

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.¹ The extant strophes move forward in three leaps: "(1) That man who(ever) sits by you seems godlike; and (2) this (τό) it is that stuns—or stunned—me; (3) because (γάρ) 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:

1816: F. G. WELCKER, *Sappho von einen herrschenden Vorurtheil befreit* (Göttingen), with supplementary notes=*Kleine Schriften* II (Bonn 1845) 80–144. **1827:** C. F. NEUE, *Sapphonis Mytilenaeae Fragmenta* (Berlin) 27–36. **1913:** Ulrich von WILAMOWITZ-MOELLENDORFF, *Sappho und Simonides* (Berlin) 56–61, 75–6. **1924:** Hermann FRÄNKEL, "Eine Stileigenheit der frühgriechischen Literatur," *NAkG* 1924, pp.63–127=*Wege und Formen frühgriechischen Denkens*² (München 1960) 40–96. **1931:** BRUNO SNELL, "Sapphos Gedicht Φαίβεταί μοι κήνος," *Hermes* 66, pp.71–90. **1936:** Wolfgang SCHADEWALDT, "Zu Sappho," *Hermes* 71, pp.363–73=*Hellas und Hesperien* (Zürich 1960) 66–77. **1938:** Walter FERRARI, "Il Carme 51 di Catullo," *AnnPisa* ser. II vol. 7, pp.59–72. **1939:** Alessandro SETTI, "Sul fr. 2 di Saffo," *StItal* n.s. 16, pp.195–221. **1939:** Franz TIETZE, "Catulls 51. Gedicht," *RhM* 88, pp.346–67. **1942:** Adelmo BARIGAZZI, "L'Ode di Saffo Φαίβεταί μοι κήνος e l'adattamento di Catullo," *AttiMilano* 75, pp.401–30. **1945:** Lidia MASSA POSITANO, *Saffo* (Collana di Studi greci II, Napoli), pp.84–115, 120, 150–4. **1950:** Salvatore COSTANZA, *Risonanze dell' Ode di Saffo 'Fainetai Moi Kēnos' da Pindaro a Catullo e Orazio* (Firenze) 38–85. **1950:** Wolfgang SCHADEWALDT, *Sappho: Welt und Dichtung, Dasein in der Liebe* (Potsdam) 98–112. **1955:** Denys PAGE, *Sappho and Alcaeus*, corr. ed. (Oxford 1959) 19–33. **1964:** Günther JACHMANN, "Sappho und Catull," *RhM* 107, pp.1–25.

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 Fränkel's monographs. All poems of Sappho and Alcaeus are cited from *Poetarum Lesbiorum Fragmenta* ed. E. Lobel/D. Page (Oxford 1955).

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.”² 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 ὅστις generalize the congratulatory opening (“Happy he, whoever, who sits there”)? The fact that κῆνος is reinforced by ὤνηρ may point to a particular scene; ὅστις can be used of an individual (Kühner-Gerth II pp.399–400). On the other hand, ὅστις must be taken as general, not individual, if—to avoid terminal hiatus with a monosyllable (as Lobel would have us do, in *Σαπφοῦς Μέλη* [Oxford 1925] p.lxx)—we follow Page’s suggestion (21) and read τέ | τ’ ἰσodάνει.³

(2) VERSES 5–6: What does τό refer to? The whole preceding scene, including the man’s presence near the girl?⁴ Or simply to the preceding phrase, γελαίσας ἰμέροεν, or ἄδν φωνείσας . . . καὶ γελαίσας ἰμέροεν?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, ὡς . . . ἴδω: “whenever I look at you . . .” The subjunctive gives this clause the sense of ὁπόταν (cf. Pindar fr.108.7–8 Bowra: τάκομαι εἴτ’ ἂν ἴδω | παίδων νεόγγιον ἐς ἦβαν).⁷ This general statement is meant to explain (γάρ) the

² *Catullus and Horace* (New York 1928) 20.

³ On the generalizing effect of τέ with ὅστις see J. D. Denniston, *The Greek Particles*² (Oxford 1954) 521–3, and E. Schwyzler/A. Debrunner, *Griechische Grammatik* II (München 1950) 574–5.

⁴ 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.

⁵ So, for instance, Snell 78, Setti 212–4, Tietze 348.

⁶ 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.

⁷ One expects κέ in the clause (cf. Alcaeus 117b.26–7 ὃ κέ τις δίδω), and Barigazzi suggests emending to ὡς κε γάρ σ’ ἴδω. 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 ὡς . . . ὡς which Toll introduced into the text by dividing ms. βροχέως into βρόχε’ ὡς must be rejected. The ὡς . . . ὡς construction takes aorist indicative in both

particular reaction of vv.5–6. But it is an explanation that does not fit. If $\tau\acute{o}$ 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, $\tau\acute{o}$ has a more narrow reference to $\gamma\epsilon\lambda\alpha\acute{\iota}\sigma\alpha\varsigma$ and/or $\phi\omega\nu\epsilon\acute{\iota}\sigma\alpha\varsigma$, 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 $\tau\acute{o}$ and made the subject of a very strong asseveration by the oathlike $\eta\grave{\nu}$ $\mu\acute{\alpha}\nu$ (“This it is, and no other . . .”); it leaves out the girl’s voice.⁸

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

clauses; but here we have aorist subjunctive in the subordinate clause and present indicative in the main one. Ahrens would read $\acute{\omega}\varsigma$ $\sigma\epsilon$ $\gamma\acute{\alpha}\rho$ $\epsilon\acute{\iota}\delta\omega$ $\beta\rho\omicron\chi\acute{\epsilon}\omega\varsigma$, which makes the enclitic $\mu\epsilon$ open the main clause. Seidler (*RhM* 3 [1829] 161) earlier skirted that difficulty by changing $\mu\epsilon$ to $\sigma\epsilon$ so that the subordinate clause runs $\acute{\omega}\varsigma$ $\gamma\acute{\alpha}\rho$ $\epsilon\acute{\iota}\sigma\acute{\iota}\delta\omega$ $\beta\rho\omicron\chi\acute{\epsilon}\omega\varsigma$ $\sigma\epsilon$ (Sappho uses $\epsilon\acute{\iota}\sigma\acute{\iota}\delta\eta\eta$ in fr.23.3). For the effect of this on the rest of the sentence, see n.47 *infra*.

⁸ Catullus seems to have grasped this difficulty in Sappho’s poem; he circumvents it, in his own, by importing *SPECTAT et audit* (v.4) into the first scene, where Sappho had simply $\dot{\upsilon}\pi\alpha\kappa\omicron\upsilon\epsilon\acute{\iota}$. Thus his *simul . . . te aspexi* (vv.6–7) has a clear point of reference in the first stanza. Snell 80 notes that Catullus omits Sappho’s $\beta\rho\omicron\chi\acute{\epsilon}\omega\varsigma$ and $\alpha\dot{\upsilon}\tau\iota\kappa\alpha$; but their force is retained by the contrast between *identidem te spectat* and *simul te . . . aspexi*: “He gazes uninterruptedly, while if I catch but a glimpse . . .” Snell 78—followed in this by Massa Positano 20, Costanza 63–4, Ilse Schnelle (*Philologus* Supp.-bd. 25, Hft. 3 [1933] 17), Otto Immisch (*SBHeidelberg* 1933/34, Abh. 2 pp.5–6) and Vincenzo Bongì (*Aegyptus* 26 [1946] 98)—takes *identidem* to mean that Catullus has a rival with unrestricted access to Lesbia, returning to her “repeatedly.” Yet, despite the fact that Snell is here contrasting Sappho and Catullus, he seems to apply the adverb to her verb ($\dot{\iota}\sigma\delta\acute{\alpha}\nu\epsilon\acute{\iota}$), not to Catullus’ *spectat et audit*. If one considers only the text of Catullus, Snell’s position leads one to take the adverb in conjunction with the participle *sedens* (here=*veniens et sedens*), not with the clause’s main verbs. But the adjective (or adverb) *adversus*, which separates the participle from *identidem*, is closely linked to *sedens*; so that *identidem* should, for balance, go with the following verbs (cf. G. Friedrich’s *Kommentar* [*Catulli Veronensis liber*, Leipzig/Berlin 1908] on the balanced apportioning of modifiers in the third stanza of this poem). Thus it is better, with Tietze 349–50, Ferrari 61, Leiv Amundsen (*SymbOslo* 12 [1933] 72), Ernst Bickel (*RhM* 89 [1940] 200), and Kroll (1923), to take *identidem* with *spectat et audit*, recognizing in it an expression of duration rather than repetition. The intimacy of the conversation, which Sappho stressed with $\pi\lambda\acute{\alpha}\sigma\iota\omicron\nu$ and $\dot{\upsilon}\pi\alpha\kappa\omicron\upsilon\epsilon\acute{\iota}$ (touches omitted by Catullus), is suggested in the Latin poem by emphasis on its extended character.

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 $\omega\varsigma . . . \dot{\iota}\delta\omega$ and try to consider the poem as registering the impact of a single event, we make Sappho advance as explanation ($\gamma\acute{\alpha}\rho$) 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 $\tau\acute{o}$; 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 $\omega\varsigma . . . \dot{\iota}\delta\omega$. Some try to escape this problem by assuming that ($\sigma\acute{\epsilon}$) $\dot{\iota}\delta\omega$ is equivalent to $\omega\varsigma \gamma\acute{\alpha}\rho \dot{\iota}\delta\omega \sigma' \acute{\epsilon}\nu\alpha\nu\tau\acute{\iota}\alpha\nu \alpha\upsilon\tau\omega \pi\lambda\acute{\alpha}\sigma\iota\omicron\nu \dot{\iota}\sigma\delta\acute{\alpha}\nu\omicron\iota\sigma\alpha\nu, \acute{\alpha}\delta\acute{\upsilon} \tau\epsilon \phi\acute{\omega}\nu\epsilon\iota\sigma\alpha\nu \kappa\alpha\iota \gamma\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\alpha\iota\sigma\alpha\nu \dot{\iota}\mu\acute{\epsilon}\rho\omicron\epsilon\nu$ ¹¹—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 $\gamma\acute{\alpha}\rho$ "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 $\gamma\acute{\alpha}\rho$, but the new start at v.7 and the raised level of generalization marked by $\omega\varsigma . . . \dot{\iota}\delta\omega$. No example of his softened $\gamma\acute{\alpha}\rho$ 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).

¹¹ Cf. Page 22. Tietze 351 rightly observes that Snell's interpretation of Catullus makes him understand *te aspexi* as *te aspexi sedentem cum illo*.

¹² E.g. Schadewaldt 1936.372 and 1950.99–104, 110–12, Setti 208–14, Bowra (*Greek Lyric Poetry*² [1961] 188), V. Bongi (*Aegyptus* 26 [1946] 96–101). The debate is complicated by the fact that some (like Snell 71–2, 76–8) think Sappho's is not a poem of jealousy but Catullus'

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 τό 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 kunstvollig) 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 ἴσος θεοῖσιν 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 . . . κῆνος ἴσος θεοῖσιν 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 σέ in v.7 (ὡς γὰρ εἰσίδω) and making the *man* the understood object of εἰσίδω. 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.”¹³ Wilamowitz (p.50) found similar resposion of phrases in poem 94, between v.4, *ὡς δεῖνα πεπόνθαμεν*, and the answering v.11, *καὶ κάλ’ ἐπάσχομεν*. One might add that, in the same poem, successive strophes end *με ψισδομένα κατελίμπανεν* (v.2) and *ἦ μάν σ’ ἀέκοισ’ ἀπυλιμπάνω* (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 (*κῆνος*) is only the example that comes to hand of *anyone’s* power (*ὄττις . . . τέ*, accepting Page’s suggested *τέ*) who can sit near the girl.¹⁴ And *that* act (conversing intimately, an idea conveyed by *ἐνάντιος, πλάσιον, ὑπακούει*) would stun Sappho,

¹³ In order to emphasize the relation of v.16 to *φαίνεται . . . κῆνος*, G. Thomson (CQ 29 [1935] 37–8) restored the deficient v.16 *φαίνομαι <αὔτα>*, introducing one solecism, hiatus, on the chance that it could be cured by a second one, *correctio epica* (on which see E. Lobel, *Σαπφούς Μέλη* [Oxford 1925] lx). H. J. M. Milne (*SymbOslo* 13 [1934] 21) proposed *φαίνομ’ <ἔγωγε>* to mark the same contrast. Despite arguments against linking v.1 with v.17, *τεθνάκην φαίνομαι* is enough to show that *φαίνεται* in v.1 can mean *δοκεῖ 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 *φαίνεσθαι* yet the translation given in *Sappho und Simonides* (p.56) is “Der Mann macht mir den Eindruck, Götterkraft zu haben, der . . .” (and see his comments, p.55, on *ἐφαίνεο* in fr.49). As Setti observes (p.210), Snell is restricting the meaning of *φαίνεσθαι* 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 *φαίνομαι* in v.16. But the ms. *future* infinitive makes no sense. Lobel and Page accept Hermann’s *᾿πιδεύης* even though the adjective (with *τεθνάκην* dependent on it) is clumsy, and this makes the verb less clearly mean *δοκῶ* than would *φαίνομαι* with infinitive. The best solution to this problem seems to be Beattie’s (*op.cit.* [*supra* n.12] 108–9) to take *τεθνάκην* directly with *φαίνομαι* and make *ὀλίγω ᾿πιδεύην* adverbial (= *ὀλίγου δεῖν*). Heller (*Philologus* 11 [1866] 435) emended to *ὀλίγω ᾿τι δεῖν* 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: *φαίνομ’ ἔμ’ αὔτα*.

¹⁴ Page 20 asks why, if *κῆνος* means “Any man who sits opposite you is fortunate,” we have “the addition of the specific *ὁ ἀνὴρ*.” The answer of Wilamowitz would be that *᾿ννηρ* here means ‘husband’; but this depends on the exploded hypothesis that the poem is an epithalamion. Besides, fr.111 gives us two uses of *᾿ννηρ* 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 *᾿ννηρ* juxtaposed to *θέοισιν* is meant to express the antithesis *᾿ννηρ ᾿ν ἀντὸς θεῶν ποιεῖ*. This concessive use of the noun is clearest when accompanied by a participle (e.g. Eur. *Bacch.* 795 *πρὸς κέντρα λακτίζοιμι θηητὸς ᾿ν θεῶν*), but it can stand alone as well (e.g., *ibid.* 763–4 *κάπενώτιζον φυγῆ γυναικες ᾿νδρας* “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: οὐδέ τις ἔτλη | ἄντην εἰσιδέειν, ἀλλ' ἔτρεσαν (*Iliad* 19.14–5).¹⁵ Under the force of admittedly more complex emotions, Penelope is so stunned (θυμός μοι ἐνὶ στήθεσσι τέθηπεν) by the suggestion that the stranger in court may be her husband, that she cannot address or interrogate him (οὐδέ τι προσφάσθαι δύναμαι ἔπος οὐδ' ἐρέεσθαι), indeed, cannot even look him straight in the eye: οὐδ' εἰς ὄπα ιδέσθαι ἐναντίον (*Odyssey* 23.105–7). The last phrase shows the force of ἐναντίος, “face to face,” in Sappho’s second line, where it is not mere reinforcement of πλάσιον, 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 ὤνηρ 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,¹⁶ then the iterative ὡς . . . ἴδω 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 Aristides, *Or.* 18.4, also seems to think that the symptoms are those of one stunned by beauty—if, that is, his διαφθεῖρον τὰς ὄψεις 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 Schadewaldt 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 ἴσος θεόισιν. 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.

ἴσος θεόισιν

Eleven years after Welcker's interpretation was published, C. F. Neue wrote (29–30): "At veteres poetae constanter deos aequae mortales amoris potentiae negant pares esse; neque in verbis quidquam reperitur, quod ad tolerantiam pertineat, nullum δύναται, ὑπομένει, ἔτλη, sed vocabula ἴσος θεόισιν altiore quendam dignitatis et felicitatis gradum ostendunt, in quem ille ascendisse videatur." To the first of Neue's objections¹⁷ 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.¹⁸ 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 ἴσος θείοισιν 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 (*ισδάνειν*)¹⁹—there are two answers: that Homer's words ἰσόθεος or δαίμονι ἴσος 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 ἴσος θείοισιν 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.²⁰

To judge from *Iliad* 9.603 ἴσον γάρ σε θεῶ τίσουσιν Ἀχαιοί, it might seem that epic practice makes 'honored as the gods' the proper translation of ἴσος θείοισιν. But this verse reflects a special use of the adverb ἴσον (a use particularly concentrated in the ninth book) for describing the honor given a man: some form of τίω or τιμή is present in all its uses in the *Iliad* (5.467; 9.142, 284, 603, 616; 18.82) except one, where it is used with a word meaning *dishonored* (ἀπήχθετο, 3.454). In the *Odyssey*, despite ἴσον at 14.203, the normal adverb is ἴσα, but τίω or τιμή 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 *Iliad* that: (a) Zeus warns the gods that no one should claim to be ἴσος ἐμοί since he is φέρτερος (1.186–7, 15.165–7)—compare Homeric ἰσοφαρίζειν and ἰσοφόρος. (b) The adjective ἴσος (as

fear, sorrow or anger and applied them to her sad love because that love was "strange." But it is safer to see here the influence of the commonplace "Love's delights and terrors are like war's" than to search for obscure motives in the psychology of the homosexual. In her Priamel on what is κάλλιστον (fr.16), Sappho puts her love over against a totally heroic list (ranks of horsemen, foot soldiers, ships), and her mythical *exemplum* is drawn from Helen's (heterosexual) love for Paris—the women's love behind the splendor of man's exploits, giving rise to all of them, more dangerous than any of them (cf. Schadewaldt 1950.129, 132–3).

¹⁹ Barigazzi 417 thinks this the principal obstacle to Welcker's interpretation.

²⁰ Irena Kazik-Zawadzka, for instance, in *De Sapphicae Alcaicaeque elocutionis colore epico* (Wrocław 1958) 82, simply assumes the heroic meaning without arguing the point.

opposed, say, to ἴκελος²¹) is used to compare men with only one god—with Ares (usually in the formula ἴσος Ἄρηι, but see 22.132 ἴσος Ἐνναλίω). (c) One who fights ἴσος Ἄρηι also fights ἴσος ἀέλλη (12.40 and elsewhere, in this or in extended forms) or λαίλαπι ἴσος (11.746 etc.).²² (d) The term δαίμονι ἴσος (or ἀντίθεος)—again as opposed to ἰκέλη θεῆ τινί—is nowhere used of a woman, only of warriors. And there is no γυνῆ ἰσόθεος to go with Homer's ἰσόθεος φῶς.

From these facts it seems clear that ἰσόθεος and δαίμονι 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 θέοισιν, 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 ῥεῖα ζῶντες: "'Göttern gleich sein' nicht identisch ist mit

²¹ Though ἴκελος, like ἴσος, can be used to describe mode of action (e.g. *Il.* 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, *Il.* 2.478, 19.282, 24.699, *Od.* 17.37, 19.54). Thus, when a god or man is in disguise, he is ἴκελός τινι (for gods see *Il.* 4.86, 5.450; *Od.* 5.54, for men 4.249). The word is the exact equivalent of εἰκώς/εἰκνύα (compare *Od.* 5.51 with 5.54, and *Il.* 4.78 with 4.86). The practice with εἴκελος is midway between that with ἴσος (usually, perhaps always, used to describe mode of action—see n.22 *infra*) and ἴκελος (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 φλογὶ εἴκελος (or ἀστεροπῆ or αὐγῆ) and σὺν (or φλογὶ) εἴκελος ἀλκῆν. Considering the normal practice with ἴκελος and the fact that εἴκελος used for mode of action is restricted to comparison with φλόξ and σύς (never with persons), it seems probable that θεοεἴκελος means that Achilles *looks* like a god—i.e., that it is not to be ranked with ἰσόθεος but with θεοειδής (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 λαίλαψ in the *Iliad* with one exception, Thetis' recollection at 18.56 and 437 of the way Achilles shot up like a young tree (ἀνέδραμεν ἔρρει ἴσος). In the *Odyssey*, the hero is said to sit silent ἴσος ἀναύδω (10.378) or to chatter γρηῖ . . . 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 χεῦε κύματα . . . Ἴσα δρῆσσω and 11.243 κύμα περιστάθη οὔρει 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 λαίλαψ'.

ισόθεος, *θεοείκελος* = *einem* Gott gleich. Wenn man in etwas über die Menschen hervorragt, was einer beliebigen Pluralität von Göttern eigentümlich ist, so ist das nicht eine bestimmte Eigenschaftsqualität wie Schönheit—denn wie bestände da Hephaistos!—oder Widerstandskraft gegenüber der Verlockung weiblicher Schönheit—das könnte man doch Zeus oder Apollon nicht nachsagen. Sondern es muss auf eine Eigentümlichkeit ihrer Lage gehen, eben: auf ihr Glück.”

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 *θεοείκελος* 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 *θεοείκελ’ Ἀχιλλεῦ* (*Iliad* 1.131, 19.155) from *θεοῖς ἐπιείκελ’ Ἀχιλλεῦ* (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 *ἐπιείκελος ἀθανάτοισι* (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 θεοί* or of the equally vague *θεός τις* (cf. *δαίμονι ἴσος*). 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 *ισόθεος 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, *θεοείκελος* 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 *ἴσος θεοῖσιν*, 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 epithaliamial, since an *εἰκάζειν-τοπος* is regular in the *makarismos* addressed to the bridegroom (cf. Sappho 115 *τίω σ’, ὦ φίλε γάμβρε, καλῶς εἰκάσδω;*) and therefore (d) *ἴσος θεοῖσιν* is equivalent to *ἕκελοι θεοῖς* (44.22) and

θεοικέλοις (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),²³ 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 εικάζειν-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.²⁴ 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 ἴσος θεοῖσιν ὄττις . . . 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 (οὐδ' . . . παρισωθῆ, 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 ὦ τρισμακάριον . . . γένος (*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 (κῶμος . . . ὀλβίζων) because of the other's nobility and excellence—

ὡς εὐπατρίδαι καὶ ἀπ' ἀμφοτέρων
ὄντες ἀρίστων σύζυγες εἶμεν.

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

²³ For (b) see n.13 *supra*.

²⁴ 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, *RivFC* 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. HOCHZEIT, 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 ὄλβιε 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* (ὄλβιος ὄς . . .). 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 *gamos* 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:

ὦ μακάρων βασιλεὺς μείζων ἔτ' ὄλβον·
 ὄς θεῶν κηδεύσεις
 καὶ μόνος ἀθανάτων
 γαμβρὸς δι' ἀπείρονα γαῖαν
 θνατὸς ὑμνήσῃ.

The opening line does not express the conventional ὄλβιος ὡς θεός. 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.²⁵ The ὄς-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 (θεάν), 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 θεοῖσιν must mean ὄλβιος 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 θέασι μὸρφαν . . . ἐξίσωσθαι, and at 96.4 †θεασικελαν† (θέα σ' ἰκέλαν ἀριγνώτα, Page: Homer uses ἀρίγνωτος of theophanies at *Iliad* 13.72, 15.490, *Odyssey* 6.108). And fr.44.21 ἰκελοι θεοῖς and 44.34 θεοεικέλοις, which are part of a description, not a greeting, must refer to the beauty of the couple (cf. *Aves* 1709–14). Thus Sapphic θέα (θεοῖς) ἰκελος has the force of Homeric θεοεικέλος, just as her ἴσος θεοῖσιν can mean ἀντίθεος φῶς.²⁶ And the

²⁵ 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).

²⁶ 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 εἰσέρχεται †ἴσος† Ἄρει. Homer's ἴσος Ἄρηι referred to the power of a hero's onslaught, but Sappho's phrase is followed by the epexegetic line ἄνδρος μεγάλω πόλυ 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' ἡδὺ τὸ σῦκον 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 god’), but something else (‘beautiful as a god’).²⁷

The argument thus far has established only that *ἴσος θέοισιν* 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 *ὄλβιος ὄς* . . . type describes a privileged class (e.g., the class of victors described in Pindaric *makarismoι*). 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

καὶ παχύς. 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 *ἴσ’* for the unmetrical *ἴσος*. (See now H. Lloyd-Jones’ support for Kirk’s interpretation of *ἄνδρος μεγάλα*, CQ 17 [1967] 168.)

(2) At 115.2, answering her own question about the groom, Sappho says *ὄρπακι βραδίνῳ σε μάλιστ’ εἰκάσδω*, 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 *ἔρνος*. 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 φυτὸν ὡς γουνῶ ἀλωῆς . . . ἐπιπροέηκα . . . μαχησόμενον*, 18.57–9, 438–40). In the five Homeric passages that compare a human being to an *ἔρνος*, 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: *γουνῶ ἀλωῆς* (*Il.* 18.57, 438), *Ἀπόλλωνος παρὰ βωμῶ* (*Od.* 6.162), *χώρῳ ἐν οἰοπόλῳ, ὅθ’ ἄλις ἀναβέβροχεν ὕδωρ* (*Il.* 17.54: cf. Sappho’s sacred grove, fr.2.5–8). The *ἔρνος* 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 *ἔρνος*, 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 *ὄρπακι . . . εἰκάσδω* is, like Homer’s *ἔρνει ἴσος*, 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—*ἰσόθεος*, *ἴσος Ἀρηι*, *θεῆ ἰκέλη*, *ἔρνει ἴσος*—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 *εἰκάζειν-τοπος* 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 lines 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 ἴσος θεοῖσιν 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 ὄρτις 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 ἴσος θεοῖσιν), there is one argument, less frequently made,²⁸ 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 (ἐπτόαισεν) does signify. Some have called it "gnomic,"²⁹ 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 ὡς . . . ἴδω, 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.³⁰ The fact that the word is rarely used in the present

²⁸ Mainly by Turyn (*supra* n.18) 10.

²⁹ E. Kalinka, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.4) 157, and Longinus, *On the Sublime*, ed. D. A. Russell (Oxford 1964) 101.

³⁰ 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*).

gives some credit to this view,³¹ but even so the verb sits oddly with the subsequent present tenses (or perfects used as present). Page (19) translates *ἐπτόαισεν* and *ὑπαδεδρόμηκεν* 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 *ὅστις* of v.2 is virtually equivalent to *εἰ* (as in most of these *makarismoi*: cf. Alcman 1.37–9 *ὁ δ' ὄλβιος, ὅστις εὐφρων ἀμέραν διαπλέκει ἄκλαυτος*). Since Welcker makes *ἐπτόαισεν* apodotic, his *τό* would stand for the protasis,³² which naturally resumes the elements in the “semi-protasis” introduced by *ὅστις*: “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 *ὅστις* 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*=*τὸ ἰζάνειν* (*ἐμέ*), but “The fact that the man is godlike enough to sit there stuns me” (*τό*=*τὸ δ' αὐτὸν ἰσόθειον εἶναι φῶτα*).³³

Thus—even though we recognize a heroic meaning for *ἴσος θέοισιν*—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*)

³¹ I find the present only at Theognis 1018; but Aeschylus uses the compound *μεταπτοεῖν* (*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 *οὕτως* 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 *γελαίσας* find it in the subordinate and separated verbs *ἰσθάνει* 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— $\tau\acute{o}$ μ' η $\mu\acute{\alpha}\nu$ for the meaningless $\tau\acute{o}$ $\mu\eta$ $\acute{\epsilon}\mu\acute{\alpha}\nu$ of all "Longinus" manuscripts save one. The reading of that maverick codex, despite its pointless pleonasm ($\tau\acute{o}$ $\mu\omicron\iota$ $\acute{\epsilon}\mu\acute{\alpha}\nu$), could at least be approximately construed; it was accepted by Toup, Blomfield, Neue, and only slightly altered (to $\tau\acute{o}$ $\mu\omicron\iota$ $\tau\acute{\alpha}\nu$) by Stephanus, Ursinus, Vossius. But the Teubner editions gave widest currency to two emendations, Ahrens' $\tau\acute{o}$ $\delta\eta$ $\acute{\epsilon}\mu\alpha\nu$ (Bergk, Hiller 1897, Crusius) and Schneidewin's $\tau\acute{o}$ $\mu\omicron\iota$ $\mu\acute{\alpha}\nu$ (Hiller 1890, Diehl 1925). Since 1936, however, when Diehl put Lobel's suggestion in his second edition, η $\mu\acute{\alpha}\nu$ has been universally accepted.

There is a fatal objection to this popular expedient: η $\mu\eta\nu$ 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 $\eta\mu\alpha\nu$. . . at fr.99 col. ii 25) and in Alcaeus 344.1. At most, the relative $\tau\acute{o}$ might delay the asseveration; but $\mu(\omicron\iota)$ should not intervene to delay it further.

If we are not to accept η $\mu\acute{\alpha}\nu$, what is the explanation of ms. $\mu\eta$ $\acute{\epsilon}\mu\acute{\alpha}\nu$? It may be useful to compare here what happened to one manuscript of Aristotle 1367a14 (= Sappho 137.7): although the best witnesses give $\alpha\iota\delta\acute{\omega}\varsigma$ $\kappa\acute{\epsilon}\nu$ $\sigma\epsilon$ $\omicron\upsilon\kappa$ $\epsilon\iota\chi\epsilon\nu$ $\delta\acute{\omicron}\mu\mu\alpha\tau\alpha$, Page (105) reports that the Dresden codex reads $\alpha\iota\delta\acute{\omega}\varsigma$ $\kappa\acute{\epsilon}\nu$ $\sigma\epsilon$ $\omicron\upsilon$ $\kappa\acute{\alpha}\nu$ $\chi\epsilon\nu$ $\delta\acute{\omicron}\mu\mu\alpha\tau\alpha$, where the fiddling with various forms of $\kappa\acute{\epsilon}$ suggests that the $\alpha\nu$ in $\kappa\acute{\alpha}\nu$ arose from a gloss of $\acute{\alpha}\nu$ for $\kappa\acute{\epsilon}$. If, in the *τομημαν* of 31.5, the two final letters represent a similar use of $\acute{\alpha}\nu$ to gloss $\kappa\acute{\epsilon}$ —in this case extruding the original word—then $\tau\acute{o}$. . . $\kappa\acute{\epsilon}\nu$. . . $\acute{\epsilon}\pi\tau\acute{o}\alpha\iota\sigma\epsilon\nu$ would give Welcker's sense to the passage, explain the aorist, specify the pronoun $\tau\acute{o}$, and remove the difficulty of position in Lobel's η $\mu\acute{\alpha}\nu$, 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 $\acute{\epsilon}\pi\tau\acute{o}\alpha\iota\sigma\alpha$ (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.³⁴

If we seek to make sense of the rest of the line—*μηεμ*—several alternatives present themselves. They are, in order of ascending likelihood:

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

(2) *τό μ' ἦ κεν* is possible: there is more latitude in delaying *ἦ* than in the postponement of *ἦ μὴν*. But this is not normal except with a vocative or an exclamation, and *ἦ* 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: *τό*, as relative-implying-protasis, might precede the asseverative, but not *μ(οί)* as well, which this reconstruction must retain in v.5 to prevent hiatus.

(3) *τὸ μάν κεν* (adversative *μὴν*, Denniston p.334): this would bring out the contrast between the man's power and Sappho's powerlessness, and Sappho seems to have written *μάν κε* at fr.70.8. Though *τὸ μάν κε* | *καρδίαν* may seem dysphonious, see fr.137.5–6.

(4) *τὸ δὴ κεν* (cf. Ahrens *τὸ δὴ ἔμην*): this gives a normal opening for an apodosis (Denniston pp.224–5), and therefore normal juxtaposition with *κέ*. Furthermore, the joining of *δὴ* to the pronoun *τό*, implying a protasis resumptive of elements in the *ὅττις* clause, resembles other uses of *δὴ* with resumptive pronoun (Denniston p.226). Thus I think the most probable restoration of the sentence: *τὸ δὴ κεν* | *καρδίαν μ' ἐν στήθεσιν ἐπτόαισεν*.³⁵

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

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 Δ for Μ, giving rise to *μὴ*

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 ἰσθάνει 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 ἰσθάνει) 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) ἐπτόαισεν, Catullus wrote

for δῆ, and *EMAN* might be an attempt to make sense of the remaining *KAN* (cf. κᾶν 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 καρδίαν . . . (κέν) ἐπτόαισεν 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 unthinkable 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

³⁶ 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 Catullus 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.

³⁷ 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.³⁸ 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;³⁹ 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,⁴⁰ oversimplifies 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

³⁸ See especially Snell 81–90, Massa Positano 89–91, H. Fränkel 50–1 and his *Dichtung und Philosophie*² (München 1962) 212; her poems "stehn unter dem Zeichen der absoluten und direkten Gegenwärtigkeit."

³⁹ 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).

⁴⁰ 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).⁴¹ 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 (κάλ' ἐπάσχομεν, 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”)⁴² 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 “naïve” listing (cf. the γάρ 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 naïve 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.16.⁴³ Even Fränkel admits that fr.16 is a “mehrschichtige Gedicht,” a description he would deny to her other poems.⁴⁴

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

⁴¹ Schadewaldt 1936.363–5; 1950.115.

⁴² Fränkel 49–50 on the questions and 43 on the requests of the Aphrodite-hymn.

⁴³ See Schadewaldt 1936.372; 1950.12–3, 129–30.

⁴⁴ *Dichtung und Philosophie*² (*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 “naïve immediacy.” Schadewaldt wrote (1936.371) “Sie scheut die direkte Äusserung ihres eigenen 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 (*τεθνάκην . . . 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 . . ." ⁴⁵ There is no reason for "Longinus" to quote lines which no longer illustrate his point (the *συμβαίνοντα . . . μανίαις παθήματα*); 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 Stafferung," 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*² p.200). Actually, as we have seen, there was already a withdrawal from the specific experience in *ὦς . . . ἴδω*, 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). ⁴⁶ The symptoms have been exaggerated, either seriously

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

⁴⁶ If *τόλματον* 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 οἶος ἐναντίος ἦστο σιωπῆ*); 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 *εἴκει*=*ἴκει*, as in Epicharmus 35.13 (Kaibel), Hesych. s.v. *εἴκει*: 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 *εἴκ[]*). With *μέ* as the terminus of this verb’s action, argued Seidler (*RM* 3 [1829] 160), *φώνας οὐδ’ ἐν ἐτ’ εἴκει* must mean “no voice reaches me” (from you). Lobel (*CR* 43 [1929] 136) and Page 23 agreed, and therefore accepted Danielsson’s *μέ φώνεισ(αι)* (where, however, *εἴκει* is of indeterminate meaning: = *παρέκει*?) 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 (*ὑπακούει*) 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 *ἐπιπρόμβεισι δ’ ἄκουαι*, 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*; *ἔτι* 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: *σε* ending the first clause suggests that *φώνας* beginning the main sentence is “your voice,” the *φώνα* of the girl who is *ἄδου φώνεισα*. Hermann (*Wiener Jahrb.* 54 [1831] 109, 112) and Heller (*Philologus* 11 [1866] 434) asserted that *ἀλλά* 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 *ἀλλά* can be progressive, as at Alcman 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* (post-positive, 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.

φαίνεται μοι κῆνος ἴσος θεοῖσιν
 ἔμμεν ὤνηρ, ὅττις ἐναντιός τέ
 τ’ ἰσδάνει καὶ πλάσιον ἄδυ φωνεί-
 4 σας ὑπακούει

καὶ γελαίσας ἰμέροεν, τὸ δὴ κεν
 καρδίαν μ’ ἐν στήθεσιν ἐπτόαισεν.
 ὡς γὰρ εἰσίδω βροχέως σε, φώνας
 8 οὐδ’ ἐν ἔτ’ εἵκει,

ἀλλ’ ἄκαν μὲν γλῶσσ’ ἀπέαγε, λέπτον
 δ’ αὐτικά χρῶ πῦρ ὑπαδεδρόμηκεν,
 ὀππάτεσσι δ’ οὐδ’ ἐν ὄρημμ’, ἐπιρρόμ-
 12 βεισι δ’ ἄκουαι,

κάδ δέ μ’ ἴδρωσ ψῦχρος ἔχει, τρόμος δὲ
 παῖσαν ἄγρει, χλωροτέρα δὲ ποίας
 ἔμμι, τεθνάκην δ’, ὀλίγω ’πιδεύην,
 16 φαίνομ’ ἔμ’ αὐτα.

ἀλλὰ πᾶν τόλματον ἐπεὶ †καὶ πένητα

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 ἄδυ φωνείσας at vv.3–4, Buttman’s γελαίσας at v.15, Hoffmann’s ὄρημμ’ at v.11); and (c) Lobel’s division of Codex P’s ἀλλὰκᾶν at v.9. I depart from the Lobel-Page text in the following instances:

2–3 τέ τ’ ἰσδάνει Page, for τοιζάνει P. 5–6 τὸ δὴ κεν . . . μ’ ἐν Wills, for τὸ μὴ ἐμάν MS. 7 εἰσίδω Seidler, for σίδω P; βροχέως MS; σε Seidler, for με (*supra* n.7); φώνας Seidler, for φωνὰς P.⁴⁷ 9 γλῶσσ’ ἀπέαγε

Beattie, for γλώσσα ἔαγε P: cf. Galen's use of ἀπάγνυσθαι in Oribasius 46.6.3 (Bussemaker-Daremberg). 13 καὶ δέ μ' Ahrens, ἔχει Page, for ἔκαδε μ' ἰδρωὺς ψυχρὸς κακχέεται P. 15 ἴδιδεῖν Ahrens, for πιδεύσῃν 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,⁴⁸ 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,⁴⁹ of cultural history,⁵⁰ of moral philosophy⁵¹ have

⁴⁸ The most frequent use of one poem to explain the other has, naturally, been the attempt to fill the lacuna in Catullus (v.8) by consulting Sappho. Most attempts at restoration add *vocis in nihil* (v.7) on the model of φώνας οὐδ' ἔν—*vocis in ore* (Ritter), *Lesbia, vocis* (Friedrich), *pectore vocis* (Pleitner), *vocis amanti* (Meissner), *tum quoque vocis* (Lenchantin). 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*).

⁴⁹ Passerini (*StItal* 11 [1934] 52) extracted from Hellenistic political thought a definition of *otium* as *τροπή*, which leads to the *hybris* (*nimumque 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 Bonghi (*Aegyptus* 26 [1946] 107–9) accepted Passerini's semi-scholastic exegesis of the stanza.

⁵⁰ Cf. Tietze 353–4 on the shifts in meaning the word underwent in the transition from the Republic to the Principate.

⁵¹ 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 ἀταξία.

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.⁵² 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 straightfaced 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,⁵³ different *personae*,⁵⁴ even to different poems.⁵⁵ But, as we shall see, certain formal

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 post-script 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 *misero* (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 enjambed, 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*:

*Ipsē ego segnis eram discinctaque in otia natus;
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).

*Impulit ignavum formosae cura puellae
 Iussit et in castris aera merere suis.
 Inde vides agilem nocturnaue bella gerentem.
 Qui nolet fieri desidiosus, amet!*

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.

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⁵⁸ Cf. Neue 35, Barigazzi 424, and R. Lattimore, *CP* 39 (1944) 184–5.