Sappho 31 and Catullus 51

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The Problem

Despite corruption at certain points, Sappho's famous poem preserved by “Longinus” seems clear on its surface. But the moment one looks to the implicit ties of part with part, he finds different men giving the most divergent reports of them; finds, even, that he arrives at different results himself after different readings. Under scrutiny, the components of the poem seem to drift apart, or sort ill with one another, despite brilliant efforts to establish their coherence. The extant strophes move forward in three leaps: 

1 That man who (ever) sits by you seems godlike; and (2) this (-TO) it is that stuns—or stunned—me; (3) because (γεῖρο) whenever I look at you, the effects of that glance totally debilitate me.” The separate

1 The most complete bibliography for Sappho’s poem, up to the year 1948, is given in pp.10-12 of Costanza’s book (in the list below, under 1950). Much of the literature touches only on a single point or separate verse. For the thought-sequence of the poem as a whole, these works seemed to me most useful:


I shall cite these items by author and page number (distinguishing Schadewaldt’s two works by date). Though I refer to Schadewaldt’s 1936 essay in its first, more accessible locus, I use the later versions of Welcker’s and Franke’s monographs. All poems of Sappho and Alcaeus are cited from *Poetarum Lesbiorum Fragmenta* ed. E. Lobel/D. Page (Oxford 1953).
stages are clearly marked, but their interrelations are elusive—so much so that, in Tenney Frank's opinion, Sappho "seems purposely to have hidden the transition."1 Each of the three stages raises questions that affect its bearing toward the other two:

(1) Verses 1–5: Is this a particular scene, affecting Sappho because a particular man has captured the girl's attention? Or does ὅτις generalize the congratulatory opening ("Happy he, whoever, who sits there")? The fact that κῆνος is reinforced by ἄνηρ may point to a particular scene; ὅτις can be used of an individual (Kühner-Gerth II pp.399–400). On the other hand, ὅτις must be taken as general, not individual, if—to avoid terminal hiatus with a monosyllable (as Lobel would have us do, in Σαπφοὺς Μέλη [Oxford 1925] p.lxx)—we follow Page's suggestion (21) and read τὲ | τ ἀδᾶνει.2

(2) Verses 5–6: What does τὸ refer to? The whole preceding scene, including the man's presence near the girl?4 Or simply to the preceding phrase, γελαίας ἱμέροεν, or ἄν ὕψείς ἵκτορ . . . καὶ γελαίας ἱμέροεν?5—in which case the man's presence was merely functional: an interlocutor was needed to elicit the sweet voice and laughter that can stun Sappho.6 But neither of these alternatives accords naturally with what follows.

(3) Verses 7–16: Verse 7 introduces a general rule, ὃς . . . ἵδω: "whenever I look at you . . ." The subjunctive gives this clause the sense of ὅποταν (cf. Pindar fr.108.7–8 Bowra: τάκομαι εἰρήν ἵδω | παιδῶν νεόγυνος ἐς ἱβαώ).7 This general statement is meant to explain (γάρ) the

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1 Catullus and Horace (New York 1928) 20.
3 It is taken this way by, e.g., Ferrari 62, Barigazzi 412–3. See also Ernst Kalinka in Wiener Eranos (Wien 1909) 158, and Carlo Gallavotti, RivFC 20 (1942) 117.
4 So, for instance, Snell 78, Setti 212–4, Tietze 348.
5 For Snell and his followers, the man is not merely functional. His presence is explained not by the poem itself, but by its occasion (a wedding). This explanation "from outside" will be considered later; we must first try to understand the poem from its own terms, if that is possible, without recourse to an occasio ex machina for the resolution of difficulties.
6 One expects κέ in the clause (cf. Alcaeus 117b.26–7 κέ τις βαδῶ), and Barigazzi suggests emending to ὃς κέ γαρ στ ἵδω. But it is better to presume that κέ could at times be omitted in Lesbian as in Attic poetry (Soph. OC 1225, cf. Kühner-Gerth II p.449), since it is omitted in other subordinate clauses with subjunctive at Sappho 16.4 and 98.3. G. L.Ahrens argued (RM 6 [1839] 60) that, since this is the best way to understand Sappho's subjunctive, the Homeric ὃς . . . ὃς which Toll introduced into the text by dividing ὃς. βροξέως into βροξέ ὃς must be rejected. The ὃς . . . ὃς construction takes aorist indicative in both
particular reaction of vv. 5–6. But it is an explanation that does not fit. If τό in v. 5 refers to the whole scene called up in the first lines, then Sappho is forced to say “I am stunned when I see x with y because, whenever I see x, I am debilitated.” Her explanation leaves out the key point in the scene, the man, whose prominence in the first five lines is thus rendered poetically futile. If, on the other hand, τό has a more narrow reference to γελαίος and/or φωνείος, Sappho is made to say: “I am stunned when I hear your voice, because whenever I look at you . . .” This explanation not only leaves out the man, but omits the point selected from the first scene by τό and made the subject of a very strong asseveration by the oathlike ἐὰν μάν (“This it is, and no other . . .”); it leaves out the girl’s voice. There is, then, a problem no matter which way we consider Sappho’s movement from the particular scene she limns at the outset to the general statement of her reaction whenever she sees this girl. For the essential point of the poem is often overlooked: Sappho’s famous description of her “symptoms” is not a record of her reaction
to the scene she began with. It is a description of what happens whenever she sees the girl. "Sappho spricht von der stets eintretenden Wirkung, nicht von der besonderendes Augenblicks" (Tietze 348). If we ignore the generalizing effect of ως . . . ἴδω and try to consider the poem as registering the impact of a single event, we make Sappho advance as explanation (γάρ) what is mere iteration: "This scene stuns me because whenever I see it I am stunned." ⁹ But to grant that vv.7–16 are the statement of a general law is to face a whole series of problems concerning its relation with the particulars of the opening—the fact that the man is given prominence and then ignored; the clumsy transition effected by an ambiguous τό; the fact that the general explanation does not explain the sentence to which it is appended.

These structural problems are crucial to one's interpretation of the poem. They gave rise, for instance, to the labyrinthine discussion of it as an expression of jealousy. One group of scholars says that the man's presence with the girl is the key point and that vv.7–16 therefore describe the torture of jealousy. ¹⁰ The trouble with this view is that it does not take seriously the general statement ως . . . ἴδω. Some try to escape this problem by assuming that (σέ) ἴδω is equivalent to ως γάρ ἴδω σ' ἐναντίαν αὐτῷ πλάσιον ἴδόνουσαν, ἓδι τε φώνειαν καὶ γέλαιαν ἵμερον—-an ellipsis not only obscure and unlikely in itself, but still open to the charge of circularity ("Your sitting with him stuns me because whenever you sit with him it stuns me").

Others deny that the poem has anything to do with jealousy and consider it a simple expression of love for the girl. ¹² But they cannot

⁹ Cf. Tietze 352. Snell 81 tried to remove the problem of this non-explanatory explanation by calling γάρ "mehr explizierend ('ja auch') als begründend." For him, there is no break between the particular statement of vv. 5–6 and the general one introducing the list of "symptoms" (vv. 7–16). It is all one description of Sappho's reaction to the opening scene. Such an interpretation ignores not only γάρ, but the new start at v. 7 and the raised level of generalization marked by ως . . . ἴδω. No example of his softened γάρ can be found in the intelligible passages of Sappho. She seems always to use it in the full causal sense (as in 16.6 and 94.8), and that sense is clearly in place here (like Catullus' nam). Cf. Setti 215.

¹⁰ It is understood this way by Ferrari 63, Barigazzi 414, Page 28, and G. Perrotta (Saffo e Pindaro [Bari 1935] 46-9).


explain the function of the man who is congratulated in the impressive first lines. Even Snell, who can rely on the extraneous factor of a nuptial occasion to account for the man’s presence, seems grateful that the fellow obligingly fades from a love poem where he can be nothing but an embarrassment: “Sehr kunstvoll wird von Wendung zu Wendung das Bild des Mannes weiter in den Hintergrund gerückt, so dass in dem Satz τὸ μ’ ἦ μάν . . . nicht mehr an ihn gedacht wird” (p.78). This gradual recession, which Page (28) also believes possible, is accomplished by v.5: that is, we are given four verses in which the man’s importance is created, then gradually (sehr kunstvoll) diminished, until it imperceptibly disappears! Even if one could believe in this kind of “artistry,” and even if one were to grant Snell’s thesis that the occasion of the poem is a wedding, a question of poetical economy remains: once Sappho decides to introduce the man (whether he is bridegroom, rival or nonentity) into her lines, and to give him a prominent rôle in the opening strophe, then that decision should contribute to the total impact of the poem. If he is just an embarrassment, to be artfully “phased out,” then Sappho has botched her job.

Welcker’s Solution

One of the most ingenious solutions to the problem of thought-sequence in this poem is that of F. G. Welcker. He maintained that ἱος θεοῦσαν has a heroic provenance and must mean “godlike in power.” The drift of the poem would then be: “He is strong as the gods who sits near you. That—sitting near you—would surely stun me, since merely to look at you affects me so violently.” A century later, Wilamowitz endorsed Welcker’s view of the poem and developed his suggestion that the man is the girl’s bridegroom. He also pointed out (p.57) that Welcker’s interpretation gives special point to the movement from φαίνεται . . . κήνος ἱος θεοῦσαν to φαίνομαι . . . τεθνάκην: “He seems a god, near you and able to bear

is, while others (like Barigazzi 421–2 and Ernst Bickel, RhM 89 [1940] 198–204) think Sappho’s is a poem of jealousy and Catullus’ is not. A. J. Beattie (Mnemosyne ser. IV, 9 [1956] 111) tried to make the poem unambiguously express jealousy by suppressing the ατ in v.7 (ὡς γὰρ εἰσίναι) and making the man the understood object of εἰσίναι. He seems not to know he was anticipated in this by H. J. Heller (Philologus 11 [1866] 432), though Heller thought Sappho’s love homosexual, while Beattie makes it center on the man.
such joy; while I seem almost dead from a mere glance at you.”

Wilamowitz (p.50) found similar responsion of phrases in poem 94, between v.4, \(\omega\delta\varepsilon\iota\nu\alpha\ \pi\varepsilon\pi\ο\ν\theta\a\mu\e\nu\), and the answering v.11, καὶ κάλ’ ἐπάσχομεν. One might add that, in the same poem, successive strophes end με \(\psi\iota\δομένα\ \kappa\a\tau\ε\λ\ι\μπα\νε\nu\) (v.2) and \(\eta\ \mu\a\nu\ \sigma’ \ \acute{\alpha}\acute{\kappa}\o\iota\sigma’ \ \acute{\alpha}\nu\p\iota\λ\i\μ\i\μ\a\nu\) (v.5).

Welcker’s reading of the poem offers many advantages. Some of these (the new light it can throw on the mutilated opening of the fifth strophe, the way it specifies the τό of v.5) I shall return to later. The main thing to note is that it gives a rationale to the transitions from particular to general: that man (κήρος) is only the example that comes to hand of anyone’s power (ὅτις . . . τέ, accepting Page’s suggested τέ) who can sit near the girl. And that act (conversing intimately, an idea conveyed by ἐνάντιος, πλάσιον, ὑπακουεῖ) would stun Sappho,

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13 In order to emphasize the relation of v.16 to \(\phi\a\i\nu\e\tau\a\i\) . . . κήρος, G. Thomson (CQ 29 [1935] 37–8) restored the deficient v.16 \(\phi\a\i\nu\o\m\a\mu\i\) <α\σ\τα>, introducing one solecism, hiatus, on the chance that it could be cured by a second one, correetio epica (on which see E. Lobel, \(\S\a\p\o\i\o\s\i\) Μέθη [Oxford 1923] IX). H. J. M. Milne (Symboło 13 [1934] 21) proposed \(\phi\a\i\nu\o\m\a\mu\i’ \ \acute{\gamma}ο\ς\o\gamma\e\) to mark the same contrast. Despite arguments against linking v.1 with v.17, τεθάκην \(\phi\a\i\nu\o\m\a\mu\i\) is enough to show that \(\phi\a\i\nu\e\tau\a\i\) in v.1 can mean δοκεί μοι; Snell 75 and others claim that before Plato it must mean ‘have the physical appearance’. Wilamowitz (on Eur. HF 804) is Snell’s authority for this doctrine on \(\phi\a\i\nu\o\e\σ\θα\u\) yet the translation given in \(\S\a\p\o\i\o\s\i\) und Simonides (p.56) is “Der Mann macht mir den Eindruck, Göterkraft zu haben, der . . .” (and see his comments, p.55, on \(\phi\a\i\nu\o\e\σ\θ\a\) in fr.49). As Setti observes (p.210), Snell is restricting the meaning of \(\phi\a\i\nu\o\e\σ\θα\u\) to its normal sense with the participle, ignoring its wider use (as here) with the infinitive (see also Jachmann 6–7). It would be best, therefore, to have an infinitive with \(\phi\a\i\nu\o\m\a\mu\i\) in v.16. But the ms. future infinitive makes no sense. Lobel and Page accept Hermann’s τίδειν even though the adjective (with τεθάκην dependent on it) is clumsy, and this makes the verb less clearly mean δοκεί than would \(\phi\a\i\nu\o\m\a\mu\i\) with infinitive. The best solution to this problem seems to be Beattie’s (op.cit. [supra n.12] 108–9) to take τεθάκην directly with \(\phi\a\i\nu\o\m\a\mu\i\) and make ὀλγοι̇ν τίδειν adverbial (= ὀλγοι̇ν δεïν). Heller (Philoξogus 11 [1866] 435) emended to ὀλγοι̇ν τι δεïν to get the same sense. Wilamowitz’s view of v.16 was vindicated when M. Manfredi announced to the XI International Congress of Papyrology (Sept. 1965) that a papyrus still to be published quotes Sappho’s line intact: \(\phi\a\i\nu\o\m\a’ \ \acute{\epsilon}μ’ \ αὐτή.

14 Page 20 asks why, if κήρος means “Any man who sits opposite you is fortunate,” we have “the addition of the specific ὀ αὐτός.” The answer of Wilamowitz would be that ὀ αὐτός here means ‘husband’; but this depends on the exploded hypothesis that the poem is an epithalamion. Besides, fr.111 gives us two uses of ὀ αὐτός in a wedding poem, and the word cannot mean ‘husband’ in either occurrence. A better explanation within the context of Welcker’s view would be that ὀ αὐτός juxtaposed to θέους is meant to express the antithesis ὀ αὐτός θεῖα ποιεῖ. This concessive use of the noun is clearest when accompanied by a participle (e.g. Eur. Bacch. 795 πρὸς κέντρα λακτίζουμι θυτός ὀν θεῖο). But it can stand alone as well (e.g., ibid. 763–4 κατενώτειον φωνῆ γυναικεῖς ἀνδρας “though women, turned men to flight”). Cf. Pind. Ol. 11.10, Eur. fr.781 vv.29–31.
since whenever she looks at the girl, a chain reaction of symptoms nearly destroys her. Sappho, too weak to do what the godlike man of the first lines does, is dizzied by the mere sight of the girl. In the same way the Myrmidons, lesser men than their godlike leader, cannot bear the dazzling sight of the armor Thetis brings her son: oüdė τις ἔτην ἐν εἰσιδέειν, ἀλλ' ἔτρεσον (Iliad 19.14–5). Under the force of admittedly more complex emotions, Penelope is so stunned (θυμός μοι ἐνι στῆθεσι τεθηπεν) by the suggestion that the stranger in court may be her husband, that she cannot address or interrogate him (οüdė τι προσφάσθαι δύναμαι ἐπος οüδ' ἐρέεθαι), indeed, cannot even look him straight in the eye: oüd' εἰς ὤπα ἱδέος τὸν ἔναντιον (Odyssey 23.105–7). The last phrase shows the force of ἔναντιος, “face to face,” in Sappho’s second line, where it is not mere reinforcement of πλάσων, v.3.

Welcker’s interpretation is not pushed toward either of the unsatisfactory poles in the “jealousy” debate. As opposed to (e.g.) Snell, he thinks that the man remains important throughout the poem, that he is not “phased out” after the inexplicable fanfare that brought him before us at the outset. But, as opposed to (e.g.) Page, he denies that the only prominent rôle the man can play is that of a rival. The man is, for Welcker, an example of the familiar bliss within reach of anyone else but denied Sappho because of her extraordinary vulnerability to the girl’s charms.

Attractive as the Welcker interpretation is, it has been severely criticized; by now, it is generally rejected. Some of the objections are not so much addressed to Welcker’s original thesis as to Wilamowitz’s embroiderings on it. Setti (203–8), Page (30–33) and Jachmann (9–13), among others, have shown how flimsy are the assumptions that Lesbian society would not allow intimate conversation between the sexes except at or after marriage, that ὤνηπ means husband, that the emotions expressed here are appropriate to an epithalamion. One might add the observation that if this is a poem of farewell to the bride who leaves Sappho’s circle, then the iterative ὃς . . . ἔδω defeats Sappho’s purpose: the poet is reduced to plain silliness if, in order to state that she cannot bear separation (seeing the bride no

15 Aelius Aristeides, Or. 18.4, also seems to think that the symptoms are those of one stunned by beauty—if, that is, his διασφείρων τὰς δῆλεις is an allusion to v.11 of our poem (cf. Neue 35 and Lobel’s apparatus to fr.196).

16 Much is made of this concept by Schadowaldt 1936.366, 1950.113, Tietze 364–6 and Milne (SymbOslo 13 [1934] 19).
more), she uses the reflection that she never could bear the effects of seeing her.

But these objections to Wilamowitz’s elaborate marriage scene do not touch the central points in Welcker’s interpretation. And Welcker’s view can be maintained even if we object to Welcker’s motive, the “exoneration” of Sappho, which for him involved the demonstration that the man in this poem is not an erotic rival. The internal merits of his position are entirely separable from the moral bias that Welcker felt while making his way toward that position; it has other things to recommend it than one’s view of Sappho’s relation to her girls. Indeed, we must keep the consideration of substantive textual points entirely innocent of that debate, or be mired in endless untestable surmises—ethical, cultural, psychological—that have their origin outside the text and impose themselves upon it.

If we turn, then, to objections raised against Welcker from the words of the text itself, we find that the major one has been a cumulative, now almost canonical, argument against his interpretation of ἰσος θεοσ. Some say it need not mean ‘godlike in power’, most say that it cannot. This position was formed in three main stages by three men, Neue, Dornseiff and Snell.

ʼἰσος θεοσ

Eleven years after Welcker’s interpretation was published, C. F. Neue wrote (29-30): “At veteres poetae constanter deos aeque ac mortales amoris potentiae negant pares esse; neque in verbis quidquam reperitur, quod ad tolerantiam pertineat, nullum δύναται, ὑπομένει, ἔτη, sed vocabula ἰσος θεοσ altiorem quendam dignitatis et felicitatis gradum ostendunt, in quem ille ascendisse videatur.” To the first of Neue’s objections one might answer that not even the most erotically unstable gods lose their voice, or sweat, or “almost die” from a mere glance at the object of their passion. But Sappho who at fr.1.28 summons Aphrodite as a σύμμαχοσ in her love-wars, sees the man who can stand the close onslaught of beauty as a hero, godlike in war, where she draws back in cowardice. That some gods

17 Costanza 53–4 thinks this the best refutation of Welcker.

18 It has often been observed that Sappho’s “symptoms” are largely drawn from Homeric descriptions of fear; that Lucretius, though he seems to echo Sappho’s poem at 3.152–9, does so to illustrate the pathology of terror. Cf. A. Turyn, Studia Sapphica (Eus suppl. 6, 1929) 44–5, 52–5. Tietze 363–6 believed that Sappho chose Homeric phrases descriptive of
are not as appropriately remembered in this context no more invalidates the phrase ισος θεους than the fact that Aphrodite shuns battle would invalidate the term ἀντίθεος used of a great warrior. For that matter, gods can at times lose even the dignitas and felicitas Neue ascribes to them all.

To the second of Neue’s objections—that the idea of strength should be expressed by some word like δύναται (ἰσδάνειν)\(^\text{19}\)—there are two answers: that Homer’s words ἵσθεος or δαιμον ἱσος have the meaning ‘godlike in war’ without any further specification, and that the context of the poem does specify Sappho’s phrase in Welcker’s sense. This second point must be dealt with later, but the first deserves some attention here, since Welcker did not support his intuition about heroic ἱσος θεους with a close look at Homer’s language—a situation that has not been remedied by any of those who later accepted or rejected his view.\(^\text{20}\)

To judge from \textit{Iliad} 9.603 ἵσον γάρ σε θεῶ τίσοναν Ἀχαιών, it might seem that epic practice makes ‘honored as the gods’ the proper translation of ισος θεους. But this verse reflects a special use of the adverb ἵσον (a use particularly concentrated in the ninth book) for describing the honor given a man: some form of τίω or τιμῇ is present in all its uses in the \textit{Iliad} (5.467; 9.142, 284, 603, 616; 18.82) except one, where it is used with a word meaning dishonored (ἐπικρατεῖ, 3.454). In the \textit{Odyssey}, despite ἵσον at 14.203, the normal adverb is ἵσα, but τίω or τιμῇ are still present (1.432; 11.304, 484), except at 11.557 and 15.520, where other words for honoring are used.

If we turn from this special use of the adverb to the adjective with dative, we find in the \textit{Iliad} that: (a) Zeus warns the gods that no one should claim to be ἱσος ἐμοὶ since he is φέρτερος (1.186–7, 15.165–7)—compare Homeric ἰσοφαρίζειν and ἰσοφόρος. (b) The adjective ἱσος (as

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\(^{19}\) Barigazzi 417 thinks this the principal obstacle to Welcker’s interpretation.

\(^{20}\) Irena Kazik-Zawadzka, for instance, in \textit{De Sapphicae Alcaicaeque elocutionis colore epico} (Wroclaw 1958) 82, simply assumes the heroic meaning without arguing the point.
opposed, say, to ἢκελός21) is used to compare men with only one god—with Ares (usually in the formula ἴσος Ἄρης, but see 22.132 ἴσος Ἐρυναλώ). (c) One who fights ἴσος Ἄρης also fights ἴσος ἀέλλη (12.40 and elsewhere, in this or in extended forms) or γαλαντι ἴσος (11.746 etc.).22 (d) The term δαίμον ἴσος (or ἀντίθεος)—again as opposed to ἴκέλη θεῖα τιν—i.e., used of a woman, only of warriors. And there is no γυνή ἴσοθεος to go with Homer's ἴσοθεος φῶς.

From these facts it seems clear that ἴσοθεος and δαίμον ἴσος (and, one may presume from parallel use, ἀντίθεος) mean 'powerful as a god' in Homer; and, if context allows us to suppose some heroic note in Sappho's ἴσος θέους, the words stand close enough to their Homeric exemplars to carry the meaning 'strong as god' without dependence on other words that say the same thing.

The next important contribution to the argument against Welcker occurred in 1930. Franz Dornseiff, reviewing A. Turyn's Studia Sapphica in Deutsche Literaturzeitung 51, wrote (in col. 396) that it is not only (as Neue claimed) inappropriate to apply the phrase 'equal to the gods' to a lover; one should not look for any specific quality in words that refer to the gods generally. One can only take the phrase (with Neue) as a reference to the general state of blessedness that makes the gods ὤμειν ζωντες: 'Göttern gleich sein' nicht identisch ist mit

21 Though ἢκελός, like ἴσος, can be used to describe mode of action (e.g. ll. 24.80), it is almost always used of physical resemblance: one "looks like" something (Od. 12.418, 13.157) or some one (usually some god, ll. 2.478, 19.282, 24.699, Od. 17.37, 19.54). Thus, when a god or man is in disguise, he is ἢκελός τιν (for gods see ll. 4.86, 5.450; Od. 5.54, for men 4.249). The word is the exact equivalent of ἐνοικόσ/ἐκήν (compare Od. 5.51 with 5.54, and ll. 4.78 with 4.86). The practice with ἢκελός is midway between that with ἴσος (usually, perhaps always, used to describe mode of action—see n.22 infra) and ἢκελός (usually of appearance): it can be used of physical resemblance (Od. 10.304, 20.88, 22.240), but also of singing like a bird (21.411) or flitting like a dream (11.207). In the Iliad it is restricted to the formulae ψυγκι ἢκελός (or ἀντέραψα αὐξή) and σι (or φλογί) ἢκελός ἀλακή. Considering the normal practice with ἢκελός and the fact that ἢκελός used for mode of action is restricted to comparison with ἄφιξα and σύς (never with persons), it seems probable that ἡθεικελός means that Achilles looks like a god—i.e., that it is not to be ranked with ἴσοθεος but with ἡθεικα (used most often of the handsome Paris and his father).

22 The brief simile with ἴσος-and-dative is devoted only to the ἀέλλη and the λαίλαπι in the Iliad with one exception, Thetis' recollection at 18.56 and 437 of the way Achilles shot up like a young tree (ἀνετομν ζηρεὶ ἴσος). In the Odyssey, the hero is said to sit silent ἴσος ἀνάνθος (10.378) or to chatter γρηγορὶ ἴσος (18.27). In all these cases, the comparison is with an action. The only use of the adjective that seems to indicate appearance is at 3.289-90 χεῖρ κύματα... ἱππὸς ἔρειν and 11.243 κύμα περιστάθη οὐρεὶ ἴσον, where the obvious translation is 'high (or big) as a mountain'. But perhaps all the other uses of ἴσος point to 'with the force (weight) of mountains', as 'with the force of a λαίλαπι'.
The approving use of this passage by Snell (76), Perrotta (Saffo e Pindaro p.47) and Jachmann (8) has given it wide currency. Yet it has obvious flaws. Dornseiff tells us θεοεικελος can only mean ‘like a (specific) god’—though the god is not specified when that adjective is used (only) of Achilles, and it is surely fanciful to distinguish θεοεικελ’ Αχιλλευ (Iliad 1.131, 19.155) from θεος ἐπιεικελ’ Αχιλλευ (9.485, 494; 22.279, 23.80, 24.486), despite the fact that the plural is used in the latter phrase—just as it is in the formula ἐπιεικελος ἄθωνάτους (1.265, 4.394, 11.60). According to Dornseiff, these phrases would have to mean ‘happy as the gods’, a description that hardly fits Achilles! The truth is that Dornseiff’s whole distinction between plural and singular in these phrases is without foundation: ἀντίθεος means ‘godlike’ whether one is thinking of οἱ θεοῖ or of the equally vague θεός τις (cf. δαίμον θεός). A specific god is not referred to; as usual, the godlike is whatever goes beyond human action (cf. Aesch. Ag. 661–6, Soph. OT 1258–9). Thus phrases like ἰσόθεος φῶς mean ‘strong as a god’ (i.e., stronger than man), even though some gods are not known primarily for their strength; and θεοειδής Paris (perhaps, as well, θεοεικελος Achilles) is ‘godlike in appearance’ even though, as Dornseiff thought it relevant to observe, Hephaestus is no beauty.

The most complete statement of the case against Welcker’s ἰσός θεόις, the one often referred to as decisive, is Bruno Snell’s (pp.72–6). He relies on a combination of arguments: (a) Dornseiff’s (and so Neue’s) assertion that the phrase cannot refer to anything more specific than an “Olympian” bliss; (b) the belief that φαίνεται in v.1 cannot mean ‘seems (to be strong as a god)’ but must mean ‘is revealed (visibly enjoying the bliss of a god beside his bride)’; to which he adds the argument (c) that the context is not heroic but epithalamial, since an εἰκάζειν-topos is regular in the makarismos addressed to the bridegroom (cf. Sappho 115 τίων σ’, ὥ φίλε γάμβηρε, καλῶς εἰκάζων;) and therefore (d) ἰσός θεόις is equivalent to ἰκελοῖ θεός (44.22) and
theoikeleis (44.34), phrases used of the happy couple Hector and Andromache in the poem that describes their wedding.

We have already considered arguments (a) and (b), the ones often accepted by those who reject Snell's primary addition to the criticism of this poem, arguments (c) and (d). Perhaps Snell (following E. Z. Mangelsdorff) is right in saying an eikazein-topos is a commonplace of epithalamia; we have a very slim body of evidence from which to draw inferences about Greek epithalamia. All the examples Snell gives, outside of Sappho, are in the Roman poets (p.74 n.3), and it is especially dangerous to infer Greek practice from Roman in the case of marriage poetry. Outside Sappho (and Himerius' references to her), I find only two Greek instances of any importance, and in both the makarismos is not identical with the comparison, as Snell tries to make them in 'ios theouin 5ttis . . . In Theocritus' eighteenth poem, the comparison brings out the beauty of the bride in order to congratulate the groom: "You happy groom, you have won this bride (vv.16–18)—a bride who is like no other mortal (vv.19–20), not comparable with any Spartan girl (ovδ' . . . παρισωθη, vv.21–5) but only with dawn, spring, a cypress, a Thessalian steed (vv.26–31)." And Aristophanes makes his messenger congratulate subjects because of their king-bridegroom's splendor: the birds are addressed as δαμακαριου . . . γενος (Aves 1706–7) because Peisetaerus comes to them on his wedding night brighter than a star or than the sun's ray (vv.1708–12). In each case one compares x to something as a way of congratulating y: cf. Euripides, Alcestis 920–1, where Admetus says he and his bride were each congratulated (καμος . . . δαιζων) because of the other's nobility and excellence—

\[\text{ως επιατριδαι και ἀμφωτέρων} \\
\text{ὅντες ἀριστων σύζυγες εἴμεν.}\]

Yet Snell would make Sappho's comparison praise the groom as a way of congratulating the groom: his eikazomevos and makarizomevos are one and the same.

**Note:** For (b) see n.13 supra.

The risks involved in the invention of hypothetical Greek models for Roman epithalamia have often been described: cf. P. Maas, RE 9.1 (1914) s.v. Hymenaios, col. 132; Wilamowitz, Hellenistische Dichtung II (Berlin 1924) 280; L. Perelli, RivPC 28 (1950) 289–312; E. Fraenkel, JRS 45 (1955) 7–8. The Greek and Roman attitudes toward marriage were entirely different (see H. J. Wolff, Traditio 2 [1944] 91–5), a difference of mentality reflected in their respective ceremonies (see Heckenbach, RE 8.2 [1913] s.v. Hochzei, coll. 2129–33).
We have true *makarismoi* in Sappho; but in each case it is a greeting or farewell which gives their honorary new title to the γάμβρος and/or νύμφα and the salutation ὀλβίε or χαίρε: cf. 112 (with Theocritus 18.29–31), 116, and 117 (with Theocritus 18.49). These *makarismoi* are obviously something different from Sappho’s epithalamial comparisons at 44.21, 34; 105a, 105c, 111.5, 115.2; perhaps 23.7 and 96.4. The simple vocative in 115.1 no more makes that fragment a *makarismos* in the strict sense than do the same words at Theocritus 18.9. In the same way, we cannot be sure that fr.108 introduces a congratulation: Theocritus’ imitation of it at 18.38 does not.

Not only does Snell directly identify the wedding congratulation with the comparison; he confuses these with still another alien form, the “philosophical” *makarismos* (ὁλβίος ὁς . . . ). The wedding greeting is a direct address to a specific person in a specific situation, an address marked by the vocative and/or by the use of the title ‘groom’ or ‘bride’ (cf. Sappho 112, 116, 117, Theocr. 18.16, Eur. Tro. 311) and/or by mentioning the γάμος which is the occasion for congratulation (Sappho 112, Theocr. 18.17, Aristoph. Pax 1333–4, Eur. Tro. 312 and fr.781.27–31). The philosophical *makarismos*, by contrast, is not a direct address but a general statement, in which the grounds for congratulation are given, not by using a title or a reference to the occasion, but by appending a relative clause that describes the class of people who are said to be blessed. The difference between the two types is so clearly marked that one need only glance at the examples of both facing each other across Snell’s pages (74 and 75) to grasp the distinction. The only case in which they seem to merge is Euripides fr.781.27–31, of which Snell gives a false impression by quoting only v.27. Taken alone, this line does look like a fusion of the epithalamial and philosophical *makarismoi*, of congratulation and comparison, until one looks at the rest of the passage:

\[
\text{'ὅ μακάρων βασιλεὺς μείζων καὶ ὀλβίον,  \\
δὲς θεῖον κηδεύσεις  \\
καὶ μόνος ἀθανάτων  \\
γάμβρος δὲ ἀπείρωνα γαῖαν  \\
θνατὸς ὑμνήσῃ.'}
\]

The opening line does not express the conventional ὀλβίος ὃς θεὸς. It is a literal statement of fact tailored to this specific marriage: Phaethon surpasses even the happy gods in good fortune inasmuch as he (and
not one of them) will marry the goddess. The εσ- clause does not present a class but refers to a single situation (like Sappho 112, Theocr. 18.17, Aristoph. Pax 1333–4), and the point of the congratulation to the groom is the bride’s divinity (θεά), which allows the μάκαρες to be brought into the greeting.

Once Snell has confused three different types of statement in the single sentence φαίνεται μοι κτλ, he does not notice that their inconcinnity works against the very point he is trying to establish—that ἴσος θέους must mean ἀλβιός or μακάριος. For the epithalamial comparisons do not illustrate the happiness of the εἰκαζόμενος. The Latin examples he adduces are concerned with the bride’s or the groom’s beauty (Cat. 61.16–25, 193–8; Sen. Med. 75–101, where vv.93–8 = Sappho 34). Even the debate on the relative advantages of virginity and fertility in Catullus 62 is not about which state is happier, but which is more attractive to others (see vv.42–4, 53–5). In the two Greek instances outside Sappho, the comparison is also directed toward physical beauty and splendor (Aves 1708–12, Theocr. 18.19–31).

As for Sappho herself, none of the comparative passages Snell deals with suggests the meaning ‘happy as gods’. The comparison clearly turns on the concept of beauty at 96.21–3 θέασθι μόρφων . . . ἔξισωσθαι, and at 96.4 ἔθασε κελανθή (θέα σ’ ἱκέλαν ἀργίνωτα. Page: Homer uses ἀργίνωτας of the theophanies at Iliad 13.72, 15.490, Odyssey 6.108). And fr.44.21 ἱκελόθεός and 44.34 θεοεύκελος, which are part of a description, not a greeting, must refer to the beauty of the couple (cf. Aves 1709–14). Thus Sapphic θέα (θεός) ἱκελός has the force of Homeric θεοεύκελος, just as her ἴσος θέους can mean ἀντίθεος φῶς. And the

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85 The text of fr.781.14–26 suggests that the goddess is a daughter of Aphrodite (so von Arnim in the Teubner Supplementum Euripideum [1913]), but Wilamowitz emended the text (in two different ways) to make Aphrodite herself the bride (cf. Wilamowitz p.38 and Hermes 18 [1883] 415).

86 Sappho’s adherence to Homeric usage in comparison seems not to cover two passages, where she echoes Homer’s words, but not (so it seems) his meaning. Yet I think first impressions are misleading in both cases:

(1) The first passage is fr.111.5 γάμβρος εἰσβηγχεται ἵσος Ἀρνε. Homer’s ἴσος “Ἀριμ referred to the power of a hero’s onslaught, but Sappho’s phrase is followed by the epexegetic line ἄνθρως μεγάλῳ πόλει μείζων. The point seems to be physical appearance (as at Aves 1709–10). But G. S. Kirk (CQ 13 [1963] 51–2) suggests an earthier interpretation fitting the obscene banter of marriages and explaining the fragment’s first lines: the carpenters must heighten the hall because the groom comes to his bride as hyperbolically ithyphallic as some of the satyrs on Greek vases. Kirk does not refer to the passage that confirms his suggestion, Pax 1352, where the Chorus says of the groom τοῦ μὲν μέγα καὶ παχύ. The antithetical next line τῆς δ’ ἴδε τὸ σύκον leaves no room for doubt about the way in which the groom is μέγας.
former phrase is no more 'happy as a god' than the latter. Therefore, even if Snell had established that Sappho's first line contains an epithalamial makarismos (and he did not), the line still would not mean what he wants it to ('happy as a god'), but something else ('beautiful as a god').

The argument thus far has established only that ἱᾶος θέλοισιν can readily enough mean 'godlike in power', not that it must of necessity mean that. The phrase is capable of meaning 'heroic' if the context calls for this. And the context does. A congratulation necessarily recognizes special fortune or achievement. The ὀλβίος ὅς ... type describes a privileged class (e.g., the class of victors described in Pindaric makarismoi). This is the kind of congratulation involved in Sappho's poem (even Snell admits it is the kind used by Catullus in poem 51). But why is sitting near the girl a special privilege? Once one excludes Wilamowitz's odd fancy that only husbands ever sat near Lesbian girls, two possibilities remain—the man can sit there

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kαὶ πασχός. With this interpretation, Sappho 111.5 would keep its Homeric sense: the groom is as powerful, as full of prowess, as Ares—a translation that accords well with Lobel's suggested το' for the unmetrical ἱᾶος. (See now H. Lloyd-Jones' support for Kirk's interpretation of ὀλφός μεγάλῳ, CQ 17 [1967] 168.)

(2) At 115.2, answering her own question about the groom, Sappho says ὑπὲρακι βραδύως στὶ μύλιστ’ εικάσιω, which resembles Il. 18.56 and 437, where the verb used makes it seem that Achilles' rapid growth is all that is described. But the passages have a larger context, illustrated by Homer's other comparisons of dear ones to an ἔρως. In Iliad 18 Thetis laments the fact that, after all the care she lavished on Achilles, she made the mistake of sending him off to the war (θρέψασα φυτών ὅς γονιῷ ἀλωνὶς ... ἐπισποέηκα ... μακροσμένον, 18.57–9, 438–40). In the five Homeric passages that compare a human being to an ἔρως, the shoot is one that has been specially cared for. In four places the verb τρέφω is used of this care (Il. 17.53, 18.57 and 438; Od. 14.175). In four places the plant is raised in a special, a sacred, spot: γονιῷ ἀλωνὶς (Il. 18.57, 438), Ἄπόλλωνος παρὰ βασιλέως (Od. 6.162), χάφω ἐν οἰσινόλῳ, ὅθεν ἀναβέβρεσσεν ὦδωρ (Il. 17.54: cf. Sappho's sacred grove, fr.2.5–8). The ἔρως is an honored, even holy, plant, which adds to the pathos of its obliteration in four of the five passages (Il. 17.57–9, 18.57–9, 438–40; Od. 14.178–82). Sappho's groom is like the precious ἔρως, just as her bride is like the hyacinth of 105c, where the pathos of loss is expressed, or like the inaccessible apple of 105a. Aeschylus describes his marriageable young suppliants as specially tended and guarded fruit in Danaus' "antepithalamion," Supp. 996–1005. Thus, in its full context, Sappho's ὑπὲρακι ... εικάσιω is, like Homer's ἔρως ἱᾶος, probably not so much a physical description as an expression of love for a treasured plant, like the hyacinth and the apple. So far as her fragments allow us to form a judgement, Sappho seems to draw on the stock of heroic comparisons—ὁῶθεος, ἱᾶος Ἀρτη, θεῖα ἱέλη, ἔρως ἱᾶος—for use in new contexts, but not with new denotations.

27 Snell 72 relies on Himerius Or. 1.16 to establish the fact that there is an εἰκάζεν-τόπος in Sappho; but this, too, works ultimately against his thesis, since Himerius says that the comparison emphasizes the groom's heroic prowess (see Lobel fr.105b), not the happiness that Snell would find in the comparison with a god in v.1.
because he is a successful lover (and jealous Sappho is excluded from her company), or the man can sit there because he is able to endure her dazzling proximity and Sappho is not. Since Sappho spends the rest of her extant proximity expressing the thought that she cannot stand the girl’s overwhelming presence, the second alternative must be the right one. The state of Sappho is contrasted with the man’s and this contrast defines the nature of his privilege. Thus a heroic meaning for the phrase ἰοσ θεόων is not only likely in itself (from Homeric parallels), but, as Setti (211) argues, sustained by the whole drift and order of the poem, by its total context. Therefore Wilamowitz was justified in taking ὁτις here as “ein Mensch der Art dass er . . .” (p.58, cf. Kühner-Gerth p.399).

**Sappho, Verses 5–6**

Despite all the advantages of Welcker’s reading of fr.31 and despite the ungrounded nature of the usual argument against it (the meaning of ἰοσ θεόων), there is one argument, less frequently made, that invalidates the whole thesis as it was originally advanced. Welcker (99) interpreted the poem this way: “Der Mann, der dir nahe sitzen und ruhig verweilend deinem süßen Gespräch und Lachen zuhören kann, scheint mir wie ein Gott—nicht bloss glücklich, wie Hor. Od. I 1.30, sondern auch eine stärkere Natur als ich Weib: mir würde es gewiss (denn der Aorist hat diesen Nachdruck) das Herz erschüttern . . .” That is wishful thinking. The simple aorist does not yield the sense he wants.

It is hard to say what the aorist in v.5 (ἐπτόωσεν) does signify. Some have called it “gnomic,” but this is not the kind of sentence where that occurs. Furthermore, to state a general rule here would anticipate, and so weaken, the general statement ὅσ . . ἵδω, again making the argument circular (“This always stuns me, because whenever . . .”). Welcker was right in wanting this cardinal sentence to accomplish a transition from the particular to the general. Most scholars simply treat the aorist as a present marking the sudden onslaught of Sappho’s disorientation. The fact that the word is rarely used in the present

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88 Mainly by Turyn (supra n.18) 10.
90 Cf. Carlo Gallavotti, RivFC 20 (1942) 106, and W. W. Goodwin, Syntax of the Moods and Tenses of the Greek Verb (Boston 1890) 18 § 60. Catullus uses the present (eripit).
GARRY WILLS

gives some credit to this view, but even so the verb sits oddly with the subsequent present tenses (or perfects used as present). Page (19) translates ἐπτόαισεν and ὑποδεδρομῆκεν in exactly the same way. The aorist is troublesome in any view of the poem. But that does not justify Welcker's broad construction of it.

If the aorist could mean what Welcker thought, it would remove the troublesome ambiguity of τό in v.5. The δττίς of v.2 is virtually equivalent to εἰ (as in most of these makarismoi: cf. Alcman 1.37–9 ὁ δ’ ἀλβιος, δττίς εὐφρον ἀμέραν διαπλέκει ἄκλαντος). Since Welcker makes ἐπτόαισεν apodotic, his τό would stand for the protasis, which naturally resumes the elements in the "semi-protasis" introduced by δττίς: "He is blessed inasmuch as he sits there. If I were to sit there, it would stun me." But since the simple aorist does not mean 'would stun', τό cannot contain the suppressed protasis, and we cannot make the pronoun resumptive only of the elements in the δττίς clause. It is vague, and therefore inclusive. It should refer to the whole preceding statement—not only to the verbs in the subordinate clause, but to the main verb φαίνεται. This makes the most probable reading of our text not "Sitting there would stun me," where τό = τό ἱζάνειν (ἐμέ), but "The fact that the man is godlike enough to sit there stuns me" (τό = τό δ’ αὐτόν ἵστοθεν εἶναι φῶτα).

Thus—even though we recognize a heroic meaning for ἱσος θεοίας —the simple aorist puts us back on the old merry-go-round with respect to jealousy, the transition from the man to the girl, the passage from particular scene to general statement. The man's power is, as Welcker claimed, contrasted with Sappho's powerlessness; but the specific point of vv.5–6 seems to be the fact that the man has the power—i.e., is a successful rival. And this still makes vv.7–16 swing abruptly and illogically (under cover of a non-functioning γάρ)

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31 I find the present only at Theognis 1018; but Aeschylus uses the compound μεταπτοσεῖν (Supp. 332). Alcaeus used the aorist of the verb as a true past tense at fr.283.3; so probably did Sappho in fr.22.14.

32 For a relative pronoun to express a protasis, see Goodwin (supra n.30) 173 §472 on οὖτος etc. in the apodosis, and the examples at Kühner-Gerth II p.483 §577.3.

33 So, correctly, Gallavotti (supra n.30, p.117) and C. del Grande (Euphrosyne 2 [1959] 186). Most of those who seek a referent for τό earlier in the sentence than the preceding participle γελαίασας find it in the subordinate and separated verbs ἱσθάνει καὶ . . . ὑπακούει. But why presume that a reference so distant will be so selective? Reference to the whole first sentence, as a single statement, is far more likely.
from the man (and symptoms of jealousy) to the girl (and symptoms of love). The promise that Welcker's interpretation held out, the promise that it could resolve these problems, is belied. His effort founders on the intractability of vv.5–6. Or, more precisely, it must founder there if previous restorations of v.5 express Sappho’s meaning.

So far I have been dealing with Lobel’s reconstruction of v.5—τὸ μ’ ἡ μᾶν for the meaningless τὸ μὴ ἐμάν of all “Longinus” manuscripts save one. The reading of that maverick codex, despite its pointless pleonasm (τὸ μοι ἐμάν), could at least be approximately construed; it was accepted by Toup, Blomfield, Neue, and only slightly altered (to τὸ μοι τὰν) by Stephanus, Ursinus, Vossius. But the Teubner editions gave widest currency to two emendations, Ahrens’ τὸ δὴ ἐμάν (Bergk, Hiller 1897, Crusius) and Schneidewin’s τὸ μοι μᾶν (Hiller 1890, Diehl 1925). Since 1936, however, when Diehl put Lobel’s suggestion in his second edition, ἡ μᾶν has been universally accepted.

There is a fatal objection to this popular expedient: ἡ μῆν always introduces its asseverative clause (see examples, Denniston pp.350–1), as in Sappho’s only use of it in an understandable context, fr.94.5 (nothing can be made of ἑμὰν . . . at fr.99 col. ii 25) and in Alcaeus 344.1. At most, the relative τὸ might delay the assevation; but μ(οί) should not intervene to delay it further.

If we are not to accept ἡ μᾶν, what is the explanation of ms. μὴ ἐμὰν? It may be useful to compare here what happened to one manuscript of Aristotle 1367a14 (= Sappho 137.7): although the best witnesses give αἰδῶς κέν σε οὐκ ἔπειν ὄμματα, Page (105) reports that the Dresden codex reads αἰδῶς κέν σε οὐ κἂν λῦν ὄμματα, where the fiddling with various forms of κέ suggests that the αν in κὰν arose from a gloss of ἄν for κέ. If, in the τομῆμαν of 31.5, the two final letters represent a similar use of ἄν to gloss κέ—in this case extruding the original word—then τὸ . . . κέν . . . ἐπτόωσεν would give Welcker’s sense to the passage, explain the aorist, specify the pronoun τὸ, and remove the difficulty of position in Lobel’s ἡ μᾶν, along with all the difficulties of logical connection which we have discussed. A possible criticism is that we expect an imperfect tense for the contrary-to-present-fact condition (cf. Sappho 63.7, 137.5). But this could be explained by the rarity of the present stem of ἐπτόωσα (see n.31), a more likely account of the aorist than that offered by other hypotheses; apodotic
use of the verb would keep it from jarring with the tense of precedent and sequent verbs.\textsuperscript{34}

If we seek to make sense of the rest of the line—\textit{μημέμ}—several alternatives present themselves. They are, in order of ascending likelihood:

1. \textit{τό μοϊ κέν} (cf. Schneidewin \textit{τό μοϊ μάν}): this gives a weak and asyndetic opening to a very strong statement. Besides, when \textit{κέ} is separated from a verb in the indicative, it usually gravitates toward a modal word (as in the next three choices): cf. Goodwin, \textit{Moods and Tenses p.72 §219}. It is true that we need a \textit{μοϊ} in this sentence (cf. Lobel \textit{’Αλκαίου Μέη} [Oxford 1927] p. lxxxv); but it could have occurred, very fittingly, in the next line (\textit{καρδίαν μ’ ἐν στήθεσιν}), and been canceled there when the end of v.5 was corrupted to \textit{ἐμάν}.

2. \textit{τό μ’ ἵ κέν} is possible: there is more latitude in delaying \textit{ἵ} than in the postponement of \textit{ἵ μῆν}. But this is not normal except with a vocative or an exclamation, and \textit{ἵ} \textit{introducing} an apodosis is one of its special uses (Denniston p.281, iii). Thus what was said of Lobel’s emendation applies here, though not as severely: \textit{τό}, as relative-implying-protasis, might precede the asseverative, but not \textit{μ(ο)ί} as well, which this reconstruction must retain in v.5 to prevent hiatus.

3. \textit{τό μᾶν κέν} (adversative \textit{μῆν}, Denniston p.334): this would bring out the contrast between the man’s power and Sappho’s powerlessness, and Sappho seems to have written \textit{μᾶν κέ} at fr.70.8. Though \textit{τό μᾶν κέ} | \textit{καρδίαν} may seem dysphonious, see fr.137.5–6.

4. \textit{τό δή κέν} (cf. Ahrens \textit{τό δή ἔμαν}): this gives a normal opening for an apodosis (Denniston pp.224–5), and therefore normal juxtaposition with \textit{κέ}. Furthermore, the joining of \textit{δή} to the pronoun \textit{τό}, implying a protasis resumptive of elements in the \textit{ὅτις} clause, resembles other uses of \textit{δή} with resumptive pronoun (Denniston p.226). Thus I think the most probable restoration of the sentence: \textit{τό δή κέν | καρδίαν μ’ ἐν στήθεσιν ἐπτόασεν}.

\textsuperscript{34} And this interpretation does not make ἐπτόασεν mark a single coup, against normal use of the verb to mark an induced \textit{state} of confusion. Cf. Theognis 1018, where the present participle shows that the “fluttering” process goes on while one gazes, \textit{πτώμαμι δ’ ἔσσωρω}. The same thing is indicated by the use of the perfect passive (Aesch. \textit{PV} 856 etc.) to describe an enduring condition.

\textsuperscript{35} There is no single rationale for the transmissional errors that afflict this line. The emendations that are palaeographically tidy, those of Lobel and Ahrens, are ungrammatical. But part of the story may be the confusion of uncial \textit{Δ} for \textit{Μ}, giving rise to \textit{μῆ}. 

Catullus, Verses 5–6

It might be asked why Catullus 51 does not reflect Sappho’s apodotic κέ. It is true that Latin is not as flexible in the omission of the protasis (see Gildersleeve-Lodge §593); nonetheless, other things being equal, Catullus’ quod followed by the simple present indicative should (like Sappho’s text according to Lobel) refer to the whole first statement of the poem, not simply to the verbs in the relative clause. But Catullus has taken extraordinary pains that other things not be equal. A series of interconnected changes thrusts the subordinate verbs into a prominence that makes quod naturally refer to them:

1. Catullus removes the first part of his sentence from what follows by interjecting a parenthetical line not found in Sappho (ille, si fas est, superare divos).

2. He brings the two verbs in the relative clause together (again departing from his model) and, having retarded the development of the sentence’s thought with his parenthetical second verse (and by changing ἰῶδανει to a subordinate concept, sedens, in v.3), saves the verbs for climatic position in the adonius, where they stand alone: spectat et audit.

3. Furthermore, spectat is introduced (in place of Sappho’s second verb ἰῶδανει) to point a contrast between identidem te | spectat and simul te | . . . aspexi, between the power of the other man to gaze and the weakness that overcomes him at a glance.

4. The same contrast is pointed by the proleptic misero that, contrasted with par . . . deo, helps specify the following quod: Catullus is made miser by the same thing that makes the other man beatus (par deo does not have the epic ancestry of Sappho’s phrase, and the idea that power is what makes the man happy as a god must be brought out by other words).

5. While misero is contrasted with par deo in sense, its proleptic prominence at the outset of the second statement puts it in marked opposition to the opening word of the first statement, Ille, while mihi and mi pick up misero in succeeding lines (6 and 7) much as Ille is echoed, anaphorically, in the ille and qui of vv.2 and 3.

6. In place of Sappho’s καρδίαν . . . (κέν) ἐπτόασεν, Catullus wrote

for δή, and EMAN might be an attempt to make sense of the remaining KAN (cf. κάν in Arist. cod. Dresd.) or AN.
omnis eripit sensus, where omnis is contrasted with the separate interruptions of sensation in vv.7–12. This parallels the contrast between identidem spectare (et audire) and aspicere ( . . . nihil <vocis> etc.): “Gazing intimately at her ravishes all my senses, because even a glance disrupts particular senses.” Note that the nam has full causal force, a fact granted even by those who deny it to Sappho’s γάρ.

(7) Finally, by heightening καρδιάν . . . (κέν) ἔπτόωσεν to omnis eripit sensus, Catullus sacrifices (by anticipating it) the climax Sappho saves for the end of her list (τεθνάκην . . . φαίνομαι) in order to make the superlative statement hypothetical in effect: “Doing what he is doing—looking at her, and listening, close up, and long—takes away all my sensation (i.e. would do so if I were imitating him), since even a glance makes me aware of a series of physical disorders.” Every means has been used to contrast the two situations of Catullus—as (really) aspiciens and (hypothetically) identidem spectans—and to mark the latter situation as unthinkably audacious, impossibly risky.36

Every device Catullus invents here represents a departure from Sappho’s technique in order to preserve her meaning.37 Though he lacked certain of the resources at her disposal—e.g., a phrase for ‘equaling gods’ that expressed heroic power, an economical use of apodotic aorist that would leave its protasis implied—he puts his passage together in such a way that his quod refers to what the man is doing (rather than the fact that this man is doing it) and makes his eripit hypothetical in effect (as “unthinkably” superlative). So successful has he been in retaining Sappho’s concept (as Welcker discerned it) that even those who, like Snell and Schnelle and Amundsen, deny

86 Ilse Schnelle began the analysis of Catullus’ contrast between synthetic summary statement in vv.5–6 and analytic list in vv.7–12; cf. pp.17–23 of her “Untersuchungen zu Catulls dichterischen Form,” (supra n.8). L. Amundsen (SymbOslo 12 (1933) 73), Setti 215, and especially Massa Positano 94–5 have developed Schnelle’s insights, but without sufficient emphasis on the way this contrast unites with the poet’s other changes to make the “synthetic” statement hypothetical in effect.

87 This is true even of the whole strophe he omits. Sappho’s fourth strophe extends her list of symptoms and climaxes it with τεθνάκην . . . φαίνομαι. Since Catullus sacrificed this effect in order to achieve his superlative statement at vv.5–6, he cannot sustain and cap the long list as she did. He shortens his list and describes the symptoms he retains in a rhetoric progressively more complex, culminating in the delayed sed, the chiasmus of the four verbs and subjects, the enallage and alliteration of his third stanza. He thus arranges the only kind of ascent still available to him and, at the same time, prepares the way for the rhetorical topoi of his last stanza. See the fine analysis of the third stanza in Schnelle 18, and Otto Immisch’s criticism of the view that there is a total break in tone between the third and the final stanza (SBHeidelberg 1933/4, p.10).
that Welcker’s interpretation fits Sappho 31.5-6, believe that it gives a proper account of Catullus 51.5-6.

The Sapphic Style

One of the reasons for the eclipse of Welcker’s interpretation has been the popularity of Hermann Fränkel’s discussion (1924) of Sappho’s style as a simple “link-on” technique (reihende Stil). On the basis of this analysis, many contrast the logical structure of Catullus’ poem with the naïve, loosely-joined, “timeless” poiēsis of Sappho. The clear articulation between what I have called the poem’s three “leaps” is, by these critics, dissolved or blurred lest Sappho display a structural sense of which they think the archaic style innocent. Snell, for instance, claims that Sappho’s naïveté makes it impossible for her to use the relative pronoun τό in v.5 more ambitiously than as a link with what immediately precedes it; and, in the same way, he would dissolve the major junction that marks her passage from hypothesis (“it would stun me”) to explanation (“γάρ mehr explizierend als begründend,” p.81).

But Fränkel’s brilliant and seminal discussion, which in any case needs revision in terms of recent work on oral technique, over-simplifies the style of Sappho. Schadewaldt demonstrates how complex is her dramaturgy of the emotions. His prime example is fr.94, with its three marked temporal strata—the time when Sappho laments the girl’s departure, the remembered time of the departure itself, and the many remembered times called up at that departure to comfort the girl (and resummoned to console Sappho in the same

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88 See especially Snell 81-90, Massa Positano 89-91, H. Fränkel 50-1 and his Dichtung und Philosophie (München 1962) 212; her poems “stehn unter dem Zeichen der absoluten und direkten Gegenwärtigkeit.”

89 Snell also argued that reference back to vv.1-4 is precluded by the enclosed character of Sappho’s strophes, for proof of which he used fr.1 (p.78 n.2). But contrast Fränkel’s own analysis of that fragment (pp.48-9).

90 See, for instance, Fränkel 79-80, where a psychological explanation is elaborated for what seems in some of his instances a mechanical problem, the harmonizing of oral formulaic patterns. Fränkel also subsumed under a general heading sets of phenomena which may have independent and more limited origins; for instance, he does not allow as cardinal a rôle to the Priamel (pp.68-9, 90) or to hymn devices (p.43 n.2) as some scholars now would. What he considers as one large (and largely unconscious) cultural trait of the archaic age must, in many cases, be considered as separate devices—oral formulae, Priameln, hymn-phrases, deliberate antithesis (e.g. Sappho 1.21-4), etc.
terms she used upon the girl). Here is a memory-within-a-memory technique of considerable sophistication; and it has certain structural parallels with fr.31. There is, for instance, a farewell scene (v.2) followed by a statement of the effect of that scene upon one (vv.3–5). More important, there is a general statement (kαλ’ ἔπαθομεν, v.11) followed by a long list of good things meant to prove the generalization. The list, fragmentary as it is, obviously contains more items than the catalogue of symptoms in fr.31, and it is a simple paratactic account; each element in the extant part of the text is introduced by καί (compare the seven uses of δέ in 31.7–16). These, the most emotional, detailed memories in the poem, have been placed within a careful historico-dramatic perspective—just as the famous conversation with Aphrodite in fr.1 (a conversation carried on “reihenweise”) is placed in the past and reduces the intensity of the poem’s demand (vv.3–4) by making it part of a recurrent pattern.

Thus, although Sappho’s vivid lists—of questions (1.15–20) or promises (1.21–3) or requests (1.25–8) or luxuries (94.12–29) or symptoms (31.7–16)—are given with paratactic immediacy, each of them is contained within a temporal and causal framework that uses complex transitions to prepare one for the “naive” listing (cf. the γνόρ clause at fr.94.8, which gives the reason for taking comfort, a reason that will be supported by the list in vv.12ff). There is no reason to blur fr.31 into a naive flow of impressions lacking the forceful connections of Catullus’ poem. Just the opposite: Sappho seems always to view her most passionate moods or moments through some aperture of historical control. The restless, yearning figure is removed geographically in fr.96, mythically in fr.16. Even Fränkel admits that fr.16 is a “mehrschichtige Gedicht,” a description he would deny to her other poems.

Thus in fr.31 we do not witness Sappho paling, sweating, fainting at the sight of a particular scene. These reactions are offered as an

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41 Schadewaldt 1936.363–5; 1950.115.
42 Fränkel 49–50 on the questions and 43 on the requests of the Aphrodite-hymn.
44 Dichtung und Philosophie² (supra n.38) 212. Schadewaldt and Page seem to have a more adequate grasp of Sappho’s style than do those who find in her nothing but a “naive immediacy.” Schadewaldt wrote (1936.371) “Sie scheut die direkte Ausserung ihres eigensten Gefühls und sucht ihr Tiefstes auf eine sehr zarte mittelbare Weise auszudrücken.” And Page 86: “Wherever the evidence suffices for a judgement of her art, we find it to be the expression of a reflective, self-critical, and self-dramatizing personality.”
explanation of her general inability to stand the girl’s bright presence. And even this explanation, though it has reached such a desperate climax (τεθνόκην . . . φαίνομαι), leads into a contrasting, cooler statement, presenting a fourth “leap” in the poem at just the point where “Longinus” breaks off his quotation: “All, however, can be borne . . .” There is no reason for “Longinus” to quote lines which no longer illustrate his point (the συμβαίνοντα . . . μανίας παθήματο); but the corrupt v.17 shows that what went before must act as foil to some kind of counter-statement. Even Fränkel, whose thesis it is that the poem lacks “Gliederung und Staffierung,” remarks that “Unser Text bricht an der Stelle ab, wo die Sprecherin begonnen hat aus einem gewissen Abstand auf das Ereignis zu reflektieren” (Dichtung und Philosophie p.200). Actually, as we have seen, there was already a withdrawal from the specific experience in ὧς . . . ὀδω, and the fifth strophe marks the recession to an even larger perspective, one from which the first generalization can be modified and corrected. At the same time, v.17 carries Sappho back from her past symptoms to a present mood of resolution.

Furthermore, the second generalization not only broadens the first one but reverses it. The obvious completion of her line of thought is that she must brace herself to bear all the symptoms that batter her in the girl’s presence, because she means to enter that presence, to bear that obliterating proximity. Wilamowitz and others think Sappho must bear the girl’s marriage or departure; others, that she must bear the loss to a rival. But even if the occasion for the poem presumed by each of these schools could be established, such a conclusion would not fit the poem as Sappho has shaped it to this point. The danger to be overcome, the disorienting influence she has so vividly described, is not the pain of loss, of some impending absence, but the unendurable joy of her presence, the barrage of her charms. Thus, as Setti realized (pp.217–8), v.17, put at the end of the list, is resumptive: Sappho is telling herself that all these symptoms can be borne, and therefore that she means to expose herself to their cause (the laughing girl’s nearness). The symptoms have been exaggerated, either seriously

45 It is safer, with Fränkel and Snell, to accept this translation of τῶλματον than, with Wilamowitz 56, to assume that it means the same thing as τολμάτων. See Eva-Maria Hamm, Grammatik zu Sappho und Alkaios (AbhBerl 1951) §142.5. Attempts to decipher the line beyond ἀλλὰ πῶς τῶλματον, ἕτει . . . have so far proved futile.

46 If τῶλματον means (as it may) ‘can be ventured’ rather than ‘borne’, then Sappho’s determination to approach the girl would be even more forcefully stated.
or playfully, to serve as foil to her final declaration—to describe the awe with which she does, at last, approach the girl, or to give a humorous note of trepidation to the mustering of her forces for love’s encounter. Compare the way she summons her divine ally in the Aphrodite-hymn.47

If Sappho’s poem is one that brings her into the girl’s presence, then her first lines may have not only a verbal reminiscence of the Iliad (9.190) but a reference to one whole scene: Achilles is discovered singing, while Patroclus sits opposite him and listens intently (οἱ οὗς ἐναντίος ἅρσο σιωπή); and he is discovered in this pose by the ambassadors sent to negotiate with him, who approach with understandable trepidation (cf. vv.182-4), just as Sappho approaches the girl. Similar reference to a whole scene or situation in Homer may be found in fr.1, where Sappho’s playful conversation with Aphrodite resembles the conference of cronies when Odysseus and Athena meet again at

47 If φώνας is correct, then εἰκεῖ = εἰκεί, as in Epicharmus 35.13 (Kaibel), Hesych. s.v. εἰκεῖ: cf. Hamm, Grammatik p.126, who also suggests (p.127) that the same verb be read in 114.2 (it may also be indicated at 20.13 εἰκέ). With μέ as the terminus of this verb’s action, argued Seidler (RM 3 [1829] 160), φώνας οὐδ’ ἐν ἐν εἰκεῖ must mean “no voice reaches me” (from you). Lobel (CR 43 [1929] 136) and Page 23 agreed, and therefore accepted Danesi­son’s μέ φώνας(ας) (where, however, εἰκεῖ is of indeterminate meaning: = παρεἰκεῖ;) to keep the traditional translation “I can no longer speak.” Yet Page’s objection to “Your voice no longer reaches me” (= “I can no longer hear”) is weak. He writes that it is “an unsuitable sense here.” But listening (ὑπρακούει) constitutes part of the man’s privilege and felicity in the first lines; and it would be more effective for Sappho to contrast her power with the man’s in this respect, at vv.7-8, since her very next line makes the point that she cannot speak. It might be objected that “I cannot hear” comes to much the same thing as ἐπισφυμείαν β’ ἄκουει, vv.11–2. There are two answers to this: first, the two are not so obviously tautological as a directly juxtaposed repetition of the statement “I cannot speak”; and second, the tautology is only apparent, since the later statement concerns ringing in the ears as a sign of violent pounding of the blood, something one experiences entirely apart from the strain of listening for a dizzyingly sweet voice. Catullus stresses the internal pounding of his pulse by adding suopte to sonitu.

Seidler thought he could keep φώνας and make vv.7-8 mean “I cannot speak” simply by removing the terminal με from the main clause. But “the voice no longer comes” should still mean that Sappho cannot hear; εἰκεῖ makes better sense if a glance at the girl has broken off Sappho’s sense of hearing. Nonetheless, Seidler’s emendation improves grammar (see n.7) and sense: ας ending the first clause suggests that φώνας beginning the main sentence is “your voice,” the φώνα of the girl who is ἄνεα φώνεια. Hermann (Wiener Jahrb. 54 [1831] 109, 112) and Heller (Philologus 11 [1866] 434) asserted that ἄνεα following a negative must restate the preceding clause affirmatively (thereby fixing the sense of v.8 as “I cannot speak”). But such a polar expression is out of place in this paratactic list. The ἄνεα can be progressive, as at Alcm. 1.71, where it varies the list of items beginning with repeated οὐδέ (Denniston p.22). Catullus, in the same place, has an odd use of sed (post­positive, his only example), and it too is progressive in sense.
Ithaca (Od. 13.278–310, especially vv.293, 301, 303). Sappho takes intimate moments from the man’s world of Homer and looks at them from a woman’s point of view, as she did when she reversed the heroic Priamel (cf. Od. 14.222–8, Tyrt. fr.9) by taking Helen’s point of view in fr.16.

To summarize this discussion of lines 5–6 and 17 in fr.31 (and to relate it to an over-all interpretation of the poem) I offer below what seems to me the most reasonable text of Sappho’s fragment presently available.

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I follow the Lobel-Page edition of 1955 for (a) slight changes to correct metre or dialect; (b) established emendations that appear in all modern editions (Neue’s δον φανείως at vv.3-4, Buttman’s μηδε at v.15, Hoffmann’s οπτεως at v.11); and (c) Lobel’s division of Codex P’s ἀλλὰκαν at v.9. I depart from the Lobel-Page text in the following instances:

2-3 τε τ’ ἱσοδανεί Page, for τοιχανεί P. 5-6 το δὴ κεν . . . μ’ εν Wills, for το μ’ ἐμάν ms. 7 εἰσιδω Seidler, for αἴδω P; βροχέως ms; se Seidler, for με (supra n.7); φώνας Seidler, for φωνάς P. 9 γλύσσα’ ἀπέαγε
Beattie, for γλῶσσα ἐγγείρει P: cf. Galen’s use of ἀπάγωνθαι in Oribasius 46.6.3 (Bussemaker-Daremberg). 13 καὶ δὲ μ’ Ahrens, ἐχεῖ Page, for ἐκεῖνο μ’ ἵδρως ψυχρὸς κακχέαται P. 15 πυθεύν Ahrens, for πυθεύσῃν P, interpreted in Heller’s and Beattie’s sense (see n.13 supra). 16 Π (n.13).

Catullus, Verses 13–16

Welcker’s interpretation of lines 5 and 6 in Sappho greatly reduces the contrast presumed to exist between her poem and Catullus’, a contrast between unstructured, almost random reactions on the part of Sappho and consciously wrought, Hellenistic self-examination in Catullus. An interpretation that brings the poems so close together suggests the possibility of further resemblance, and, in particular, brings up the question of Catullus’ last stanza, which seems to depart entirely from his exemplar.

Most critics approach Catullus’ last stanza head on by way of its most famous problem, the meaning of otium. The far reaches of political speculation, of cultural history, of moral philosophy have the most frequent use of one poem to explain the other has, naturally, been the attempt to fill the lacuna in Catullus (v.5) by consulting Sappho. Most attempts at restoration add vocis to nihil (v.7) on the model of φωνὴς oóβ’ ἐν—vocis in ore (Ritter), Lesbia, vocis (Friedrich), pectore vocis (Pleitner), vocis amanti (Meissner), tum quoque vocis (Lencchantin). Those who, like Lobel and Page, accept Danielsson’s emendation of the Sappho text, will see no cogency in this. But, as we saw in n.47, there is reason to keep the ms reading of Sappho with the sense ‘I cannot hear’; and the same reasons make us expect the same sense in Catullus. Since he was careful to make aspexi correspond with spectat, one expects that, in a poem so logically antithetical (see n.56 infra), he would balance audit with some reference to his own inability to listen identidem. Thus the sense of the lacuna is best sought in some restoration like vocis amatae, “the voice I long for does not reach me.” For the loved voice that is no longer super mi, compare the imago of Aen. 3.489 which is mihi sola super (i.e., superstes).

Passerini (Stltal 11 [1934] 52) extracted from Hellenistic political thought a definition of otium as τροφή, which leads to the hybris (nimiumque gestis) that destroys all forms of government, whether monarchy (reges) or democracy (urbes). As Tietze noted (362) this slights oligarchy, and therefore can hardly reflect Hellenistic categories; but Ferrari 67–9, E. Paratore (Catullo ‘poeta doctus’ [Catania 1942] 144) and Bongi (Aegyptus 26 [1946] 107–9) accepted Passerini’s semi-scholastic exegesis of the stanza.

Cf. Tietze 353–4 on the shifts in meaning the word underwent in the transition from the Republic to the Principate.

Tietze (354–62) thinks the stanza draws on an ethical teaching concerning voluptas as an expression of libido, and that the poem moves, painfully, toward the readiness for renunciation expressed (painfully) at Cat. 76. Ernst Bickel (RhM 89 [1940] 210), Barigazzi 425–6 and Jachmann 19–25 accept a version of this position, as do Baehrens and Kroll in their editions. P. Giuffrida (L’Epicureismo nella letteratura latina II [Torino 1948] 245–65) thinks the fourth stanza is an orthodox Epicurean denunciation of anything that prevents ἀταπαξία.
been traversed in the search for an answer to this problem, as have the poet’s psychological heights and depths, the “spiritual autobiography” of Catullus as fancy reconstructs it. Yet no scholarly consensus has been reached.

Perhaps the way to solve the problem is to choose a new point of entry into it. The nature of *otium* can be judged from its effect, which Catullus describes by calling it *molestum*. Is this only a vague word for malaise and moral degeneration? So many have thought: Catullus is giving us his “tragic flaw” in the word *otium*, a flaw that critics connect with his self-rebukes for loving Lesbia. The flaw keeps him from his proper *neg-otium*—his law studies according to Wilamowitz (59), civic virtue according to Passerini and others (see n.49), the renunciation of Lesbia according to Tietze and Bickel (n.51).

But nothing in the rapturous love poem prepares us for this sudden self-reproach. The break that occurs at v.13 is, in this interpretation, too abrupt. The final stanza becomes a foreign thing added on, not an integral part of the poem as it has developed to this point. Furthermore, the comparison of his own distress with the fall of kings and cities is comically pretentious if this is a bit of straightforward moralizing. Self-contradiction is, admittedly, a Catullan theme; but the *amo* and the *odi* must be fused, or painfully intermingled, if they are to be expressed artistically. The moralizing approach to this poem makes Catullus append a lifeless, impersonal *odi* to a vivid and lengthy *amo*; and the two seem so disjunct that critics are driven to desperate expedients—attributing them to different speakers, different *personae*, even to different poems. But, as we shall see, certain formal

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52 The most famous attempt to argue from the course of Catullus’ affair with Clodia/Lesbia is that of Wilamowitz 58–9, who finds in this poem the young man’s first declaration of his love. Snell 71 would, like Tietze and others, place it later in the hypothetical history.

53 Kalinka (*supra* n.4, p.163), Immisch (*SBHeidelberg* 1933/4, pp.13–7) and Gallavotti (*AeR* [1943] 14) think the last stanza is spoken by Lesbia, who gives her young admirer some altruistic advice.

54 The last stanza is spoken by Catullus’ *genius* or *alter ego* according to Birt (*Philologus* 63 [1904] 445–6). It is spoken by the real Catullus (as opposed to the not-yet-involved “translator Catullus” of the first three stanzas) according to A. Goldbacher (*WS* 21 [1907] 113). Kranz (*Hermes* 65 [1930] 237) takes a position resembling Goldbacher’s. R. Katičić (*Ziva Antika* 8 [1958] 31) thinks Catullus speaks through two “translator-selves” so juxtaposed that they reveal the feelings of the “real” Catullus.

55 This view takes two forms: that the last stanza strayed into place accidentally (the view, in the last century of Bergk and Ellis, among others; in 1961, of Fordyce) or Friedrich’s suggestion (*supra* n.8, p.237) that the fourth stanza is an addition, a kind of postscript by way of palinode, written after disillusionment had set in.
ties with the rest of the poem show that we possess the last stanza in situ. Is there a way to make better sense of it in that setting than the moralists have so far done?

Return to that word molestum: what is it that impedes or afflicts Catullus? Evidently the same thing that makes him miser (v.5), and that misery is defined by contrast with the beatitude of the par deo. It is not love that tortures Catullus, but his debility in the presence of Lesbia. He does not flee from her but seeks her presence, only to find that he collapses at a glance and cannot enjoy the continued gazing and listening of the man first described. We have noticed already how proleptic miser (5), picked up by mihi (6) and mi (7), is set off from the opening of the first three lines (ille . . . ille . . . qui). The anaphora in the first stanza is even more strikingly opposed in the line openings of the last: Otium . . . otio . . . otium. The negotium suspended by Catullus’ languor is that of the man in the first stanza; he is beatus, Catullus miser; he plies his senses effectively (spectat et audit), Catullus loses all sensation. The poem ends with the reverse image of the man who opened it—the pining distant lover set far off, contrasted with the man who sits near to Lesbia and to her laughter.56

So much the structure of the poem, its mere shape and sounds, can tell us about the last stanza. But two questions remain. Why does Catullus call his weakness otium, which suggests deliberate remissness, rather than by some word for involuntary paralysis? And why does he indulge the heroics of linking his failure to the fall of kings and cities? The answer to both questions is to be sought in the same place. The first one explains, I think, the unwillingness of most critics to trust the

56 The structural resemblances of the first and fourth stanzas were traced by Ferrari 70: the last stanza echoes the first not only in the anaphora of the first three lines in each, but in the climactic arrangement of the first and second lines (par . . . superare and Otium . . . molestum . . . otio exsultas nimiumque gestis), and in the pacing of the phrases (lines 1 and 2 are end-stopped, while 3 is en jambed, in each stanza). See also n.37 on the preparation for the last stanza accomplished by the escalation of artifice in vv.9-12. Tietze 367 found an ironic response to ille . . . ille . . . qui in the iterated unhappiness of vv.13-15. But he and Ferrari both sought in the last stanza a renunciation of the ideal offered by beatus in the first. The technical contrasts are far more telling if we hold that in the fourth stanza, as in the second and third, Catullus is yearning toward the state of the man in the first, echoing it from his pole of powerlessness. E. A. Fredrickson (TAPA 96 [1965] 161-2) realizes how important is the contrast between the poet’s situation in the last stanza and the joy of ille in the first; but he thinks the word sedens points to a distinction between the otium of a love satisfied and that of unsatisfied love—an aimless distinction, not otherwise attested, and obscured by the mention of “kings and cities” (which have nothing to do with the satisfaction or frustration of love).
poem’s own antitheses as guides to the meaning of *otium*. It is assumed that *miser* refers to what Catullus cannot help (debility in Lesbia’s presence, of jealousy), and *otium* to what he *can* do something about (breaking off the affair, refusing to see her, etc.). But Sappho’s poem turns back on itself with the assertion that the apparently involuntary symptoms can be borne; and it seems idle to debate whether ceasing to love at all or bearing love’s ecstasies is more within the scope of the will. When the poet braces himself to overcome a weakness, it should be the weakness analyzed in the poem (the one that makes him less able to bear Lesbia’s presence than the model listener of the first lines), not some weakness imported from other poems (loving Lesbia after a series of degradations).

But *otium* says more than mere ‘weakness’. It is a moral term, related to duty. Why is Catullus bound *in duty* to bear the ecstasies of love? Posed that way, the question suggests its own answer: Catullus is talking about a lover’s code—one that embraces suffering and condemns desertion under trial. This is his “heroic code” (a point emphasized by *reges* and *urbes*). Love is his *negotium*, and he must be fit for all its encounters.

*Otium* is properly used of remissness in war (cf. Tac. *Ann*. 14.39, *Hist*. 4.70), of the warrior who is *segnis*. And love-as-war is a *topos* as old as Sappho (fr.1.28), a *topos* latent in the heroic language with which she opens the very poem Catullus is translating. Though the comparison is used throughout classical literature,57 the best summary of its possibilities is Ovid’s *Amores* 1.9 (*Omnis amans militat*). There he tells us (vv.27–8) that the lover and the warrior are *miser* in precisely the same way, and he gives a list of heroic parallels—Achilles, Hector, Agamemnon, Mars himself—to prove the point. But the poem’s conclusion brings us closest to Catullus, since it presents love’s activity precisely as a renunciation of *otium*:

\[
\text{Ipse ego segnis eram discinctaque in otia natus;}
\]
\[
\text{Mollierant animos lectus et umbra meos;}
\]

57 See the examples in K. Preston, *Studies in the Diction of the Sermo Amatorius in Roman Comedy* (diss. Chicago 1916) 50; R. Pichon, *De Sermone amatorio apud Latinos elegiarum scriptores* (Paris 1902) 201–2; and J.-M. André, *L’Otium dans la vie morale et intellectuelle romaine* (Paris 1966) 421–5. André (p.12) even argues that the original sense of *otium* was martial, not commercial; it meant ‘an intermission in *militia*’, soldiers’ ‘leave’ or ‘peacetime service’ (cf. Propertius 4.4.79).
Catullus’ poem closes, then, not with the wretched morality of disgust, but with the playful moralism of erotic poetry. He must have a heroic ardor and energy, great enough to bear love’s most excruciating bliss. After all, no greatness has been won or kept by those who did not overcome their pusillanimity; Otium et reges prius et beatus | perdidit urbes. Kings and cities must rule; he must love (cf. Sappho fr.16).

This interpretation has the added advantage of making Catullus’ “break” at v.13 resemble Sappho’s (at v.17) in substance as well as form. Many have noticed that the poems agree in the way they depart from the list of symptoms with a strong push toward moral resolution—Sappho with a turn from description of lost control to a statement that control is possible, Catullus with the self-exhortation of his little sermon on otium.58 Both steady themselves for encounter with the sense-bereaving object of their passion. They tread an elaborate, courtly path of approach to their lovers, all the while saying that such a privilege and disabling pleasure is beyond their power. Each uses as foil a man who is less affected than they are by this brilliance, but whose feat they mean, in the long run, to equal. The poems shape the same thought, hers dancingly, his as a thing baroquely sculpted.