

M. L. WEST

NOTES ON SAPPHO AND ALCAEUS

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Except where otherwise stated, fragments are cited from the edition of E.-M. Voigt (Amsterdam 1971). A few of the following ideas were briefly mentioned in my review of the work, *Class. Rev.* 27 (1977) 161-3.

S. 99 L-P. (= A. 303A V.) i 4 ff.

< > χόρδαισι διακρέκην (οἱ -αῖσ' ἴδια κρ.)
 5 — ὄλισβοδόκοισ(ι) περκαθ ενος
 τεούτ[οι]σι φιλοφ[ρό]νως
 —] . . . ς δ' ἐλελίσδ[ε]ται προτανέως
]ωνος δὲ διο[. .]ω
]μυαλω δ' . [.] . . ἐνητε[. .]χ . .

I assume the loss of a syllable before χόρδαισι, since the responding lines 6 and 8 seem to have been glyconics, and 2 δ[.]οῖ Πωλυαγακτ[ιδ]α . [.], though difficult to restore, is perhaps easier if δ[.]οῖ represents two syllables. The metrical scheme of the stanza is then gl l tl ia lll .

Page, *Sappho and Alcaeus* 145, writes 'the beginning of col. i 5 appears to prove that Sappho used in her poetry a word of quite unusual coarseness, referring to practices about which silence is almost universally maintained (except in Attic and Sicilian comedy and in Herondas, see Headlam, *Herodas*, p. 288)'. But this is to assume without reflection that the word ὄλισβος, which to the Attic comedians signifies a dildo, had always had that meaning and no other. In the Sappho passage the surrounding vocabulary, χόρδαισι (δια)κρέκην, ἐλελίσδετα, indicates clearly that she is talking about playing a lyre or harp, something as typical of her poetry as sex toys are alien to it. If the strings of the instruments are ὄλισβοδόκοι, then ὄλισβος in Sappho's vocabulary must obviously mean 'plectrum'. The Suda in fact attributes the invention of the plectrum to her, which should imply that she was the earliest author in whom a mention of it was found (though it is also mentioned in the Homeric Hymns to Apollo and Hermes). A later semantic development from 'plectrum' to 'dildo' is easily understood. The Greek plectrum had a blunt flat or spoon-shaped blade of bone, ivory, etc., attached to a rounded handle; in vase-paintings it often presents a strikingly

phallic appearance.¹ It was readily to hand in the γυναικωνίτις, a convenient and suggestive object for a woman or women seeking sexual stimulation.

With the context established as musical, it is tempting to restore line 8 as εὔφ]ωνος δὲ δι' ὀ[ξέ]ωγ, 'and (singing) with lovely voice across the upper register'. One might, however, expect the feminine δι' ὀξήαν (sc.χόρδαν) in this sense. Philolaus (DK 44 B 6) uses δι' ὀξειᾶν of the upper segment of the octave, from Mese to Nete, and then by extension of any interval of a fifth.

S. 132 ἔστι μοι κάλα πάϊς χρυσοῖσιν ἀνθέμοισιν
ἐμφέρη(ν) ἔχοισα μόρφαν †Κλέϊς ἀγαπάτα,
ἀντὶ τᾶς ἔγωϋδὲ Λυδίαν παῖσαν οὐδ' ἐράνναν†

Hephaestion p. 53.12 ff. C. analyses these lines as trochaic dimeter + iambic hephthemimeres with mobile caesura. He must have read an extra syllable in the second colon of line 2, but otherwise he read the text as above. His metrical interpretation is impossible, as Page points out (Sappho and Alcaeus 131 n. 4). Page takes the first line as 2tr_Λ+ 2tr, which is certainly right, and he suggests that the third may be accommodated to the same scheme by reading Λύδαν (with γᾶν in the following line) and ἄπαισαν (Hermann, Ahrens). He notes, however, that ἄπας (ἄπαις) is 'not yet' found in the Lesbians; S. 60.2 is a doubtful instance. The alteration of Λυδίαν seems to me still more suspect. I propose the transposition of ἀντί:

τᾶς ἔγωϋδὲ Λυδίαν ἀντὶ παῖσαν οὐδ' ἐράνναν . . .

(S. 211 =) Palaeph. Incred. 48 p.69.13 Festa

ἐπαινεῖ τὸν ἄνθρωπον ἢ θεός· Ἀφροδίτην λέγουσι τὴν θεόν· καὶ ὑποδύσα θέαν ἀνθρώπου, γυναικὸς ἤδη γεγηρακυίας, τῷ Φάωνι διαλέγεται περὶ πλοῦ.

Read ὑποδύσα ιδέαν ἀνθρώπου, or perhaps θε(ὸς ιδέ)αν. Cf. p. 2.14 (Centaur) καὶ ἵππου μὲν εἶχον τὴν ὄλην ιδέαν πλὴν κεφαλῆς, 3.3, 4.3, 4.5, 11.4; 32.8 περὶ Μήστρας τῆς Ἐρυσίχθονός φασιν ὡς ὅποτε βούλοιτο ἀλλάσσειν τὴν ιδέαν.

A. 6.12-14 νῦν τις ἄνηρ δόκιμος γε[νέσθω,
καὶ μὴ καταισχύνωμεν [υ – υ –]
ἔσλοισ τόκης γὰς ὕπα κε[ιμένοις.

¹ See M. Wegner, Musikgeschichte in Bildern II.4: Griechenland (Leipzig ²1970), Abb. 37, 73, 75; D. Paquette, L'Instrument de musique dans la céramique de la Grèce antique (Paris 1984), pl. C 18, 19, 38, L 3, 11, B 7, 8, 17; M. Maas and J.M. Snyder, Stringed Instruments of Ancient Greece (New Haven and London 1989), 44 fig. 5b, 74 fig. 8-9, 76 fig. 13, 101 fig. 4, 111 fig. 28, 112 fig. 30, 194 fig. 10. Remains of what may be plectra from the archaic period have been found at the temple of Orthaia at Sparta; cf. Maas-Snyder 37, 48 fig. 13d.

Hunt suggested ἀνανδρίαί for the lacuna in 13, Diehl ἀναλκίαί. I propose ἀεικέως. Cf. 5.9 f. μηδὲ . . . ζαλλεύοντον ἀείκεα, and Stes. SLG 88 ii 10 f. (μηδὲ . . .) ἀ[γαλ]-μα . . . καταί[σχ]ύγωμε[ν ἀ]εικ[ελί]ως.

A. 45.1-2 Ἔβρε, κ[άλ]λιστος ποτάμων, πὰρ Αἴνον
ἐξί[ἐς] πορφυρίαν θάλασσαν.

ἐξί[ησθ' ἐς] Lobel, Voigt : ἐξί[ησθ' ὄς] H. Fränkel, GGA 1928. 273.

Fränkel showed a sound instinct here. The poem is formally a hymn, and after the initial vocative the addressee's properties and habits would normally be stated not in a main clause but in a relative clause or a participial phrase. The preposition ἐς, however, can hardly be dispensed with, so there is no room for the relative pronoun. Read therefore ἐξί[εις ἐς]. In the second strophe the description is continued with καὶ and indicatives. The vocative thus expanded may in the end have been left hanging, with no free-standing statement or prayer following. For this type of structure see Fraenkel on Aesch. Ag. 1470 f. (p. 698) and Barrett on Eur. Hipp. 752-7; a further example is Hymn. Hom. 29.1 ff.

A. 119.1 τίς τ' ὦ πον[

Presumably πόν[ηρε, cf. 306A b 25 (= SLG 280.25) ὦ πόνηρε παίδων. M. Treu, who translates 'du Böser' in his Tusculum edition, must have made this easy supplement, though he refrains from printing it.

A. 130b.9-11 ὡς δ' Ὀνομακλήης
ὠθήγῃος εὐόκησα λυκαυχμίαις
φεύγων τὸν πόλεμον.

So the text now appears since the publication of a commentary in P.Oxy. 3711 (fr. 1 ii 31). Whether λυκαυχμίαις is a nominative, as M.W. Haslam suggests in his edition of the papyrus, or a dative plural (H. Lloyd-Jones and M. Lefkowitz, ZPE 68, 1987, 9 f.), it appears that Onomakles the Athenian (?) was someone known at the time as a lone-wolf guerrilla. He must be a figure from recent history. We know that Alcaeus was involved in battles against the Athenians over Sigeum. One possibility, therefore, is that Onomakles, cut off from the main Athenian force, maintained himself for a time in some hideout from which he was able to cause trouble to the Mytilenaeans. Alternatively, if the scene of his marauding was Attica, we should suppose him to have been an exiled noble, perhaps an Alcmeonid. In this case the parallel with Alcaeus is a closer one.

A. 167 and 169.

It is stated by Lobel that P.Oxy. 2295 fr. 30 (= fr. 169a) has an appearance consistent with a position to the left of fr. 28 (= fr. 167). Perhaps 169.3 οὐ σῶφ[connects with 167.9]οῖδάμεν, thus:

] . [] κο . δυλ . [] . άχματα
] υτ[] εν . πιλᾱ- []
] οσ . [] εδ' ἀϋθις οὐ σάφ[εσ] οἴδαμεν
 παν . [] αιογεω[] άμύ- []
 δρων ἄνδρων παλάων δ[] ροτάματα []
 .] . [] ων μναμ[]
 Α]ιολίδαν τὼν α . [] γάων

etc. Lobel also writes that there is 'a fair chance' that fr. 37,1-3 (= fr. 176 V.) contains lefthand portions of the same lines as fr. 30,6-8' (= fr. 169.6-8). But this does not suggest anything in the way of verbal reconstruction.

A. 186.3-7 ἀλλ' ἔ]μπας θαλι[
 ἦ πό]λλαις 'Αίδα πο[
]τ' ἐν προμάχ[οισ'
]ωτος κατ' ὄμ[ιλλον
 συ]μφοραῖς μο . [

A. 296b.1 ἄγνα Κ]υπρογένη' ?
 Cf. Max. 531 ἄγνη Κυπρογένεια.

A. 306A b (SLG 280) 24 ff.

 κᾶπειτ' ἀπέθυ-
 σας ὦ πόνηρε παίδων καὶ τρ[
 . (.)]στ' 'Αμάρδιος μὲν χαίρω[
 . .]σοθεν δὲ συμπόταις τα[
 . .]θατο πλῆον ἐπασχαλλ . [

R. Führer, ZPE 54, 1984, 40 analyses the metre of the quotation as $tl\ ia\ f\ hi\ ll\ ll$; it can also be regarded as $hag\ tr\ ll\ hag\ ll\ ll$, or, with the shorter line first in the strophe, $hag\ ll\ hag\ tr\ ll\ ll$. He makes some helpful textual suggestions. In 25 f. he proposes $καίτο[ι\ | \pi]στ'$. But $ποτί$ is a doubtful form for Lesbian, and the syntax is not altogether convincing. Better is $τὸ\ [πρ]στ'$. Looking at other examples of the letter-series $προ$ in the papyrus (Oxy. 2506), I think there may just be space enough at the beginning of line 26.

Taking advantage of Führer's other conjectures, we may restore the more continuous fragments of the poem as follows:

]ου μὲν αμ[
 ⊃ ἄμ]μι· πόης γὰρ οὐ [πω]ς
 κάκον <τι>, θάνων ἐπεὶ βέ[βα.]κας α[ί]νως
 πλάγαισιν ὑπ' Ἀλλιήνων

]αισδοισαι[
 κᾶπειτ' ἀπέθυσας ὦ πόνηρε παίδων·
 καὶ τὸ [πρ]οτ' Ἀμάρδιος μὲν
 χαίρω, [μέ]σοθεν δὲ συμπόταις τα[. .]θα
 τὸ πλῆον ἐπασχάλα[μι·
 οὐ]δ' αἵματός ἐμμι τὼ σκ[ύρω σφ]ιν οὐδ' ἔν
 ἐπαίτιος ε[. .] [. .] στωι
 ἔ[μ]οι τάδε[

The sentence beginning πόης γάρ is addressed to an acquaintance whose death is not regretted, perhaps a traitor to Alcaeus' side. It is not clear whether he is the same as the παῖς πονηρός. The reproach to the latter is reminiscent in tone of Adesp. Iamb. 38 (P.Oxy. 2317), addressed to a youth (κομηῆτα παίδ[ων]) who fled from a battle and made his way home across the sea. ἀπέθυσας may mean 'rushed away', but θυίω has connotations of 'fury' (with which it is etymologically cognate), hardly appropriate here. Perhaps rather 'you sacrificed us, put us to the slaughter'; for this metaphorical use cf. Eur. Or. 191 ἐξέθυσ' ὁ Φοῖβος ἡμᾶς. The]αισδοισαι[in the preceding line is contributed by P. Turner 2. It is unmetrical as it stands; perhaps]αισ<ι>δοῖσαι,]αις <ι>δοῖσαι[ς, or the like.

A. 309 -] τὸ γὰρ θέων ἰότατι < – ∪ >
 ὑμμε λαχόντων
 ἄφθιτον θήσει γέρας [– ∪ – –

So arranged, the fragment fits the Sapphic stanza scheme. Treu, *Maia* 2, 1949, 242 ff. and Alkaios 152 f., was no doubt right to suppose that it comes from a hymn to the Muses. 'For that, by the gods' grace, will make imperishable the reward of those who have you as their special deities.'

A. 334 οὐδέ πω Ποσείδαν
 ἄλμυρον ἐστυφέλιξε πόντον.

This must be a reference to the time of year: 'it was not yet winter', or more likely 'it is not yet winter'. Alcaeus' references to the seasons usually introduce a proposal to drink, cf. frr. 338, 347, 352, 367.

A. 356 καὶ πλείστοισ' ἐάνασσε λάοις.
 Who is this great king of the past? The parallel of 'Hes.' fr. 144,
 ὃς βασιλεύτατος ἴγένετο θνητῶν βασιλῆων
 καὶ πλείστων ἦνασσε περικτιόνων ἀνθρώπων
 Ζηνὸς ἔχων σκῆπρον· τῶι καὶ πολέων βασίλευεν,

suggests that it is Minos. We may guess that the point Alcaeus was making was 'even the great Minos died', and the context was again a drinking-song. Cf. 38.5-7, 'Drink, for life is

finite: even Sisyphus, Αἰολίδαις βασίλευς . . . ἄνδρων πλεῖστα νοησάμενος . . . failed to escape death'. For Minos in this connection cf. GVI 709.7-8 ἀλλ' οὐκ εὐσεβήητις ἀλεύεται ἄστροφα Μοιρῶν δόγματα· καὶ Μείνωσ ἤλυθεν εἰς Ἀΐδην, 1249.19 θνήσκει μὲν γὰρ ἄναξ Μίνωσ; Hor. C. 1.28.7 ff. occidit et Pelopis genitor . . . et Iouis arcánis Mínoσ admissus.

A. 359 πέτρασ καὶ πολίας θαλάσσασ τέκνον . . .
ἐκ δὲ παίδων χάνωσ φρένασ, ἃ θαλασσία χέλυσ.

Athenaeus quotes from a grammarian Callias of Mytilene ἐν τῷ περὶ τῆσ παρ' Ἀλκαίωι λεπάδοσ the beginning and end of a poem of Alcaeus which was, as Wilamowitz saw (Textgesch. d. gr. Lyriker 75), a γρῖφοσ. He also takes from Callias part of a discussion of the poem by Aristophanes of Byzantium (fr. 367 Slater). The passage is admirably analysed by Wilamowitz (op. cit., 74-6); Slater's discussion is astray. Aristophanes had criticized Dicaearchus (=fr. 99 Wehrli) for having interpreted the riddle as referring to a limpet, λεπάσ. It appears that λέπασ had displaced χέλυσ in Callias' text of the fragment, but he reported that Aristophanes read χέλυσ, and we should suppose that Dicaearchus did also, as he was criticized for his interpretation, not for a divergent reading. We do not know what Aristophanes' own solution of the riddle was. Dicaearchus (not Aristophanes, who rejected the limpet interpretation) had referred to a children's practice of taking limpets - the shells, presumably - into their mouths and blowing through or across them to make a noise (a sort of whistle, I imagine): τὰ παιδάρια δὲ ἠνίκ' ἂν εἰσ τὸ στόμα λάβωσιν, ἀυλεῖν ἐν ταύταισ καὶ παίζεῖν, καθάπερ καὶ παρ' ἡμῖν τὰ σπερμολόγα τῶν παιδαρίων ταῖσ καλουμέναισ τελλίναισ (mussels). Dicaearchus must have mentioned this in explanation of Alcaeus' phrase ἐκ δὲ παίδων χάνωσ φρένασ.

It does indeed explain it rather well. But to appreciate why, one must not translate the phrase as 'inflas puerorum animos' (Kaibel), 'die Kinder machst du toll' (Wilamowitz), or 'bezauberst der Knaben Sinn' (Treu). It means 'you evacuate boys' wits', and the point may be discovered from Adesp. eleg. 19,

ἄνδρῖ μὲν ἀυλητῆρῖ θεοὶ νόον οὐκ ἐνέφυσαν,
ἀλλ' ἅμα τῷ φυσῆν χῶ νόοσ ἐκπέταται.

In the light of the parallel we must surely accept that Alcaeus was indeed referring to a mollusc that children liked to blow. πέτρασ καὶ πολίας θαλάσσασ τέκνον suits the limpet that clings to the rocks rather than the mussel. ἃ θαλασσία χέλυσ with its strong suggestion of the turtle (θαλασσία χελώνη), is deliberately misleading. It is the limpet, carrying its house on its back, that is here 'the tortoise of the sea'. The musical associations of χέλυσ are not relevant, as there is no sufficient point of comparison between the sound of the lyre and that of the blown limpet.

A. 367.1 ἦρος ἀνθεμόεντος ἐπείον ἐρχομένοιο.

Page, Sappho and Alcaeus, 313, translates 'I heard the coming of the flowery springtime', but does not explain what kind of sound he supposes Alcaeus to have heard. Treu, Alkaios 71, tries to obscure the problem by rendering 'Frühling, blumengeschmückter, - sein Nahen hab heut ich vernommen!'

I think it likely that ἐπείον (or ἄιον, if ἐπ' is connected with ἐρχομένοιο) did not govern ἦρος but another genitive in the next line, e.g. κοκκύγω (the thematic declension is attested for Alcaeus, fr. 416) or . . . χελίδονος or . . . ἀήδονος. For the cuckoo as a sign of spring cf. Hes. Op. 486; for the swallow, ib. 568, Stes. 211, Sim. 597, Ar. Eq. 419, etc.; for the nightingale, Od. 19.519, Sappho 136. ἦρος - ἐρχομένοιο may have been a genitive absolute (like ἔαρος νέον ἰσταμένοιο in Hes. and Od. Il.cc.), or an objective genitive with ἀγγέλω (. . . χελίδονος/ἀήδονος), as in Sappho l.c. ἦρος ἄγγελος ἡμερόφωνος ἀήδων and Sim. l.c. ἄγγελε κλυτὰ ἔαρος ἀδυόδμου κυανέα χελιδοῖ.

A. 401B a Ἄλκαος σάος †ἄροι ἐνθάδ' οὐκυτόν ἀληκτορίν†
ἐς Γλαυκώπιον ἶρον ὀνεκρέμασσαν Ἄττικοι.

This is the message that Alcaeus wishes to be sent home after a battle. In the corrupt phrase in the first line the following variants are reported from the Strabo manuscripts:

ἄροι] ἄρει h o
οὐκυτόν] οὐκ αὐτόν Cmoz: οὐκυτόν hi: οὐ κεῖται r w
ἀληκτορίν] ἀλυκτορήν o z

The sense required is 'but his armour ...', and the metre (after σάος) – υ υ – υ – υ – υ – υ –. Wesseling made ἐνθάδ' into ἔντεα δ'. I think we should rather combine ἄροι ἐνθάδ' as ἄρμενα δ', comparing 383 ἦρ' ἔτι Δινομένηνι . . . τᾶρμενα λάμπρα κέοντ' ἐν Μυρσινήωι; Then perhaps εὔτυκ', or οὐκέτ', ἀλλ'. In the letters ληκτ I am tempted to look for ληῖστ, thinking of Athena's titles ληῖτις, πολύλαῖς (A. 298.9); e.g. εὔτυκ' αὐ Λαῖστορι. Other conjectures not mentioned by Voigt are ἀλίκτυπον Seidler, ἀλίκροτον Lindau, ἀνάκτορον Hecker, Ἀλέκτορος Bergk.

A. 424A Campbell (add. p.507 V.) †φοινίκωνος ὄνομα†.

Quoted from Alcaeus as evidence for φοῖνιξ as the name of a musical instrument. I conjecture φοινίκων δόνημα.

Lesb. inc. 5c ἄβρα δεῦτε πάσχης πάλαι ἀλλόμαν.

Bergk's δηῦτε is highly probable. Then a metrical verse (cr gl) can be obtained by writing πάλιν for πάλαι (punctuating, of course, after πάσχης). The nature of the context is unclear, but δηῦτε and πάλιν suit each other.

Lesb. inc. 12 ἴδρωσ ἀμφότερα.

The grammatical source attests that ἴδρωσ is genitive. The fragment is therefore presumably a hyperbolic comparison of the type 'more - than - '; cf. Alc. 369, Sappho 31.14, 156, etc. A suitable adjective is λεμφοτέρω, 'more dribbly'.

London

M.L.West