasion. The epiphany took place under Helicon, in remote scenery naturally suited to divine epiphanies<sup>17</sup>). The country road in Cos where Lycidas met Simichidas is less remote, but is also far from the bustle of the town, and Cameron has shown that the road between town and country is a typical setting for an encounter<sup>18</sup>). In the lines (22–34) describing the epiphany of the Muses to Hesiod they are not said to have appeared to him at any particular time of day. But in the proem of the poem, which immediately precedes the epiphany, and describes some of their habitual activities, they are said to descend from Helicon by night (ἐννύχαι στείχον 10). So it seems likely that the particular incident of their epiphany should also be imagined as taking place at night<sup>19</sup>). Asclepiades, with no support from Hesiod's text, gives noon as the time of the epiphany<sup>20</sup>). It is of interest that he should feel it appropriate for the Muses to appear at this hour, a time of day which, like night, had supernatural associations, and the time at which Lycidas met Simichidas.

Hesiod's narrative is rather bare, and Cameron observes that 'the scene of the epiphany is recorded, but not its exact manner, and it cannot be added directly to the examples from Homer'<sup>21</sup>) (e.g. the encounters of Hermes with Priam in *Il.* 24 or with Odysseus in *Od.* 10). However some typical features of an encounter are found in the following lines (*Theog.* 30–34):

καί μοι σκήπτρον ἔδον δάφνης ἐριθηλέος ὄζον  
 δρέψασαι, θηητόν· ἐνέπνευσαν δέ μοι αὐδὴν  
 θέσπιν, ἵνα κλείοιμι τὰ τ' ἐσόμενα πρό τ' ἐόντα,  
 καί μ' ἐκέλονθ' ὑμνεῖν μακάρων γένος αἰὲν ἐόντων,  
 σφᾶς δ' αὐτὰς πρώτον τε καὶ ὕστατον αἰὲν αἰεῖδεν.

The motif of the gift appears here both in the laurel branch and in the αὐδὴ θέσπις which the Muses breathe into the poet. Certainly Hesiod saw song as a gift from the Muses, cf. *Theog.* 93 Μουσῶων ἰερωὶ δόσις ἀνθρώποισιν, 103 δῶρα θεῶων 104 χαίρετε τέκνα Διός,

16) Dover p. 149.

17) Cf. E. R. Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational* p. 117 for epiphanies of gods in lonely mountainous places.

18) Cameron pp. 297 ff.

19) Cf. C. W. Müller, *Die Archilochoslegende*, *Rh. Mus.* 128 (1985) p. 102 and n. 7.

20) Gow-Page, *Hellenistic Epigrams* 45.1. For the associations of noon with the supernatural cf. Cameron p. 301, A. W. Bulloch on Callimachus, *Hymn* 5.72.

21) Cameron p. 294.



δότε δ' ἰμερόεσσαν ἀοιδίην<sup>22</sup>). With the second gift, and, indeed, with both gifts, is associated another traditional feature of a divine encounter, a command: καί μ' ἐκέλοντο . . . ἀείδειν.

At this point, after delivering their command, the Muses leave Hesiod, though this typical feature of an encounter story is not expressed. There can be no doubt, however, that it must be understood, as it is, for example, in Suetonius, Nero 1.1. In Pindar, Pyth. 4.36 f. Euphamus receives the βῶλαξ δαίμονια from the god, and we must suppose, though this is not stated, that the god then parts from him. In Il. 17.545 Athene descends from heaven to stir up the Greeks. Disguised as Phoenix, she rouses Menelaus, and (569–573) gives him strength and daring. At this point we must suppose she leaves the scene, though this is not stated. At the beginning of Il. 19 Thetis brings the armour made by Hephaestus to Achilles. In 19.37–39 she gives her son strength and treats the body of Patroclus, and then, although this has to be understood, she leaves the world of men.

After the departure of the Muses, Hesiod obeys their command (Theog. 34) to sing of them first: τῦνη, Μουσῶων ἀρχώμεθα (36).

Another poet who met the Muses was Archilochus, as we read in the inscription of the third century B.C. discovered on Paros in 1950 (Suppl. Epigr. Gr. XV [1958] 517)<sup>23</sup>. They appeared to him, in the form of mortal women, when as a boy (ἔτι νεώτερον ὄντα col. II.22 f.) he had been sent by his father εἰς ἀγρόν, εἰς τὸν δῆμον, ὃς καλεῖται Λειμῶνες (col. II.24) to sell a cow. The country setting is a feature which this story shares both with Hesiod's meeting with the Muses, and Simichidas's with Lycidas. He met the Muses at night (cf. ἀναστάντα πρωίτερον τῆς νυκτός, σελήνης λαμπούσης col. II.26), and night is a time when gods may be about; similarly in Hesiod the Muses descend from Helicon by night (Theog. 10)<sup>24</sup>. The story of Archilochus' encounter with the Muses contains an indication of its sequel: . . . προσελθόντα σκόπτειν, τὰς δὲ δέξασθαι αὐτὸν μετὰ παιδιᾶς καὶ γέλωτος (col. II.30 f.). His mockery of them, and their favourable response to him in a similar spirit, point to his future success as composer of iambi<sup>25</sup>. The

22) Cf. Archilochus 1.2 Μουσέων ἔρατὸν δῶγον with D. A. Campbell's note (Greek Lyric Poetry p. 141), Catullus 68.10 *munera* . . . *Musarum* with C. J. Fordyce's note, Kambylis p. 15 n. 29.

23) Cf. C. W. Müller, op. cit. pp. 99 ff.

24) Cf. M. L. West ad loc.

25) C. W. Müller, op. cit. p. 107.

Muses gave him a lyre; though no divine command is expressed, one is implied, as clearly the lyre is to be played. The fragmentary inscription gives information about Archilochus' later life, which can be seen as the sequel to his encounter with the Muses, but the encounter itself has indicated the nature of the sequel. With the Muses' gift of a musical instrument compare their gift of Hesiod's pipes to Gallus, through the agency of Linus, in Virgil, *Ecl.* 6.69–71, a gift which is accompanied by a command (*ibid.* 72 f.).

An experience in some ways resembling a divine encounter made Pindar a poet, according to Pausanias (9.23.2)<sup>26</sup>). When on his way to Thespieae in the hot season the young Pindar lay down to sleep at noon. Some bees flew up and made wax on his lips. From that time he began to compose songs. Here, as with Archilochus, a country journey is the occasion for an experience which is beyond the range of the normal. The time of day is the significant time of noon<sup>27</sup>).

Two dream encounters which are attributed to Pindar show the pattern of a command or the like being given in the dream, which is later obeyed by the dreamer<sup>28</sup>). Pausanias (9.23.3) tells how in his old age Pindar saw Persephone in a dream, who told him to write a hymn to her. After his death he appeared to an old woman in a dream and sang a hymn to Persephone, which she wrote down on waking. The other story is in the *vita Ambrosiana* of Pindar<sup>29</sup>). In a dream Demeter blamed him for not having written a hymn for her, alone of the gods. He then wrote one to her. Similarly, it was in obedience to a command which had repeatedly come to him in dreams that Socrates composed a hymn to Apollo<sup>30</sup>).

The same pattern is found in Pausanias' story (1.21.2) of Aeschylus' dream: ἔφη δὲ Αἰσχύλος μειράκιον ὦν καθεύδειν ἐν ἀγρῶ φυλάσσων σταφυλᾶς, καὶ οἱ Διόνυσον ἐπιστάντα κελεύσαι τραγωδίαν ποιεῖν ὡς δὲ ἦν ἡμέρα – πείθεσθαι γὰρ ἐθέλειν – ὅῃστα ἤδη πειρώμενος ποιεῖν. Here again there is a country setting. Aeschylus is very young here, as Archilochus was when the Muses appeared to him, and his task of guarding a vineyard is a humble one, as was

26) Cf. Kambylis p. 60.

27) In some ways similar is the story in Pausanias 9.30.10. A shepherd leant against the tomb of Orpheus at noon. He fell asleep, and while asleep sang some poems of Orpheus in a loud and sweet voice.

28) Cf. Pindar, *Ol.* 13 (p. 279 above).

29) Drachmann, vol. 1 p. 2.6, cf. Kambylis p. 107.

30) Plato, *Phaedo* 60E.

Archilochus' task of selling a cow. It is appropriate that Dionysus, the god especially associated with tragedy, should inspire a future tragedian. Similarly, when Archilochus met the Muses his future as a writer of iambi, rather than as a poet in general, was adumbrated.

Callimachus had a dream encounter with the Muses<sup>31</sup>), and Hesiod's meeting with the Muses was sometimes interpreted as a dream, though 'the direct evidence for this view is scanty and mostly late'<sup>32</sup>). Ennius had a dream encounter with Homer<sup>33</sup>), and Propertius a dream in which he received poetic guidance first from Apollo, and then from the Muses<sup>34</sup>). In his *Somnium* Lucian claims to have received guidance in a dream. When he was very young (*ἀντίπαις* ἔτι ὄν 16), the same age as Archilochus and Aeschylus in the stories concerning them, he saw two women, Ἐρμολυφικὴ τέχνη and Παιδεία, in a dream. They compelled him to decide which of them he should follow, and he chose the latter. The pattern of command followed by obedience appears clearly in two other examples from the time of the Roman Empire. The elder Pliny composed his history of the German wars at the bidding of the ghost of Nero Drusus, who begged him in a dream to defend his memory<sup>35</sup>), and Cassius Dio had a similar experience: . . . κατέδαρθον, καὶ μοι καθεύδοντι προσέταξε τὸ δαιμόνιον ἱστορίαν γράφειν. καὶ οὕτω δὴ ταῦτα περὶ ὧν νῦν καθίσταμαι ἔγγραψα<sup>36</sup>).

In connection with stories of men receiving the gift of poetry in dreams, it is worth noticing the experience of Melampus, although he was a prophet, and not a poet. While he slept some snakes cleansed his ears with their tongues. When he awoke he was able to understand the voices of birds, and from them to foretell the future<sup>37</sup>).

The last encounter concerned with poetry which we will look at, Callimachus, *Aetia* 1 fr. 1, is not a dream encounter<sup>38</sup>). In it the poet, now an old man (cf. 6 τῶν δ' ἐτέων ἢ δεκάς οὐκ ὀλίγη), recalls that when he began to write poetry Apollo gave him some guidance on the kind of poetry he should write. His response was (29):

31) Cf. schol. in Callimachus, Pfeiffer vol. 1, p. 11, Anth. Pal. 7.42 (Kambylis pp. 70 ff.)

32) West on Hesiod, *Theog.* 22–34 (p. 158).

33) O. Skutsch, *The Annals of Ennius* (Oxford 1985) pp. 147 ff.

34) Propertius 3.3 (Kambylis pp. 125 ff.).

35) Pliny, *Epist.* 3.5.4.

36) Cassius Dio 73.23.2.

37) Apollodorus 1.9.11 with J. G. Frazer's note.

38) Cf. Kambylis pp. 75 ff.

τῷ πιθόμη]ν. Only the final ν is in the papyrus; the supplement, of Wilamowitz, is accepted by Pfeiffer. An indication of the poet's willingness to obey the god's command is just what might be expected here, as in the story of Aeschylus<sup>39</sup>): πείθεσθαι γὰρ ἐθέλειν. Cf. also Pindar, Ol. 13.79 f.: ἐνυπνίῳ δ' ἄ τάχιστα πιθέσθαι / κελήσατό μιν<sup>40</sup>), and Pyth. 4.36 οὐδ' ἀπιθησέ ἰν<sup>41</sup>). In his reply to the ghost of Patroclus Achilles says (Il. 23.95 f.): αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ τοι / πάντα μάλ' ἐκτελέω καὶ πείσομαι ὡς σὺ κελεύεις<sup>42</sup>). Pfeiffer notes that in his recollection of this passage (Ecl. 6.3–8) Virgil records his compliance with the command of Apollo. But even if τῷ πιθόμη]ν were rejected, the first part of the poem (1–20) would still show that Callimachus had accepted Apollo's guidance (note especially 20 βροντᾶν οὐκ ἐμόν, ἀλλὰ Διός).

## II

The foregoing survey of encounter stories suggests that if it is true that Theocritus has adapted the traditional form of a story of an encounter between god and man to his story of the meeting of Lycidas and Simichidas, it may be expected, if it is not inevitable, that the part of the poem which immediately follows Lycidas' departure should somehow express the result of the encounter. Immediately after he has left them Simichidas and his companions lie down in an attractive spot at the farm of Phrasidamus, and enjoy some good wine. The lush scenery is described in detail. The poem concludes with the prayer of Simichidas that he may again in the future, as he has done on this occasion, plant a winnowing fan on Demeter's heap of corn. The question then arises, in what sense can this part of the poem, or at least the description of the picnic spot which immediately follows Lycidas' departure, express the result of his meeting with Simichidas.

In some of the encounter stories which we considered it appeared that the narrative of the encounter contained indications of the nature of its sequel. It will be worth seeing if this is true in our poem. I shall therefore attempt a brief survey of the part of the poem devoted to the encounter, without exploring all the many controversial points of interpretation which it contains.

39) Pausanias 1.21.2 (pp. 285 f. above).

40) p. 279 above.

41) pp. 278 f. above.

42) p. 281 above.

At the very beginning of the encounter we are told that it took place *σὺν Μοΐσαισι* (12), a clear hint that its orientation may be poetic. Theocritus states clearly that Lycidas was a goatherd (13), and his goatherd's dress is described in realistic detail (15–19). However the goatherd has no goats<sup>43</sup>), and it is not even stated that Lycidas has entrusted them to a fellow herdsman to look after in his absence<sup>44</sup>). This apparent departure from realism raises the possibility that he is more than a simple goatherd.

Lycidas, as the senior of the two men, is the first to speak. He addresses Simichidas 'with the relaxed, slightly patronizing confidence of an older man speaking to a promising youth'<sup>45</sup>). He addresses Simichidas by name (21), and Simichidas answers him by name (27), which naturally suggests that the two men already know each other<sup>46</sup>). Lycidas asks Simichidas where he is going, and Simichidas tells him, but his reply has a literary orientation. He compliments Lycidas on his reputation as *συρικτᾶς*, and invites him to sing 'country song' with him (35 f.):

ἀλλ' ἄγε δῆ, ξυνὰ γὰρ ὁδοῦ ξυνὰ δὲ καὶ ἄως,  
βουκολιασδώμεσθα.

He refers with modesty, or mock modesty, to his own poetic achievement, admitting that he is not yet equal to 'Sicelidas' (i. e. Asclepiades) or Philetas (38 ff.).

In his reply Lycidas tells Simichidas that he will give him a stick in recognition of the candour with which he admits his limitations as a poet (43 f.). In contrast, he disparages over-ambitious poets and 'cocks of the Muses' who vainly strive to rival Homer (45–48). This declaration resembles the message 'small is beautiful' expressed by Callimachus in *Aetia* fr. 1, *Hymn* 2.105 ff. and *Epigr.* 28 Pfeiffer. Lycidas is here in effect giving advice to Simichidas to write poetry of a particular kind, as Apollo did to Callimachus in *Aetia* loc. cit. His words resemble the command given by the god to the young poet in encounter stories with a poetic orientation<sup>47</sup>). Finally Lycidas accepts Simichidas' invitation to sing 'country song' (49 f.):

43) Cameron p. 296.

44) Cf. Theocr. 4.2 and 3.1–5, though in the latter passage Tityrus may be a he-goat.

45) Dover p. 149.

46) For a different view see Giangrande pp. 526 f.

47) Arnott pp. 342 f.

ἀλλ' ἄγε βουκολικᾶς ταχέως ἀρξώμεθ' ἀοιδᾶς,  
Σιμιχίδα.

Lycidas' acceptance echoes Simichidas' original invitation (35 f.) verbally, and seems to express a friendly attitude on his part towards the younger man. His acceptance also means that both Lycidas' and Simichidas' songs can be seen as exemplifying βουκολικὰ ἀοιδά, from the point of view of our poem.

Lycidas then delivers his song, in which he prays that Ageanax, whom he loves, will have a safe journey to Mitylene, if he yields to him. The marked poetic orientation of the song deserves notice. Half of it (71–89) is devoted to the music and poetry to be heard at Lycidas' celebration of the safe arrival of Ageanax. The term βουκολικὰ ἀοιδά would seem to fit the song very well here. The two pipers at the celebration will be shepherds (71 f.), and the singer Tityrus, an essentially bucolic name<sup>48</sup>). Tityrus will sing of Daphnis, the mythical cowherd of Theocritus 1 and 6, and of the mythical Comatas, who was, like Lycidas himself, both goatherd and musician. Lycidas ends his song with the wish that Comatas might have lived in his own day, so that he, Lycidas, might have listened to his music while tending his goats, an essentially bucolic image.

Simichidas then reiterates the claim that he is able to compose bucolic song which he had implied in his original invitation to Lycidas ἀλλ' ἄγε δῆ, . . . βουκολιασδώμεσθα (35 f.). He tells Lycidas that he too has wandered in the mountains in search of poetic, or more particularly bucolic, inspiration, and that the Nymphs have taught him much<sup>49</sup>). Here the Nymphs, as often, resemble the Muses<sup>50</sup>). His song follows, in which he prays for the success of his friend Aratus in his love for a boy. He begins his song with a bucolic image, by comparing his love for Myrto with the love of goats for spring (96 f.). He also appeals to Pan to bring success to Aratus in his love (103–114). Pan is a god prominent in bucolic poetry, and so this invocation goes some way to justify Simichidas' claim that he can compose βουκολικὰ ἀοιδά. But the image of Simichidas and Aratus watching by the house of Philinus (122 ff.) is essentially urban. Simichidas was a townsman, and so we may

48) Cf. Hatzikosta ad loc. (p. 119): 'What can be said with certainty, is that Τίτυρος is associated with the bucolic world, and must have been employed by Theocritus as such.'

49) For the interpretation of 91 f. see Giangrande pp. 508–511.

50) Cf. Gow and Dover ad loc., and M. L. West on Hesiod, Theog. 7.

presume that his friend Aratus and Philinus were so also, as nothing in the text associates them with the country. And although in real life lovers might no doubt be shut out in the country as well as in the town, in literary tradition κῶμος and θυραυλία belong to the town<sup>51</sup>). If we consider Simichidas' song as a whole it is much less bucolic in character than Lycidas'. This can be explained by the fact that Simichidas was a townsman, unlike the goatherd Lycidas<sup>52</sup>).

Lycidas then presents him with the stick (128 f.), as he had said he would (43). The gift is not a prize, as the two men had not been competing with each other, but an expression of friendship (ξεινήϊον). Lycidas' smile (ἀδὸν γελάσσειας ὡς πάρος) expresses the good will tinged with irony which he feels towards his younger friend. His seniority to Simichidas is shown in the fact that Simichidas does not give him any gift in return. In view of the fact that Lycidas gives Simichidas the stick after listening to his song it seems natural to see in the gift either an expression of appreciation of his song, or at least a wish to encourage the younger poet, notwithstanding any possible lack of achievement revealed by the song. The words ἐκ Μοισῶν (129) show that 'it is to the Muses that Lycidas and Simichidas owe the ξένος-relationship expressed in the gift'<sup>53</sup>). If the gift has the Muses' blessing, it would seem that in making it Lycidas was not merely showing friendship to Simichidas, but also wishing to encourage him as a poet.

It has been argued by Giangrande that Lycidas' gift cannot express his approval of Simichidas as a poet, because Lycidas had stated his intention of giving him the stick before he had heard his song, when he was still unable to form an opinion of his poetic worth. But at that point Lycidas had said he would give him the stick because of the candour with which he had admitted his lack of poetic achievement, rather than because he was an established poet. And we are free to suppose that this is still his attitude, when he makes the gift. However that may be, the context in which the

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51) Cf. Gow on Theocritus 3 (p. 64): 'It should be noted that the κῶμος . . . belongs essentially to town life . . . The essence of the Idyll is, in fact, the transference of the custom to a rustic setting in which it is evidently absurd . . .' Propertius (2.19.5 f.) rejoices that Cynthia will be free from the attentions of comasts while she is in the country.

52) For the characterization of Lycidas and Simichidas see Giangrande *passim*.

53) Dover ad loc.

gift is made, and the words ἐκ Μοισῶν, make it difficult to exclude all expression of poetic appreciation from the gift<sup>54</sup>).

The words ἐκ Μοισῶν come just before Lycidas' departure, at the end of the encounter. They seem to echo the reference to the Muses at its beginning, σὺν Μοῖσαισι (12). Thus the encounter as a whole is under the influence of the Muses. It has been said that Lycidas's gift 'could not fail to remind any Greek' of the Muses' gift of a branch of laurel to Hesiod in the *Theogony*<sup>55</sup>). It will be clear now that it is not just the similarity of the two incidents, but also the nature of the context in which Lycidas' gift has been placed, which justified this association. And the association is pointed by the element of parody, in that the donor is a humble goatherd, not a god or goddess, while his gift is his everyday staff<sup>56</sup>).

### III

We may now turn to the sequel. If the writing of poetry, and more particularly of bucolic poetry, was a central theme of the encounter, we may expect the same to be true of the sequel.

After Lycidas has left them, Simichidas and his companions lie down in lush scenery to enjoy a wine of good vintage. It is not immediately clear that this passage has any literary significance. Giangrande has interpreted it as revealing the character of the narrator Simichidas, a townsman who has been invited to the harvest festival, although he has not laboured in the fields and thereby justified his presence at the festival<sup>57</sup>). Its religious aspects have no appeal for him, and his interests are exclusively hedonistic, something he seeks to conceal with his description of the scenery, which is merely a smokescreen of conventionalities<sup>58</sup>). But this

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54) In an imitation of Theocritus a stick is a reward for bucolic song ([Theocr.] 9.22 f.): τοῖς μὲν ἐπεπλάτῃσσι καὶ αὐτίκα δῶρον ἔδωκα, / Δάφνιδι μὲν κορῦναν, ...

55) Dover p. 149.

56) Segal pp. 22–26.

57) Giangrande p. 502.

58) Cf. especially Giangrande pp. 512 f.: 'Simichidas, dans son récit, laisse de côté non seulement la fête religieuse, mais même ces détails du banquet qui n'ont pas de rapport avec l'unique but qui l'a fait venir à la ferme: il ne se préoccupe pas de faire mention de l'accueil reçu chez ses hôtes, des nécessaires *convenevoli*, et procède immédiatement à décrire son but: être couché sur un lit confortable, dans une ambiance agréable, et boire. Théocrite a probablement entendu faire une satire



view is perhaps too censorious. It is true that Simichidas had not shared in the toil of the harvest, but the text nowhere suggests that he and his companions were uninvited guests. Lycidas' gibe ἄκλητος (24) is surely not to be taken seriously; Theocritus makes it very clear that Lycidas was smiling when he said this (19 f.). Moreover Simichidas is the narrator throughout the whole of the poem. So if any unfavourable traits can indeed be detected in his characterization, he himself is our only authority for them, and such ironic self-presentation should not be taken too seriously<sup>59</sup>). Certainly, in enjoying themselves the townsman Simichidas and his companions were behaving no differently from genuine countrymen; compare the country scene in Longus 2.31.1: ἤδη δὲ παρόντων τῶν ἀμφὶ τὴν Χλόην, πῦρ ἀνακαύσας καὶ τὰ μὲν ἐψήσας τῶν κρεῶν τὰ δὲ ὀπτήσας ἀπήρξατό τε ταῖς Νύμφαις καὶ κρατῆρα ἀπέσπεισε μεστόν γλεύκος καὶ ἐκ φυλλάδος σιβάδας ὑποστορέσας ἐντεῦθεν ἐν τροφῇ (τε) ἦν καὶ πότῳ καὶ παιδιᾷ<sup>60</sup>). And their enjoyment of a good wine is quite compatible with an interest in the more strictly religious aspects of the festival<sup>61</sup>).

However that may be, Giangrande's interpretation is on the whole valid, at any rate (to use Arnott's terminology<sup>62</sup>) from the perspective of natural realism. But perhaps it does not do justice to the passage from other points of view. To begin with, the fact that the features mentioned in the description of the scenery are naturally attractive, while springs and the shade of trees are inevitably

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des bergeries, comme l'a suggéré Legrand, en faisant envelopper à Simichidas son vrai intérêt dans un langage fleuri, plein de lieux communs (pour la *Geräuschkulisse* traditionnelle, cf. Schönbeck, *Der locus amoenus* von Homer bis Horaz p. 124; ...); mais, derrière le rideau de fumée des mots conventionnels, on voit le vrai *nüchtern* Simichidas, tel qu'il a été décrit par Lycidas, se préoccuper seulement d'être installé confortablement et de boire du vin de bonne marque.

59) There are grounds for thinking that Simichidas to some extent represents Theocritus himself (see Dover pp. 146–148). If so, some self-disparagement or εἰρωνεία is understandable. In Satire 1.6 Horace presents his daily life at Rome as being more simple and carefree than it is likely to have been in reality. Nor is he likely to have been quite as tongue-tied on being first introduced to Maecenas as he says he was. Catullus was doubtless better able to deal with women such as the *amica* of Varus than the story he tells against himself in poem 10 might suggest. Persius' life was surely not as idle and degenerate as he says it was in Satire 3.

60) For a rustic banquet in a different spirit cf. Alciphron 2 (Letters of Farmers) 15.2 ἐορτάσομεν δὲ μάλ' ἠδέως, καὶ πιόμεθα εἰς μέθην καὶ μετὰ τὸν κόρον ἀσόμεθα...

61) Compare Tibullus' remarks on a country festival (2.1.29 f.): *vina diem celebrant: non festa luce madere / est rubor, errantes et male ferre pedes*, and cf. K. F. Smith ad loc.

62) Arnott p. 344.

highly prized in Mediterranean lands, may make us hesitate to see in the description nothing more than a 'rideau de fumée des mots conventionnels'.

Moreover Schönbeck has shown that lines 131–157 are a *locus amoenus*, that is to say a description of an idealized landscape, a literary genre with its own traditions and conventions<sup>63</sup>). It is not necessary to repeat here his thorough analysis of the passage, but some aspects of it, which may reveal Theocritus' artistic intentions, deserve mention. On 141 αἶδον κόρυδοι καὶ ἀκανθίδες, ἔστενε τρυγῶν Gow comments: 'The song of the crested lark is said to be inconspicuous, and it is elsewhere spoken of with contempt', and that the moaning of the τρυγῶν 'was proverbial for persistency, but is not praised for beauty'. Why then should Simichidas mention the song of these birds in an idealizing description of a country spot? The reason, as argued by Hatzikosta, is that the townsman Simichidas is a 'sham countryman', who 'in his bogus love for the countryside mixes inappositely the song of birds and insects traditionally liked (bees, etc.) with the song of birds and animals which real "campagnards" did not like and which he pretends to like in his overzealous attempt to elaborate the bucolic setting'<sup>64</sup>). But it is simpler to suppose, as Gow has suggested, that 135–142 'may merely describe the concert of a fine summer day without implying that its components are individually agreeable'<sup>65</sup>). A variety of bird song is in itself attractive, and Schönbeck observes, in commenting on these lines, that 'das Streben nach Mannigfaltigkeit' is a constant feature of the *locus amoenus*<sup>66</sup>), the *locus amoenus* itself being 'ein Naturausschnitt, der dem Genuß dient'<sup>67</sup>). In another Theocritean *locus amoenus*, epigram 4, two different kinds of bird are heard, blackbirds and nightingales (9–12), and variety is also found in the song of the blackbird itself, which is called ποικιλότραυλα μέλη (10)<sup>68</sup>). Compare Virgil's idyllic picture of the Tiber estuary (Aen. 7.32 ff.): *variae circumque supraque / adsuetae ripis volucres et fluminis alveo / aethera mulcebant cantu lucoque volabant*.

63) Schönbeck pp. 112–127.

64) Hatzikosta p. 200.

65) Gow p. 166.

66) Schönbeck p. 121, cf. pp. 53, 69, 102, 111.

67) Schönbeck p. 15 and passim.

68) The nightingale's song is itself varied, cf. Od. 19.521 ἦ τε θαμὰ τρωπῶσα χέει πολυηχέα φωνήν.

Moreover it seems likely that in introducing the bird song Theocritus has departed from realism, as has been suggested by Arnott<sup>69</sup>). Gow has shown that it is reasonably certain that the action of the poem took place in August, or possibly July<sup>70</sup>). 'At this time of the year, however, most species of bird have ceased to sing. The purr of the turtle dove (τρυνών) can still occasionally be heard in August, but chaffinches (ἀκανθίδες) and crested larks (κόρουδοι) stop singing in mid-July, and nightingales (όλολυγών)<sup>71</sup>) shortly after mid-June<sup>69</sup>). But birds often sing in *loci amoeni*, and in particular 'der typische Vogel, dessen Gesang die akustische Seite der nichtbukolischen Ideallandschaft bestimmt, ist die Nachtigall'<sup>72</sup>). We have already noticed the nightingale in another Theocritean *locus amoenus*, epigram 4 (11 f.), where, however, the time of the year is spring (εἰαρινοί 9).

Similar considerations explain the apparent departure from reality in 138 f. On σκιαραῖς Gow comments that 'from the cicada's point of view the adjective is not very well chosen, ἐν γὰρ τοῖς ψυχροῖς οὐ γίνονται τέτιγες, διὸ οὐδ' ἐν τοῖς συσκόις ἄλσει (Arist. H. A. 556 A 24); but Theocritus is thinking both of the shade and of the cicadas as among the attractions of Phrasidamus' party'. In fact shade is a constant feature of the *locus amoenus*<sup>73</sup>), as is the chirping of the cicadas<sup>74</sup>), and it seems that Theocritus has here brought together two traditional motifs, without concern for the facts of natural history<sup>75</sup>).

It would seem that the use of motifs traditional to the *locus amoenus* has led Theocritus to a more basic departure from realism in this passage. It is difficult to see how all the features which he attributes to the picnic spot could have been found in the same place. The branches of *many* poplars and elms wave over their heads (135 f.), while at the same time about them pears and apples tumble in profusion (δαψιλέως), and branches of sloes are also burdened with fruit (144–146)<sup>76</sup>). Nearby there is not only a spring

69) Arnott, pp. 336 f.

70) Gow, p. 127.

71) That Theocritus' όλολυγών was a nightingale, not a frog, has been demonstrated by Heather White, *Studies in Theocritus and Other Hellenistic Poets*, Amsterdam 1979, pp. 9–16.

72) Schönbeck, pp. 36 f.

73) Schönbeck, pp. 86, 100, 109, 124, and cf. p. 76 n.5.

74) Schönbeck, pp. 59 f.

75) Schönbeck, p. 119.

76) Schönbeck, p. 117, cf. p. 125: 'Beide Teilanlagen (wood and orchard), die in der Realität gewöhnlich räumlich getrennt sind, werden von Theokrit in ihrer künstlerischen Darstellung auf engstem Raum zusammengedrückt.'

sacred to the Nymphs (136 f.), but other springs as well, surrounded by bees (142). The relationship of the spot to the farm of Phrasidamus also raises doubts, as farm buildings, farm people and farm animals are strangely absent. However there is a reference to the harvest in  $\theta\acute{\epsilon}\rho\epsilon\omicron\varsigma$  (143), and the pears and apples suggest husbandry. The other participants in the festival are not mentioned, and in general 'die Naturschilderung vermittelt uns nicht den Eindruck, daß Simichidas und seine Begleiter nun einen Ort erreicht haben, der von buntem Treiben erfüllt ist, wie es sich für ein Erntefest gehört, sondern den, daß sie in eine menschenleere Landschaft eingetreten sind, in der sich eine überirdische, von göttlichen Wesen belebte Natur entfaltet'<sup>77</sup>). To suppose that Theocritus composed this description of the place with its numinous atmosphere and unrealistic elements merely to provide a verbal smokescreen to Simichidas' enjoyment of the feast seems an inadequate explanation, especially if such enjoyment were not in itself discreditable. Can the passage be shown to have the literary significance that a consideration of the structure of poem might lead us to expect?

It is perhaps relevant that natural features similar to those found here, trees, shade, springs, birdsong, chirping cicadas and humming bees, are mentioned in Theocritus' other poems as being attractive. For example, in 5.31–33 Lacon invites Comatas to sing in a spot which he praises by mentioning trees, a cold stream, a natural couch of grass, and the chirping of grasshoppers. In 5.45–49 Comatas caps this by heightened praise of another spot<sup>78</sup>). Cf. also 1.106 f., 11.44–48, 13.39–45, 22.37–43, epigram 4.1–12 (a fully developed *locus amoenus*).

Particularly interesting is the conversation between Thyrsis and the goatherd which opens the first poem. Thyrsis mentions a pine tree by some springs (1 f.), and in his reply the goatherd mentions a stream falling from a rock (7 f.). Next Thyrsis mentions a knoll with tamarisks (13). Finally the goatherd mentions an elm, a statue of Priapus, some springs, a shepherd's seat and some oaks (21–23). The spatial interrelationship of these various features is vague. It is not clear if the goatherd's stream (7 f.) flows from one of the springs mentioned by Thyrsis (2) or not. Nor is it clear whether the springs mentioned by the goatherd ( $\kappa\rho\alpha\nu\acute{\iota}\delta\omega\nu$  22) are the same as those mentioned by Thyrsis ( $\pi\alpha\rho\alpha\iota\sigma\iota$  2). The regular

77) Schönbeck, p. 116.

78) Schönbeck, pp. 128–131.

semantic difference is that πηγὴ means 'natural source' and κρήνη 'place where spring water is made artificially available', though κρήνη is sometimes used, especially by poets, to mean a natural spring<sup>79</sup>). So it appears that although Theocritus' language does not prove that the two sets of springs are distinct, there is certainly no indication that they are the same. But if they are not the same, it would seem that he has here, as in poem 7, crowded more natural features into the same spot than would be possible in reality. But the way in which the features are distributed among different speeches makes the departure from realism less palpable here than in poem 7.

But this lack of realism may have literary significance. It appears that Theocritus set such a high poetic value on these natural features that at times he introduced them into his poems at the expense of realism. Their poetic value doubtless makes them an appropriate environment for the aspiring bucolic poet Simichidas, the Μοισᾶν καλυρὸν στόμα (37), to enjoy. Simichidas reclines in the delightful spot immediately after his meeting with the senior bucolic poet Lycidas, so Theocritus is perhaps suggesting that the lush scenery will inspire him to compose βουκολικὰ ἀοιδά, which will have such scenery as one of its themes.

The cave of the Nymphs (136 f.) seems intended to contribute to this impression. When Simichidas mentioned the Nymphs before (91–93) they closely resembled the Muses in function<sup>80</sup>). And just before he reaches the attractive spot, he receives the stick from Lycidas as an ἐκ Μοισᾶν ξεινήϊον (129). The stream flowing from their cave could be associated with the Muses as easily as with the Nymphs, cf. Pausanias 1.19.5 ἐθέλουσι δὲ Ἀθηναῖοι καὶ ἄλλων θεῶν ἱερὸν εἶναι τὸν Ἰλισόν, καὶ Μουσῶν βωμὸς ἐπ' αὐτῷ ἐστὶν Ἰλυσιάδων. The 'water of the Muses' was associated with the Delphic oracle, cf. Plutarch, Mor. 402c Μουσῶν γὰρ ἦν ἱερὸν ἐνταῦθα περὶ τὴν ἀναπνοὴν τοῦ νάματος, ὅθεν ἐχρῶντο πρὸς τε τὰς λοιβὰς καὶ τὰς χερνίβας τῷ ὕδατι τούτῳ, ὡς φησι Σιμωνίδης

ἐνθα χερνίβεσσι ἀρύεται τὸ Μοισᾶν  
καλλικόμων ὑπένερθεν ἀγνὸν ὕδωρ (Simonides 72 Page).

Pindar uses similar imagery of his own poetry (Isthm. 6.74 f.):

πίσω σφε Δίρκας ἀγνὸν ὕδωρ, τὸ βαθύζωνοι κόραι  
χρυσοπέλου Μναμοσύνας ἀνέτειλαν παρ' εὐτειχεῖν Κάδμου  
πύλαις.

79) R. E. Wycherley C. R. 51 (1937) 2f.

80) Cf. p. 289 above.

Later Simichidas addresses the Nymphs as Νύμφαι Κασταλίδες Παρνάσιον αἶπος ἔχοισαι (148). Here they have become universal, not merely local, deities, although it appears from 154 f. that they have not lost their connection with Phrasidamus' farm<sup>81</sup>). The mention of Delphi points to their literary significance. For the poetic associations of caves we may compare Homer's cave near Smyrna (Pausanias 7.5.12): Σμυρναίους δὲ ποταμὸς Μέλῃς ὕδωρ ἐστὶ κάλλιστον καὶ σπήλαιον ἐπὶ ταῖς πηγαῖς, ἐνθα Ὅμηρον ποιῆσαι τὰ ἔπη λέγουσι. Here, as in our poem, there are springs<sup>82</sup>). In a programmatic poem (3.3) Propertius dreams of a cave of the Muses (27), one of whom, Calliope, addresses him. The concluding lines mention a spring: *talia Calliope, lymphisque a fonte petitis / ora Philitea nostra rigavit aqua*. Bowie has shown that the imagery is likely to come from Philetas, who is also likely to have described a divine encounter<sup>83</sup>). Propertius uses similar imagery in addressing the shades of Callimachus and Philetas: *in vestrum, quaeso, me sinite ire nemus. / ... / dicite, quo pariter carmen tenuastis in antro? / quove pede ingressi? quamve bibistis aquam?* (3.1.2–6). It was in similar scenery, a well watered grove of the Nymphs, that Longus (Pref.) professes to have conceived the idea of writing his novel<sup>84</sup>). While Theocritus may have been influenced by Philetas, the notion that beautiful scenery might inspire literature was adumbrated before the Alexandrian era.

As has been shown by Schönbeck<sup>85</sup>), Sophocles follows the conventions of the *locus amoenus* in his description of Colonus (O.C. 668–693). The Muses favour the place (οὐδὲ Μουσᾶν χοροῖν νιν ἀπεστύγησαν 691 f.) and the Nymphs are also found there (678–680). Thus Sophocles implies, or might be thought to imply, that the natural beauties of Colonus might inspire poets, not least himself, who was born there.

The *Phaedrus* of Plato<sup>86</sup>) offers a more sustained expression of the belief that nature can provide inspiration. As in Theocritus 7, the time of day is noon (229 A). Socrates' detailed description of

81) Cf. Dover on line 148.

82) The identification of the cave as Homer's was doubtless facilitated by the presence in the Ithacan cave of the Nymphs (Od. 13.103–112) of ὕδατ' ἀενάοντα (109). Compare the four springs (Od. 5.70) by the cave of Calypso. At Rome the grove of the Camenae contained a grotto and a spring (Juvenal 3.12–20, Platner and Ashby, Topographical Dict. of Ancient Rome p. 89).

83) Bowie pp. 83 f. Cf. Horace, Odes 3.4.40 *Pierio ... antro*.

84) Cf. Bowie, p. 84.

85) Schönbeck, pp. 88–102.

86) Cf. Cameron, pp. 305 f.

the spot where the conversation takes place (230 B–C) follows, as Schönbeck has shown<sup>87</sup>), the conventions of the *locus amoenus*. The trees, the stream, the chirping cicadas, and the natural resting-place are all features which it shares with the *locus amoenus* of Theocritus 7. Especially interesting is the presence of the Nymphs here, as in Theocritus. It is not necessary to repeat Schönbeck's admirable analysis of this passage, but it will be worth noticing how Plato refers to the beauty and the sacred character of the place repeatedly throughout the dialogue. After listening to Lysias' speech, Socrates says he feels able to deliver a better one, with inspiration coming from outside himself: λείπεται δὴ οἶμαι ἐξ ἄλλοτριῶν ποθὲν ναμάτων διὰ τῆς ἀκοῆς πεπληρωῶσθαι με δίκην ἀγγείου (235 C–D). Here the source of inspiration is left indefinite, but the reader is prepared for the later references to the Nymphs and to nature. Shortly afterwards (236 D) Phaedrus' oath by the plane tree serves to remind us of the spot: ἢ βούλει τὴν πλάτανον ταυτηνί; The deictic ταυτηνί is natural to conversation, but also helps the reader to visualize the scene. Theocritus uses demonstratives in the same way, e.g. 1.1 f. ἀδύ τι τὸ ψιθύρισμα καὶ ἅ πίτυς, αἶπολε, τήνα, / ἅ ποτὶ ταῖς παγαῖσι μελίσδεται<sup>88</sup>).

Before beginning his first speech Socrates invokes the Muses (237 A). The Muses are universal, rather than local, deities, but it will appear from some later passages in the *Phaedrus* that they closely resemble the local Nymphs. Socrates then interrupts his first speech to ask Phaedrus ἀτὰρ . . . δοκῶ τι σοί, ὡσπερ ἔμαυτῶ, θεῖον πάθος πεπονθέναι; His explanation is: τῶ ὄντι γὰρ θεῖος ἔοικεν ὁ τόπος εἶναι, ὥστε ἐὰν ἄρα πολλάκις νυμφόληπτος προιόντος τοῦ λόγου γένωμαι, μὴ θαυμάσης (238 C–D). At the end of his first speech Socrates refers again to the Nymphs: ἄρ' οἴσθ' ὅτι ὑπὸ τῶν Νυμφῶν, αἷς με σὺ προύβαλες ἐκ προνοίας, σαφῶς ἐνθουσιάσω; (241 E). He tells Phaedrus he is leaving: ἀγῶ τὸν ποταμὸν τοῦτον διαβάς ἀπέρχομαι πρὶν ὑπὸ σοῦ τι μείζον ἀναγκασθῆναι (242 A). Socrates could have threatened to go without mentioning the Ilissus, but Plato has not neglected this opportunity to remind the reader of the scene (note the demonstrative τοῦτον). In his reply Phaedrus mentions the time of day: ἢ οὐχ ὄρας ὡς σχεδὸν ἤδη μεσημβρία ἴσταται ἢ δὴ καλουμένη σταθερά; (242 A). That Plato should refer again to the noon shows that it was not an insignificant detail for him.

87) Schönbeck, pp. 102–111.

88) Cf. R. G. M. Nisbet and M. Hubbard on Horace, Odes 2.11.13.

Socrates' second speech follows, and he then introduces the theme of speech-writing (257 C–258 E). This brief introduction is followed by an interlude, which recalls the country scene. Yet again we are reminded that it is mid-day (259 A), and the chirping of the cicadas prompts Socrates to tell the myth of their origin. One of the purposes of the myth is to appeal for divine support from the Muses in the task that lies ahead<sup>89</sup>). The fact that this interlude is placed after the introduction of the theme of speech-writing serves to indicate that the inspiration of the local scene is not confined to Socrates' speeches on love, but extends over the whole dialogue.

Early in the discussion of rhetoric Socrates twice refers to his speeches and to Lysias'. He professes to see the influence of the ἐντόπιοι θεοί in the fact that they show how a man who knows the truth can mislead his audience: καὶ ἔγωγε, ὦ Φαίδρε, αἰτιῶμαι τοὺς ἐντοπίους θεούς. ἴσως δὲ καὶ οἱ τῶν Μουσῶν προφηται οἱ ὑπὲρ κεφαλῆς ὧδοι ἐπιπεπνευκότες ἂν ἡμῖν εἶεν τοῦτο τὸ γέρας· οὐ γάρ που ἔγωγε τέχνης τινὸς τοῦ λέγειν μέτοχος (262 D). A little later he playfully sees the same deities as the composers of his speeches: φεῦ, ὅσῳ λέγεις τεχνικωτέρας Νύμφας τὰς Ἀχελῷου καὶ Πάνα τὸν Ἐρμοῦ Λυσίου τοῦ Κεφάλου πρὸς λόγους εἶναι (263 D). The way in which the same influence is attributed to the cicadas, the προφηται τῶν Μουσῶν, in the first passage as to the Nymphs in the second, shows the close similarity between Muses and Nymphs.

Near the end of the dialogue Socrates asks Phaedrus to take a message to Lysias: καὶ σύ τε ἐλθὼν φράζε Λυσία ὅτι νῶ καταβάντε ἐς τὸ Νυμφῶν νᾶμά τε καὶ μουσεῖον ἠκούσαμεν λόγων . . . (278 B). That Phaedrus is asked to tell him not only about the results of the discussion but also about the place where it was held, clearly indicates the importance of the latter. The way in which the Νυμφῶν τέτινων καὶ Ἀχελῷου ἱερόν of the *locus amoenus* (230 B) is here called μουσεῖον again shows the similarity of Nymphs and Muses.

At the conclusion of the dialogue *Phaedrus* remarks that the noon heat has abated, and Socrates prays to Pan and the other local gods (279 B), a reference especially to the Nymphs.

The way in which Plato has made references to the Nymphs and to the local scene throughout the dialogue leaves no doubt about their influence on Socrates. An ancient reader familiar with the *Phaedrus* might well suppose that the scenery, and especially

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89) Cf. R. Hackforth's translation p. 118.



the Nymphs, of the Theocritean *locus amoenus* might have the same kind of influence on Simichidas. In Plato virtually all the references to the scenery are placed in the mouth of Socrates. And in Theocritus the fact that it is Simichidas who praises the scenery makes it appropriate for him to be inspired by it. And the analogy of other encounter stories might further suggest that it was as a result of his encounter with Lycidas that Simichidas should, perhaps not light upon the idyllic country spot itself, but at least be receptive to its inspiring influence.

However that may be, the hypothesis that the last part of the poem expresses the result of the encounter between Lycidas and Simichidas may seem better founded if we look at it from another point of view. So far we have considered this part of the poem as a narrative, in which Simichidas records an event in his past life. But the narrative is in poetic form, and so he is at the same time a poet. Moreover the subject-matter of this part of the poem is rustic; from the departure of Lycidas to its end it is quite free of urban elements. Surely then we have here an example of βουκολικὰ αἰοιδά. In Simichidas' song (96–127), however, the country element was, as we saw, very limited. The contrast with the rich profusion of country images in the *locus amoenus*, a profusion which overflows the boundaries of realism, is very striking. Surely this contrast is deliberate, and Theocritus is implying that the encounter with Lycidas, and perhaps more particularly the gift of the stick, has enabled Simichidas to sing βουκολικὰ αἰοιδά. We noticed earlier that in an encounter a gift from god to man was often accompanied by a command. In some cases there was a command, but no gift. In our poem Lycidas does not accompany his parting gift with a command, though his earlier commendation to Simichidas of the literary doctrine 'small is beautiful' (45–48) resembles a command<sup>90</sup>). However it seems likely that this gift of the stick implies his encouragement of his younger friend to pursue his poetic aspirations. The fluency with which the images in the *locus amoenus* succeed each other suggests ease of composition, and Simichidas may be supposed to owe this facility to the influence of Lycidas. Here we may find an analogy in Pausanias' story of Aeschylus' vision of Dionysus<sup>91</sup>). There it is specifically the ease of composition rather than the composition of tragedies in itself which is

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90) Cf. p. 288 above.

91) Cf. pp. 285f. above.

attributed to the inspiration of the god, cf. ὡς δὲ ἦν ἡμέρα – πείθεσθαι γὰρ ἐθέλειν – ῥᾶστα ἤδη πειρώμενος ποιεῖν<sup>92</sup>).

So far we have considered the final part of the poem largely in relation to Simichidas, but we may now ask whether it sheds any light on Lycidas, even though he has left the scene. The spot where Simichidas and his friends recline is not merely attractive but sacred, as is shown by the cave of the Nymphs: τὸ δ' ἐγγύθεν ἱερὸν ὕδωρ / Νυμφῶν ἐξ ἄντροιο κατειβόμενον κελάρυζε (136 f.). Gow<sup>93</sup>) regards ἱερὸν as 'probably no more than an *epitheton ornans*', but this view conflicts with the conventions of Hellenistic poetry, where 'every single word serves a purpose'<sup>94</sup>). And the curious absence of human activity in the spot contributes to the impression of holiness<sup>95</sup>); similarly the *Phaedrus* was set ἐν ἐρημίᾳ (236 C), and the conversation took place ἐν ἡσυχίᾳ (229 A)<sup>96</sup>).

The indications in the text are confirmed by the religious feeling of the Greeks, for whom, from the earliest times, springs were sacred<sup>97</sup>). Naturally the area immediately surrounding the spring would share in its sacred character. Such feeling is reflected in Pausanias' description of the setting of the temple of the Nymphs at Cyrtone, north of lake Copais (9.24.4): ἔστι δὲ αὐτόθι καὶ ὕδωρ ψυχρὸν ἐκ πέτρας ἀνερχόμενον· νυμφῶν δὲ ἱερὸν ἐπὶ τῇ πηγῇ καὶ ἄλσος οὐ μέγα ἐστίν, ἡμέρα δὲ ὁμοίως πάντα ἐν τῷ ἄλσει δένδρα<sup>98</sup>). This simple description is factual, not literary, but the literary motif of the *locus amoenus* has its roots in such passages, and in poetry *loci amoeni* are regularly also *loci sancti*. The cave of Calypso, surrounded by woods (Odyssey 5.55–73), the precinct

92) Cf. Penelope Murray, *Poetic Inspiration in Early Greece*, J. H. S. 101 (1981), pp. 87–100. On pp. 94–96 she discusses the importance of fluency in the earliest Greek poetry and in later times, and observes that 'fluency of composition is a common characteristic of inspiration in all periods.'

93) On Theocr. 1.69.

94) Hatzikosta ad loc. (p. 196), who gives further references.

95) Schönbeck, p. 116.

96) It was in similar circumstances that Ἀρετή and Κακία appeared to Herakles 'am Scheidewege', cf. Xen. Mem. 2.1.21 ἐξελεθόντα εἰς ἡσυχίαν.

97) Cf. L. R. Farnell, *The Cults of the Greek States* 5, pp. 420 f. 'No objects of the natural world attracted the religious devotion of the primitive and later Greeks so much as the river and springs, and no other obtained so general a recognition in the cults of the Greek states.' Cf. *ibid.* p. 424 'The worship (of the Nymphs) ... was widely prevalent and was probably universal, having been taken over by the state-religion from the primitive beliefs of the countryside.'

98) Compare the sanctuary of the Nemeseis at Smyrna (Pausanias 7.5.2): Ἀλέξανδρον ... ἀφιέσθαι πρὸς Νεμέσεων λέγουσιν ἱερὸν, καὶ πηγὴ τε ἐπιτυχεῖν αὐτὸν καὶ πλατάνω πρὸ ὄρεοῦ, περφυκία δὲ ἐπὶ τοῦ ὕδατος.

of the temple of Aphrodite, as described by Sappho (Sappho 2 Lobel and Page), and the grove of the Eumenides at Colonus (Sophocles, O.C. 16–18, 668–693) are all sacred places<sup>99</sup>). A rudimentary *locus amoenus*, which is also sacred, appears in Iliad 2.305 ff.: ἡμεῖς δ' ἀμφὶ περὶ κρήνην ἱεροῦς κατὰ βωμοῦς / ἔρδομεν ἀθανάτοισι τελέεσσας ἑκατόμβας, / καλῆ ὑπὸ πλατανίστῳ, ὅθεν ῥέεν ἀγλαὸν ὕδωρ. Compare the fountain in Ithaca, sacred to the Nymphs<sup>100</sup>), where Odysseus and Eumaeus meet Melantheus (Od. 17.208 ff.): ἀμφὶ δ' ἄρ' αἰγείρων ὕδατοτρεφῆων ἦν ἄλλος, / πάντοσε κυκλοτερές, κατὰ δὲ ψυχρὸν ῥέεν ὕδωρ / ὑπόθεν ἐκ πέτρης βωμὸς δ' ἐφύπερθε τέτυκτο / νυμφάων, ὅθι πάντες ἐπιρροῦζέσκον ὀδῶνται, and the grove of Athene in Phaeacia (Od. 9.291 f.): δῆεις ἀγλαὸν ἄλλος Ἀθήνης ἄγχι κελεύθου / αἰγείρων· ἐν δὲ κρήνῃ νάει, ἀμφὶ δὲ λειμών. It is true that the description of the orchard of Alcinous (Od. 7.112–132) lacks any reference to the gods, although it contains many of the typical features of the *locus amoenus*. The reason would seem to be that such a reference was not necessary in a description which had the specialized aim of expressing fruitfulness<sup>101</sup>). However Longus seems to have felt the absence of the gods, for he makes good the deficiency in his own imitation of the passage (4.3.1): ἵνα τοῦ παραδείσου τὸ μεσαίτατον ἐπὶ μῆκος καὶ εὖρος ἦν, νεὼς Διονύσου καὶ βωμὸς ἦν. An interesting passage in connection with the divine associations of the *locus amoenus* is Livy 1.21.3: *lucus erat quem medium ex opaco specu fons perenni rigabat aqua. quo quia se persaepe Numa sine arbitris velut ad congressum deae inferebat, Camenis eum lucum sacrauit, quod earum ibi concilia cum coniuge sua Egeria essent*. For Livy Numa's meetings with Egeria were a fiction by which he sought to instil the fears of the gods into the people (cf. Livy 1.19.5). It follows that Numa made use of such scenery in his propaganda precisely because it had divine associations.

In all the other encounter stories with a literary orientation it was a god, not a man, who met the poet, except in the story about Pindar, for whom bees were the transmitters of inspiration. The meeting of Lycidas with Simichidas is then unusual in that it is a man who meets the aspiring poet. However in the story about Archilochus the Muses were disguised as women, and indeed the human disguise of gods is a common feature of encounter stories

99) Cf. Schönbeck, pp. 61 ff., 78 ff., 88 ff.

100) Cf. Schönbeck, p. 34 'Unter den Gottheiten sind es vor allem Nymphen, welche die Ideallandschaft beleben.'

101) Schönbeck, pp. 70 ff.

in general. Such disguise is perhaps a partial parallel to the story in Theocritus. But although Lycidas was a goatherd, Theocritus has inserted into his narrative a number of hints which suggest an analogy between him and the gods of other stories. Some of these have already been mentioned<sup>102</sup>); another is Lycidas' smile, which Theocritus mentions three times (19 f., 42, 128 f.). Although this is wholly intelligible on the human level, it nevertheless seems to suggest the quiet smile often attributed to gods, which expresses their command of a situation in which human beings are baffled<sup>103</sup>). And Arnott asks whether it is merely a coincidence that the crooked countryman's stick that Lycidas carries is often carried by gods such as Pan in Hellenistic works of art<sup>104</sup>). Lycidas is also closely connected with the Muses; Simichidas calls him 'dear to the Muses' (95), and, as we noticed earlier, Theocritus suggests that the meeting of Lycidas and Simichidas as a whole was under their influence<sup>105</sup>).

After the departure of Lycidas, Simichidas and his friends reach the place whose attractive scenery is described by Theocritus according to the conventions of the *locus amoenus*. It may be suggested that the fact that this place is sacred in character has some inner connection with the supernatural aura surrounding Lycidas. If Theocritus has modelled his narrative on stories in which an encounter between god and man is regularly followed by a sequel expressing the result of the encounter, it seems likely that the sacred character of the spot is intended to confirm the validity of the divine motifs in the presentation of Lycidas. If however these divine motifs were, as some might claim, wholly imaginary, it would not be clear why, immediately after Lycidas' departure, Simichidas should find himself in a numinous place, and its sacred character might seem to have a merely ornamental function in the structure of the poem.

It was immemorial Greek belief that a poet drew his inspiration from a divine source outside himself<sup>106</sup>). When Theocritus

102) Cf. pp. 276 f. above.

103) See Cameron, p. 305 n. 64 and Arnott, p. 340. To their examples add Longus 1.4.2 τὰ ἀγάλματα τῶν Νυμφῶν αὐτῶν λίθοις ἐπεποιήτο· πόδες ἀνυπόδετοι, χεῖρες εἰς ὤμους γυμναί, κόμαι μέχρι τῶν αὐχένων λελυμέναι, ζῶμα περὶ τὴν ἰξύν, μειδίωμα περὶ τὴν ὄφρυν.

104) Arnott, p. 340.

105) Arnott, p. 343 and pp. 290 f. above.

106) Kambylis, pp. 11–16. Cf. Penelope Murray, op. cit., who shows that in the earliest period the concept of inspiration did not involve ecstasy or possession, and was balanced by a belief in the importance of craft.

made the goatherd Lycidas encourage Simichidas to pursue his poetic aspirations he was modifying, or parodying, this tradition, but not abandoning it. Lycidas is presented as being in an undefined sense the agent or spokesman of the Muses. The sacred character of the spot which Simichidas and his companions reach after his departure, no less than the divine motifs which attach to him, show that Theocritus was not seeking to secularize his story of *Dichterweihe*.

At an earlier stage we noticed some ways in which our poem resembles Plato's *Phaedrus*. However the question whether the resemblances are sufficiently close to show that Theocritus was consciously imitating Plato was not raised. Perhaps the importance of the Nymphs and the feeling for the natural scene in both works, and the fact that both conversations occur at midday, are features which can be attributed to a common culture or literary tradition, rather than direct imitation. But there is a similarity of structure which may point in the other direction. In *Phaedrus* 230 C-D Phaedrus tells Socrates that in the country he (Socrates) seems more of a tourist than a native, the reason being that he never ventures beyond the walls of Athens. Socrates replies: Συγγίγνωσκέ μοι, ὦ ἄριστε. φιλομαθῆς γάρ εἰμι· τὰ μὲν οὖν χώρια καὶ τὰ δένδρα οὐδέν μ' ἐθέλει διδάσκειν, οἱ δ' ἐν τῷ ἄστει ἄνθρωποι. This declaration is, however, at odds with the dialogue as a whole, in which, as has been seen, Plato makes it clear that Socrates was deeply influenced by the natural scene. Similarly Theocritus presents Simichidas as very much a townsman, in contrast with the genuine countryman Lycidas<sup>107</sup>). But although he is a townsman his encounter with Lycidas enables him to sing of the beauties of the country with great fluency. The fact that both works show a similar irony in the presentation of the townsman in the country may suggest that Theocritus was directly influenced by Plato.

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107) See Giangrande *passim*.