The Poetry of Sappho: Introduction

By J.B Hare

Imagine that two millenia or so in the future, literary experts attempt to collect the glories of our literature. Most of our paper writings have crumbled into dust or used for kindling; all our digital files are long gone or indecipherable. English is a dead language and many of the cultural references are a complete puzzle to them. They have a strange jumble of popular and high literature: one partial summary of of the episodes of a saga called 'Star Trek', a fragment of an archive of fan fiction about a warrior princess named Xena, some quotes from various authors extracted from anthologies written three hundred years from now, *and* a few cryptic bits of poetry from somebody named Shakespeare, who was apparently very highly regarded, and wrote in an archaic dialect: specifically, one complete sonnet, a couple of soliloquies and a few random lines from his plays. Now try to psychoanalyze Shakespeare from those fragments. This is about where we stand vis-a-vis Sappho.

What is Known

The poet Sappho lived in the sixth century B.C. on the island of Lesbos, which is situated in the Northeastern Aegean. We do not know the exact date of her birth or death, but it has been suggested that she was alive from about 610 B.C to 570 B.C. Her family is known to have been wealthy merchants; Lesbos in the sixth century B.C. was very prosperous. That she lived a life of luxury, and loved beatiful clothes and ornaments is clear from several allusions in the fragments. In addition, it is known that women of Lesbos at this time were exceptionally liberated and moved freely in social and religious circles. Lesbos was the center of a flourishing school of lyric poetry. Some of the other Lesbian poets of this period were Terpander and Alcaeus, and there were several other women poets.

Sappho was born in either Eresus or Mytilene, but lived most of her life in Mytiline. Herodotus, who wrote about 150 years after Sappho's death, said that her fathers name was Scamandronymous. We know that she had three brothers, named Charaxus, Larichus, and Eurygius. From Athenaeus we learn that Larichus had the post of cup-bearer at Mytilene, which was an honorary office only open to the aristocracy. It is therefore assumed that Sappho and her family were of the upper class. Charaxus as a merchant who exported the renowned wine of Lesbos to Naucratis in Egypt. He was reputed to have married a wealthy Egyptian woman named Doricha, who is mentioned in Herodotus. Nothing is known of her third brother.

Aside from writing a large amount of exquisite poems, it is difficult to tell what Sappho's actual occupation was (as the late William Everson noted, poetry is a vocation, not to be confused with one's occupation). There is evidence in several of the poems that Sappho may have been part of a circle of women who were priestesses of the goddess Aphrodite, which in that time and place may have implied ritual prostitution. In another poem she boasts of having trained a champion runner (#68). One of the commentators says that she invented a particular kind of garment, the chlamys. In yet another (#87), her daughter (or perhaps Sappho speaking to *her* mother), complains that she can't focus on her weaving because she's, to put it bluntly, horny. Priestess? Sacred Whore? Athlete? Fashion designer? Weaver? Sappho may have been any or all of these at some point in her life. We simply don't know.

There are no contemporary portraits of Sappho; it is said that she was short and dark. After her death she was portrayed on coins, medallions, vases and in statuary. There were two famous statues of Sappho in antiquity, both which have disappeared.

Sappho was exiled for a time in Sicily; this is the only event in her life for which there is actual documentary evidence. An inscription cut in a block of marble and found at Paros, now in the British Museum, gives a chronology of events from the sixteenth to the third century B.C. The chronology states that Sappho fled from Lesbos to Sicily when Aristocles ruled the Athenians. The reason was some sort of political upheaval in Lesbos.

It is said that she flung herself off of the Leucadian promontory over unrequited love for a beautiful boatman named Phaon. This is completely unsubstantiated (if not out of character). This myth formed the basis for several romantic poems about her as late as the Renaisannce.

Sappho the poet was an innovator. At the time poetry was principally used in ceremonial contexts, and to extoll the deeds of brave soldiers. Sappho had the audacity to use the first person in poetry and to discuss deep human emotions, particularly the erotic, in ways that had never been approached by anyone before her. As for the military angle, in one of the longer fragments (#3) she says: "Some say that the fairest thing upon the dark earth is a host of horsemen, and some say a host of foot soldiers, and others again a fleet of ships, but for me it is my beloved."

In the ancient world she was considered to be on an equal footing with Homer, acclaimed as the 'tenth muse'. Her poetry was collected three hundred years after her death at Alexandria in nine books. Some of her poems were known to be hundreds of lines long.

Today, only a few scraps of her poetry survive, only three of them consisting of more than one verse (the longest being seven verses of four lines), a handful of four line and two line fragments, and the rest just phrases or short quotes. Most of the fragments are second- or third-hand quotes from other texts. Some small fragments were found (in the early twentieth century) wrapped around mummies in Egypt; essentially recycled papyrus. These have been identified only because of Sappho's distinctive literary style.

Sappho's books were burned by Christians in the year 380 A.D. at the instigation of Pope Gregory Nazianzen. Another book burning in the year 1073 A.D. by Pope Gregory VII may have wiped out any remaining trace of her works. It should be remembered that in antiquity books were copied by hand and comparatively rare. There may have only been a few copies of her complete works. The bonfires of the Church destroyed many things, but among the most tragic of their victims were the poems of Sappho.

Sappho, Image and Reality

The reason that the Church wanted Sappho's works eradicated is not certain, but it probably had something to do with the subject matter of her poems. From the surviving fragments, we know Sappho wrote splendid hymns in praise of the Pagan Goddesses, particularly Aphrodite, and love poetry of great sophistication, passion and deep understanding of the human heart. This at least is apparent even from the few fragments we have. Such subjects were anathema to the bigots of the Dark Ages.

The matter of her sexual orientation did not become controversial until much later, during the nineteenth and twentieth century. It was not an issue for her contemporaries; it was not even an issue in the seventeenth or eighteenth centuries, when her poetry started to emerge from obscurity.

It should be emphasised that we have few clues about her sexual orientation. Moreover, we are still unclear what same-sex romantic or erotic love between women may have implied in Sappho's culture. What we do know is that there was not widespread fear and persecution of homosexuals in antiquity. Even during the middle ages, same-sex unions occured and were not disapproved of by the Church. This is *not* why Sappho's poems were burned. If anything, it was her (possibly exaggerated) reputation for promiscuity which brought her reproach in the early Christian era.

It was only during the Victorian era that Sappho's sexual preference *per se*, rather than her poetry, became a focus of interest. Since there is no actual explicit 'lesbian' sexual content in her poems, in the late 19th Century the French Decadant novelist Pierre Louys decided to invent some. Louys claimed that he had discovered the poems of an ancient Lesbian poetess named 'Bilitis', a contemporary of Sappho. Louys published free-verse 'translations' of her works complete with scholarly apparatus. The Bilitis poems provided all the juicy details that were missing from the Sappho corpus (or at least as much as Louys could imply in a book published at the time). Conspicously missing were the original texts of Bilitis' poems, which is understandable, since our spotty information on the Aoelic dialect which Bilitis would have spoken would make them hard to forge.

The Bilitis hoax (which, although purely a male fantasy, has literary merits in its own right) took Europe by storm. In time, Bilitis became confused with Sappho in popular culture to the point where it is impossible to tell the two apart. Sappho was a popular subject for moody decadent painters at the turn of the 20th century. Today the adjective 'Sapphic' conjures up images of lesbian sex, rather than its original meaning of a specific classical Greek poetic form. Bilitis was even made into an atrocious soft-euro-porn movie in the 1970s starring the nymphet Sylvia Crystal, with cinematography by the fashion photographer David Hamilton (albeit with little connection to the Louys book other than some voice-overs). Popular culture to this day employs Sappho and ancient Greece as a codeword for homosexuality. Ironically, the beforementioned Xena television drama, with its ambiguous portrayal of a relationship between two women,--possibly by accident, considering how it made a hash of ancient mythology and history--somewhat reflected the fluid nature of Hellenic sexual identity.

The truth of the matter is that Sappho was probably bisexual, not lesbian in the sense of the word today, i.e. exclusively attracted to women. Moreover, *nobody made a big deal about it for nearly 2,500 years after she was dead*.

The best and most cited evidence is her powerful Hymn to Aphrodite (#1), the longest fragment of Sappho's still in existence. In this poem, Sappho prays to Aphrodite, Goddess of Love, to sway the heart of an unnamed woman, to whom Sappho proclaims an unrequited erotic attraction ("what I, in my hearts madness, most desire"). Aphrodite promises Sappho that her beloved will soon turn around and offer her gifts, rather than the other way around, and will love her (Sappho), "however reluctant". In other poems she addresses female lovers, lovers of lovers, ex-lovers, and other women by name: Anactoria, Atthis, Andromeda, Mnasidika, Eranna. These are such short fragments, however, it is hard to infer anything. For all we know, they could be characters in a fictional setting.

There is also textual evidence that Sappho had a heterosexual side as well. In one fragment, we learn that Sappho had a daughter Cleis (#82) "like a golden flower", she longs for her lost virginity in several others (e.g. #104), and in yet another (#72) she addresses a younger, male lover: "For if thou lovest us, choose another and a younger spouse; for I will not endure to live with thee, old woman with young man". None of this conclusively proves anything, either, since homosexual women can obviously lose their virginity

and have children. We also have no idea what the context of the last quote is.

We do *not* have any historical record of Sappho having an extended relationship with a woman, or explicit poetry of hers which depicts 'lesbian' sexuality. If you come to her expecting to find woman to woman erotica, you will be missing the point. The reputation of Sappho in the twentieth century based on her supposed exclusive preference for women is a self-perpetuating myth which has completely obscured the real value of her work: some of the most hauntingly beautiful and evocative poetry that has ever been written. Even some of the shortest fragments meet the test of 'true poetry' that Robert Graves proposed: they make the hair on the back of your neck stand up.

What *is* clear is that Sappho had a passionate romantic and erotic life which was integrated with her devotion to the Goddess Aphrodite. If today it is scandalous that her concept of love transcended gender, that is only a contemporary prejudice.

The Poems of Sappho

System of Greek Transliteration

[J.B. Hare]

Sappho's poems are written in Aoelian Greek, spoken in antiquity in the North-Eastern Aegean. This is a rustic and more archaic dialect than the Attic or New Testament Greek which is typically taught in schools, closer to the Homeric. Indeed, many of the confirmed surviving Sappho fragments are from quotes in Roman grammatical treatises to illustrate fine points of the Aeolic dialect (The early Christians burned most of her poems, but couldn't eradicate every stray line of hers that was quoted in some textbook). In some cases the Sappho fragments are references in texts to quotes in other (lost) texts.

In this text, transliterated Greek text is shown in a monospaced font, e.g, `Psa'pfa`. The system of transliteration has been designed so that the Greek text can be migrated to Unicode automatically at some point, balancing of readability and resemblance to the original Greek letter. For this reason, it was felt that there should be exactly one character per grapheme, except where it would be unambigous (`ks` and `ps`). The ð (ð in HTML) (capital Ð) symbol is used to transcribe theta, because `h` is being used for eta and th would be ambiguous; the ð symbol represnts a similar sound to theta (abeit a voiced version, as in 'the') in Old English. Capitalized letters are written as the equivalent capital Latin letter. Although there were a couple of left over Latin characters, they were left out of the mix since standalone use of the letters 'c' and 'q' would just make the resulting transcriptions look stranger than they already are. Hopefully, if you are slightly familiar with Greek orthography, this system should only take a few moments to get up to speed with.

Accent marks follow the vowel they are placed on, including (for consistency) the breath marks `!` and `?`. [Note that the rough breath mark does not acutally appear in this corpus because it is not found in Aeolian Greek, except in one case (#112) where the poem was rewritten in Attic.] This is done even if the vowel is capitalized (in which case the Greek has the breathing mark written before the vowel, e.g. Helen, written here `E?le'na`, is actually spelled `?Ele'na`).

Note also that an diaresis (umlaut) iota is found occasionally in long vowel combinations. This is written

as the HTML ï (ï). This has no special phonetic significance as far as I know; it just seems to be an orthographic convention.

The following table gives the name of the Greek letter, the letter by which it is transcribed, and an approximate pronunciation (for non-experts). If you know nothing about Greek, and you want to try reading the Greek out loud (which I heartily recommend), just ignore the punctuation marks and pronounce h as 'e', w as 'o', and j as 'y'.

greek letter	transliteration	pronounced
alpha	a	a
beta	b	b
gamma	g	g
delta	d	d
epsilon	e	long e
zeta	z	z
eta	h	short e
theta	ð	th as in tee*th*, not *th*e
iota	i	i
kappa	k	k
lambda	l	l
mu	m	m
nu	n	n
xi	ks	x as in bo*x*
omicron	o	short o
pi	p	p
rho	r	r
sigma	s	s
tau	t	t
upsilon	u	u (actually like German ü)
phi	f	f
chi	x	ch as in Ba*ch*
psi	ps	ps as in oo*ps*
omega	w	long o
digamma	v	v (probably pronounced 'w')
smooth breathing	?	silent
rough breathing	!	h (not found in Aeolic)
accute accent	'	accent
grave accent	`	accent
circumflex	^	accent
subscript iota	j	y (modifies vowel)

The Poems of Sappho Part I

1

Hymn to Aphrodite

```
Poikilo'ðron? a`ða'nat? ?Afrodita,
pai^ Di'os, dolo'ploke, li'ssomai' se
mh' m? a?'saisi mh't? o?ni'aisi da'mna,
     po'tnia, ðu^mon.

a?lla' tui'd? e?'lð?, ai?'pota ka?te'rwta
ta^s e?'mas au'dws ai?'oisa ph'lgi
e?'klues pa'tros de` do'mon li'poisa
     xru'sion h?^lðes

a?'rm? u?pozeu'ksaia, ka'loi de' s? a?^gon
w?'kees strou^ðoi peri` ga^s melai'nas
pu'kna dineu^ntes pte'r? a?p? w?ra'nw
     ai?'ðeros dia` me'ssw.

ai^psa d? e?xi'konto, su` d?, w?^ ma'saira
meidia'sais? a?ða'natwj prosw'pwj,
h?'re? o?'tti dhg?^te pe'ponða kw?'tti
     dh?^gte ka'lhmi

kw?'tti moi ma'lista ðe'lw ge'nesðai
maino'laj ðu'mwj, ti'na dhu?^te pei'ðw
mai^s a?'ghn e?s sa`n filo'tata ti's t, w?^
     Psa'pf?, a?di'khei;

kai` ga'r ai? feu'gei, taxe'ws diw'ksei,
ai? de` dw^ra mh` de'ket a?lla' dw'sei,
ai? de` mh` fi'lei taxe'ws filh'sei,
     kwu?k e?ðe'loisa.

e?'lðe moi kai` nu^n, xalepa^n de` lu^son
e?k meri'mnan o?'ssa de' moi te'lessai
ðu^mos i?mme'rrei te'leson, su? d? au?'ta
     su'mmaxos e?'sso.
```

Immortal Aphrodite of the shimmering thone, daughter of Zeus, weaver of wiles, I pray thee crush not my

spirit with anguish and distress, O Queen. But come hither if ever before thou didst hear my voice afar, and hearken, and leaving the golden house of thy father, camest with chariot yoked, and swift birds drew thee, their swift pinions fluttering over the dark earth, from heaven through mid-space. Quickly they arrived; and thou blessed one with immortal countenance smiling didst ask: What now is befallen me and why now I call and what I in my heart's madness, most desire. What fair one now wouldst thou draw to love thee? Who wrongs thee Sappho? For even if she flies she shall soon follow and if she rejects gifts, shall soon offer them and if she loves not shall soon love, however reluctant. Come I pray thee now and release me from cruel cares, and let my heart accomplish all that it desires, and be thou my ally.

```
                 I
Shimmering-throned immortal Aphrodite,
Daughter of Zeus, Enchantress, I implore thee,
Spare me, O queen, this agony and anguish,
     Crush not my spirit

                 II
Whenever before thou has hearkened to me--
To my voice calling to thee in the distance,
And heeding, thou hast come, leaving thy father's
     Golden dominions,

                 III
With chariot yoked to thy fleet-winged coursers,
Fluttering swift pinions over earth's darkness,
And bringing thee through the infinite, gliding
     Downwards from heaven,

                  IV
Then, soon they arrived and thou, blessed goddess,
With divine contenance smiling, didst ask me
What new woe had befallen me now and why,
     Thus I had called the.

                  V
What in my mad heart was my greatest desire,
Who was it now that must feel my allurements,
Who was the fair one that must be persuaded,
     Who wronged thee Sappho?

                  VI
For if now she flees, quickly she shall follow
And if she spurns gifts, soon shall she offer them
Yea, if she knows not love, soon shall she feel it
     Even reluctant.

                  VII
```

Come then, I pray, grant me surcease from sorrow,
Drive away care, I beseech thee, O goddess
Fulfil for me what I yearn to accomplish,
     Be thou my ally.

2

fa'inetai' moi kh^nos i?'sos the'oisin
e?'mmen w?'ner o?'stis e?nanti'os toi
i?za'nei kai` plasi'on a?du
     fwneu'sas u?pakou'ei

kai` galai'sas i?mmero'en to` dh` ?ma'n
kardi'an e?n sth'ðesin e?pto'asen,
w?s ga`r eu?'idon broxe'ws se, fw'nas
     ou?de`n e?'t? e?'ikei,

a?lla` ka'm me`n glwjssa ve'age, le'pton
d' au?'tika xrw^j pu^r u?padedro'maken,
o?ppa'tessi d? ou?de`n orhm?,
     e?pirro'mbeisi d? a?'kouai.

a? de' m? i'?drws kakxe'etai, tro'mos de`
pai^san a?'grei xlwrote'ra de` poi'as
e?'mmi, teðna'khn d? o?ligw ?pideu'vhn
     fai'nomai [a?'lla].

pa^n to'lmaton [......]

That one seems to me the equal of the gods, who sits in thy presence and hears near him thy sweet voice and lovely laughter; that indeed makes my heart beat fast in my bosom. For when I see thee even a little I am bereft of utterance, my tongue is useless and at once a subtle fire races under my skin, my eyes see nothing, my ears ring, sweat pours forth and all my body is seized with trembling. I am paler than [dried] grass and seem in my madness little better than dead, but I must dare all ...

I

Peer of the gods, the happiest man I seem
Sitting before thee, rapt at thy sight, hearing
Thy soft laughter and they voice most gentle,

Speaking so sweetly.

II

Then in my bosom my heart wildly flutters,
And, when on thee I gaze never so little,
Bereft am I of all power of utterance,
My tongue is useless.

III

There rushes at once through my flesh tingling fire,
My eyes are deprived of all power of vision,
My ears hear nothing by sounds of winds roaring,
And all is blackness.

III

Down courses in streams the sweat of emotion,
A dread trembling o'erwhelms me, paler than I
Than dried grass in autumn, and in my madness
Dead I seem almost.

3

I

O]i? me`n i?pph'wn stro'ton oi? de` pe'sdwn
oi? de` na'wn fai^s? e?pi` ga^n me'lainan
e?']mmenai ka'lliston e?'gw de` kh^n?
o?'ttw ti`s e?'patai.

II

pa']gxu d? eu?'mares su'neton po'hsai
pa']nti t[ou^]t?. a? ga`r po'lu persko'peisa
ka']llos a?nðrw'pwn E?le'na [to`]n a?'ndra
[kri'nnen a?'r]iston,

III

```
o?`s to` pa`n] se'bas troï'a[s o?']less[e,
kwu?de` pa]i^dos oy?'de [fi'l]wn to[k]h'wn
ma^llon] e?mna'sðh, a?[lla`] para'gag` au?'tan
     ph^le fi'lei]san,

                  IV

W?ros. eu?'k]ampton gar [a?ei` to` ðh^lu]
ai?' ke'] tis kou'fws t[o` pa'ron n]oh'shj.
ou?]de` nu^n, A?naktori'[a, t]u` me'mnai
     dh`] pareio^isas,

                  V

ta^]s ke bolloi'man e?'rato'n te ba^ma
k]ama'rugma la'mpron i?'dhn prosw'pw
h ta` lu'dwn a?'rmata ka?n o?'ploisi
     pesdom]a'xentas

                  VI

ei` men i?'d]men ou?' du'naton ge'nesðai
lw^jst?] o?n` a?n&the;rwp'ois, pede'xhn d? a?'rasthai,
[tw^n pe'deixo'n e?sti bro'toisi lw^jon]
    [h?` lela'ðesðai.]
```

With the emendations by Mr. J.M. Edmonds, the reprinting of which he has been kind enough to permit, a nearly literal rendering would be as follows:

Some say that the fairest thing upon the dark earth is a host of horsemen, and some say a host of foot soldiers, and others again a fleet of ships, but for me it is my beloved. And it is easy to make anyone understand this. When Helen saw the most beautiful of mortals, she chose for best that one, the destroyer of all the honour of Troy and though not much of child or dear parent, but was led astray by Love, to bestow her heart far off, for woman is ever easy to lead astray when she thinks of no account what is near and dear. Even so, Anactoria, you do not remember, it seems, when she is with you, one the gentle sound of whose footfall I would rather see than all the chariots and mail-clad footmen of Lydia. I know that in this world man cannot have the best; yet to pray for a part of what was once shared is better than to forget it...

```
                  I

A troop of horse, the serried ranks of marchers,
A noble fleet, some think these of all on earth
Most beautiful. For me naught else regarding
    Is my beloved.
```

II

To understand this is for all most simple,
For thus gazing much on mortal perfectino
And knowing already what life could give her,
     Him chose fair Helen,

III

Him the betrayer of Ilium's honour.
The recked she not of adored child or parent,
But yielded to love, and forced by her passion,
     Dared Fate in exile.

IV

Thus quickly is bent the will of that woman
To whom things near and dear seem to be nothing.
So mightest thou fail, My Anactoria,
    If she were with you.

V

She whose gentle footfall and radiant face
Hold the power to charm more than a vision
Of chariots and the mail-clad battalions
    Of Lydia's army.

V

So must we learn in world made as this one
Man can never attain his greatest desire,
[But must pray for what good fortune Fate holdeth,
     Never unmindful.]

4

Asteres me'n a?mfi ka'lan sela'nnan
a?^ips a?pykru'ptoisi fa'ennon ei?^dos,
o?'ppota plh'ðoisa ma'lista la'mphs
     a?rguria ga^n.

The stars about the full moon lose their bright beauty when she, almost full, illumines all earth with silver.

```
The gleaming stars all about the shining moon
Hide their bright faces, when full-orbed and splendid
In the sky she floats, flooding the shadowed earth
     with clear silver light.
```

Quoted by Eustathius of Thessalonica in the twelfth century.

5

```
     amfi` d? u?'dwr
psy^xron w?'nemos kela'di di? y?'sdwn
mali'nwn, ai?ðussome'nwn de` fu'llwn
     kw^ma kata'rrei.
```

And by the cool stream the breeze murmurs through apple branches and slumber pours down from quivering leaves.

```
By the cool water the breeze murmurs, rustling
Through apple branches, while from quivering leaves
    Streams down deep slumber.
```

This beautiful fragment is quoted by Hermogenes about A.D. 170. Demetrius, about A.D. 150, says that it is part of Sappho's description of the garden of the nymphs.

6

```
     ... E?'lðe, Ku'pri,
Xprusi'asin e?n kuli'kessin a?'brais
summemigme'non ðali'aisi ne'ktar
     oi?noxo'eisa.
```

Come, goddess of Cyprus, and in golden cups serve nectar delicately mixed with delights.

```
Come hither foam-born Cyprian goddess, come,
And in golden goblets pour richest nectar
All mixed in most ethereal perfection,
     Thus to delight us.
```

Quoted by Athenaeus, who wrote in the first half of the third century A.D. The fragment is apparently part of an invocation to Aphrodite.

7

```
H?' se ku'pros kai` Pa'fos h?` Pa'normos
```

If thee, Cyprus or Paphos or Panormos [holds].

This is from Strabo, early first century A.D. Panormos was a frequent name, and does not refer to Palermo, which was not founded in Sappho's time.

8

```
Soi' d? e?'go deu'kas e?'pi bw^mon a?'igos
...
kapilei'psw toi ...
```

But for thee I will bring to the altar [the young] of a white goat... and add a libation for thee.

Cited by Apollonius of Alexadria about A.D. 140. The reading is uncertain.

9

```
Ai?'ð? e?'go xrusoste'fan? A?fro'dita,
to'nde to`n pa'lon laxo'hn.
```

May I win this prize, O golden-crowned Aphrodite.

From Apollonius. Sappho invented many beautiful epithets to apply to Aphrodite, and this fragment contains one of them.

10

```
Ai?' me timi'an e?po'hsan e?'rga
ta` sfa` doi^sai;
```

Who made me gifts and honoured me?

From Apollonius, illustrating Aeolic dialect in the word sfa'.

11

```
... Ta'de nu^n e?tai'rais
tai^s e?'maisi te'rpna ka'lws a?ei'sw.
```

This will I now sing skilfully to please my friends.

Athanaeus quotes this to show that there is not necessarily any reproach in the word e?tai'rai. Like many others, the fragment is unfortunately too short for anything but a literal translation. The breathing of the word in question in Attic Greek would of course be rough.

12

```
... O?'ttinas ga`r
eu?^ ðe'w kh^noi' me ma'lista ci'nnontai
...
```

For thee to whom I do good, thou harmest me the most.

From the "Etymologicum Magnum," tenth century A.D.

13

```
E?'gw de` kh^n? o?'ttw tis e?'patai.
```

But that which one desires I.

Quoted by Apollonius and in 1914 found to be part of the poem in the "Oxyrhynchus Papyrus," No. 1231.

14

```
tai^s kalais u?'mmin [to`] no'hma tw?^mon
     oi? dia'meipton.
```

To you, fair maidens, my mind does not change.

Quoted by Apollonius to illustrate the Aeolic form u?'mmin.

15

```
....E?'gwn d? e?mau'ta
     tou^to cu'noida.
```

And this I feel myself.

Quoted by Apollonius to illustrate Aeolic method of accentuation.

16

```
taisi [de`] psu^xros me'n e?'gento ðu^mos
pa`r d? i?'eisi ta` pte'ra ...
```

But the spirit within them turned chill and down dropped their wings.

The Scholist quotes this to show that Sappho says the same thing of doves as Pindar (Pyth. 1-10) says of the eagle of Zeus.

Another reading is psau^kros, "light", for psu^xros, "moist or chill." The sense would then be "the spirit within them became light and they relaxed their wings in rest."

17

```
... kat? e?'mon sta'lagmon,
to`n d? e?pipla'zontes a?'moi fe'roien
     kai` meledw'nais.
```

From my distress: let buffeting winds bear it and all care away.

From the "Etymologicum Magnum" to show the Aeolic use of `z` in place of `ss`. Bergk conjectures `a?'moi` for `a?'nemoi`, "winds". The fragment is tantilizingly incomplete, as so many others are, and the reading of one or two words in not certain.

18

```
Arti'ws m? a? xrusope'dillos A?u'ws.
```

Just now the golden-sandalled Dawn [has called].

There could hardly be a more beautiful epithet than "golden-sandalled" to apply to the Dawn. It is fully equal in this respect to "rosy-fingered," and in Greek both words are beautiful in sound.

This is quoted by Ammonius of Alexandria about A.D. 400 to show Sappho's use of `A?rti'ws`.

The Poems of Sappho, Part II

19

```
... Po`das de'
poi'kilos ma'slhs e?ka'lupte, Lu'dion ka'lon e?'rgon.
```

A broidered strap of beautiful Lydian work covered her feet.

```
Her shining ankles clad in fairest fashion
In broidered leather from the realm of Lydia,
    So came the Goddess.
```

This fragment is very likely from an invocation to Aphrodite. It is from the Scholiast on Aristophanes' "Peace," 1174; Pollux about A.D. 180 also mentions it.

20

    ... Pantoda'pais memigme'na xroi'aisin.

Shot with innumerable hues.

Quoted by the Scholiast on Apollonius of Rhodes, i, 727. Sappho's reference may be to the rainbow.

21

    E?'meðen d? e?'xeisða la'ðan.

Thou forgettest me.

22

    ... H?' tin? a?'llon
    [ma^llon] a?nðrw'pwn e?'meðen filhsða.

Or lovest another more than you do me.

Both from Apollonius to show the Aeolic `e?'methen` for `e?'mou^`.

23

    Ou?' ti moi u?'mmes.

You are nought to me.

    As ðelet? u?'mmes.

While you will.

These are quoted by Apollonius to show the Aeolic form `u?'mmes`.

24

```
kai` poðh'w kai` ma'omai.
```

I yearn and I seek.

From the "Etymologicum Magnum" to show the Aeolic form poðe'w, "I yearn."

25

```
Skidname'nas e?n sth'ðesin o?'rgas
mapsula'kan glw^ssan pefula'xðai.
```

When anger spreads through the breast keep thy tongue from barking foolishly (or idly).

```
When anger surges through thy heart
Let not thy foolish tongue take part.
```

This piece of somewhat sentenious advice is of an unusual type amongst the Sapphic fragments. It is quoted by Plutarch in his essay "On Restraining Anger."

26

```
Ai? d? h?^xes e?'slwn i?'meron h?' ka'lwn,
kai` mh' ti vei'pen glw^ss? e?ku'ka ka'kon,
    ai?'dws ke' s? ou? ki'xanen o?'ppat?
    a?'ll? e?'leges peri` tw^ dikai'ws.
```

Hadst thou wished for things good or noble and had not thy tongue formed evil speech, shame would not have shown from they eyes, but thou hadst spoken frankly about it.

Aristotle ("Rhetoric", i, 9), about 330 B.C., says "base things dishonour those who do or wish them, as Sappho showed when Alcaeus said:

```
?io'plok? a?'gna mellixo'meide Sa'pfoi
ðe'lw ti vei'pen a?'lla' me kwlu'ei ai?'dws.
```

"'Violet-weaving, chaste sweetly smiling Sappho, I would speak but bashfulness restrains me.'"

And she answered him in the words of the present fragment. Blass thinks that these two lines assigned to

Alcaeus are also by Sappho, and about A.D. 1110 Anna Comnena certainly suggested the same authorship.

27

```
Sta^ði ka?'nta fi'los,....
kai` ta`n e?'p? o?'ssois a?mpe'tason xa'rin.
```

Face me, my dear one...and unveil the grace in thine eyes.

```
Turn to me, dear one, turn thy face,
And unveil for me in thine eyes, their grace.
```

Athenaeus says that Sappho addressed this poem, of which this is a fragment, to a man famous for his physical beauty. It has also been suggested that the lines may have been addressed to Sappho's brother. It need not, however, necessarily be assumed that any particular person is meant.

28

```
Xru'seoi d? e?re'binðoi e?p? ai?o'nwn e?fu'onto.
```

And golden pulse grew along the shores.

From Athenaeus.

29

```
La'tw kai` Nio'ba ma'la me`n fi'lai h?^san e?'tairai.
```

Lato and Niobe were most dear friends.

From Athenaeus.

30

```
Mna'sesðai' tina' fami kai` u?'steron a?mme'wn.
```

I think men will remember us even hereafter.

From Dio Chrysostom, who, writing about A.D. 100, remarks that this is said "with perfect beauty."

31

```
H?ra'man me`n e?'gw se'ðen, A?'tði, pa'lai po'ta.
```

I loved thee Atthis, once long ago.

From Hephaestion, about A.D. 150, quoted as an example of metre.

32

```
Smi'kra moi` pai^s e?'mmen e?fai'neo ka?'xaris.
```

To me thou didst seem a small and ungraceful child.

Quoted by Plutarch and others.

33

```
A?'ll? o?'nmh` magalu'nneo daktuli'w pe'ri.
```

Foolish woman! Have no pride about a ring.

Mentioned by Herodian about A.D. 160.

34

```
Ou?k oi?^d? o?'tti ðe'w, du'o moi ta` noh'mata.
```

I know not what to do: I have two minds.

```
In doubt I am, I have two minds,
I know not what to do.
```

Quoted about 220 B.C. by Chrysippus, the Stoic philosopher.

35

```
Psau'hn d? ou? doki'moim? o?ra'nw du'si p'axesin.
```

With my two arms, I do not aspire to to touch the sky.

Quoted by Herodian.

36

```
W?'s de` pai^s pe'da ma'tera pepteru'twmai.
```

So, like a child after its mother, I flutter.

From the "Etymologicum Magnum."

37

```
H?^ros ?'aggelos i?mero'fwnos a?'h'dwn.
```

The messager of spring, the sweet voiced nighingale.

Quoted by the Scholiast on the Electra of Sophocles, 149, "the nightingale is the messager of Zeus, because it is the sign of spring."

Compare Ben Johnson's "The Sad Shepherd," Act II, Scene vi: "The dear good angel of the Spring, the nightingale."

38

```
E?'ros dau?^te' m? o? lusime'les do'nei,
gluku'pikron a?ma'xanon o?'rpeton.
```

Now Love, the ineluctable, dominates and shakes my being, and fills me with bitter-sweetness.

```
Now Love, the ineluctable, with bitter sweetness
Fills me, overwhelms me, and shakes my being.
```

Quoted by Hephaestion.

39

```
A?'tði soi` d e?'meðe'n men a'ph'xðeto
fronti'sden, e?'pi d? A?ndrome'dan po'thj.
```

But to thee, Athis, the thought of me is hateful; thou fliest to Andromeda.

Quoted by Hephaestion with the preceding, to which it does not appear really to belong.

40

```
E?'ros dau?^t? e`ti'naksen e?'moi fre'nas,
a?'nemos kat o?'ros dru'sin e?mpe'swn.
```

Now Eros shakes my soul, a wind on the mountain overwhelming the oaks.

```
Now like a mountain wind the oaks o'erwhelming,
Eros shakes my soul.
```

Quoted by Maximus Tyrius about 150 B.C. He speaks of Socrates exciting Phaedus to madness, when he speaks of love.

41

```
O?'ta pa'nnuxos a?'sfi kata'grei.
```

When all night long [sleep] holds them.

Bergk suggest that the words `o?'ppat? a?'wros` may have preceeded these words. The fragment quoted by Apollonius, and its sense may be "when all night long sleep holds their eyes,"

42

```
A?'ge dh` xe'lu di^a' moi fwna'essa ge'noio.
```

Come, O divine shell, yield thy resonances to me.

```
Come, O come, divinest shell,
And in my ear all thy secrets tell.
```

Quoted by Hermogenes and Eustathius. Sappho is apparently addressing her lyre. The legend is that Hermes is supposed to have made the first lyre by stretching the strings across the cavity of a tortise's shell.

43

```
Ka?pa'lais u?poðu'midas
ple'ktais a?mp? a?palaj de'raj
```

And delicately woven garlands round tender neck.

Quoted by Athenaeus

The Poems of Sappho, Part III

44

```
Ge'llws paidofilwte'ra.
```

More fond of children than Gello.

Zenobius, about A.D. 130, quotes this as a proverb. The ghost of Gello was said by the Lesbians to pursue and carry off young children.

45

```
Ma'la dh` kekorhme'nas Go'rgws.
```

Very weary of Gorgo.

Quoted by Choeroboscus about A.D. 600 to show the Aeolic genitive with `-ws`. Gorgo is mentioned by Maximus Tyrius with Andromeda as being friends of Sappho.

46

```
E?'gw d? e?pi` malða'kan tu'lan spole'w me'lea.
```

But upon a soft cushion I dispose my limbs

From Herodian.

This is a good example of the choice of words which combine meaning and sound poetically.

47

```
Kh^ d? a?mbrosi'as me`n kra'thr e?ke'krato,
?Erma^s d? e?'len o?'lpin ðe'ois oi?noxo'hsai.
kh^noi d? a?'pa pa'ntes karxh'sia t? h?^xon
ka'leibon a?ra'santo de` pa'mpan e?'sla
twj ga'mbrwj.
```

And there the bowl of ambrosia was mixed and Hermes took the ladle to pour out for the gods; and then all held goblets and made libation, and wished good fortune to the bridegroom.

Athenaeus quotes this fragment in two portions in different places. Lachmann first joined the two parts. The poem was evidently one of the Epithalamia.

48

```
De'duke men a? sela'nna
kai` Plhï'ades, me'sai de`
nu'ktes pa'ra d? e?'rxet? w?'ra,
e?'gw de` mo'na kateu'dw.
```

The moon has set, and the Pleiades; it is midnight, the time is going by and I recline alone.

```
The sinking moon has left the sky,
The Pleiades have also gone.
Midnight comes--and goes, the hours fly
And solitary still, I lie.

The Moon has left the sky,
Lost is the Pleiads' light;
     It is midnight,
     And time slips by,
But on my couch alone I lie.
             J. A. Symonds, 1883.
```

This singularly beautiful fragment is quoted by Hephaestion as an example of metre. With the "Hymn to Aphrodite" it was the first portion of the Poems of Sappho to be printed in 1554.

49

```
Plh'rhs me`n e?fai'net? a? sela'nna
ai? d? w?s peri` Bw^mon e?staðhsan.
```

The moon rose full, and as around an altar, stood the women.

```
Now rose the moon, full and argentine,
While round stood the maidens, as at a shrine.
```

Quoted by Hephaestion as an example of the metre known as the Ionic *a majore* trimeter brachycatalectic. Poetically the figure is a fine one, and shows Sappho's wonderful power of visualizing a scene in a few unerringly chosen words. The moon and its light had a great attraction for her, as a number of fragments shows.

50

```
Krh'ssai nu' pot? w?^d? e?mmele'ws po'dessin
w?rxeu^nt? a?pa'lois a?mf? epo'enta Bw^mon
po'as te'pen a?'nðos ma'lakon ma'teisai.
```

Thus sometimes, the Cretan women, tender footed, dance in measure round the fair altar, crushing the fine bloom of the grass.

From Hephaestion as an example of metre. Blass things that this and the preceeding framgment belong together. The whole is another example of the delicate imagery of Sappho.

51

```
A?'bra dhu?^te paxh'aj spo'laj a?llo'man.
```

Then lightly, in an enfolding garment I sprang.

From Herodian as a specimen of metre. It may not be by Sappho.

52

```
Fai^si dh` pota Lh'dan u?akinði'nwn
[u?p? a?nðe'wn] pepukadme'non
eu?'rhn w?'ion.
```

They say that Leda once found an egg under the hyacinths.

From the "Etymologicum Magnum." It is uncertain what flower the Greeks described by the word "hyacinth." In this case the iris may be meant.

53

```
O?fða'lmois de` me'lais nu'ktos a?'wros.
```

And dark-eyed Sleep, child of Night.

From the "Etymologicum Magnum."

54

```
Xrusofa'h ðera'painan 'Afrodi'tas.
```

The handmaiden of Aphrodite, shining like gold.

In a manuscript of Philodemas about 60 B.C., found at Herculaneum, in which it is said that Sappho thus addresses `Peiðw'`. There is some doubt about this as the manuscript is defective.

55

```
E?'xei me`n Androme'da ka'lan a?moi'ban.
```

Andromeda has a fair reward.

56

```
Psa'pfoi ti' ta`n polu'olbon A?fro'ditan;
```

Sappho, why [celebrate or worship] most happy Aphrodite?

Both of these are quoted by Hephaestion.

57

```
Deu^te' nun a?'brai Xa'rites, kalli'komoi' te Moi^sai.
```

Come now gentle Graces, and fair-haired Muses.

Quoted by Hepaestion, Attilius Fortunatianus, and Servius as an example of the choriambic tetrameter used by Sappho.

58

```
Pa'rðenon a?du'fwnon.
```

A sweet-voiced maiden.

Quoted by Attilius, about the fifth century A.D.

59

```
Katðna'skei Kuðe'rh?, a?'bros A?'dwnis, ti' ke ðei^men,
Kattu'ptesðe ko'rai kai` katerei'kesðe xi'twnas.
```

Gentle Adonis is dying, O Cythera, what shall we do?
Beat your breasts, O maidens, and rend your garments.

```
Gentle Adonis wounded lies, dying, dying.
What message, O Cythera, dost thou send?
Beat, beat your white breasts, O ye weeping maidens,
And in wild grief your mourning garments rend.
```

Quoted by Hephaestion and presumed to be written by Sappho from a passage in Pausanias.

The reverbrating beat of the repetitions of the letter `k` is very remarkable.

60

```
    O?' to`n A?'dwnin.
```

O for Adonis.

Quoted by Marius Plotinus about A.D. 600. It appears to be the refrain of an ode.

61

```
    E?'lðont? e?ks o?ra'nw porfuri'an [e?'xonta]
         perðe'menon xla'mun.
```

Coming from heaven, clad in a purple mantle.

Quoted by Pollux about A.D. 180 to illustrate Sappho's use of he word `xlamu's`, which she is said to be the first to use.

62

A

```
    Brodopa'xees a?'gnai Xa'rites, deu^te Dios ko'rai.
```

Come rosy-armed Graces, virgin daughters of Zeus.

The Idyll on a Distaff by Theocritis, according to the argument before it, was written in the metre of this fragment. Philostratus, about A.D. 220, refers to this as indicating Sappho's love for the rose.

63

```
...O? d? A?'reus fai^si ken A?'faiston a?'gnh Bi'aj.
```

But Ares said he would forcibly drag Hephaestus.

64

```
---- Polla` d? a?na'riðma
poth'ria kalai'fis.
```

Innumerable drinking cups thou drainest.

From Athenaeus.

65

```
Katða'noisa de` kei'seai po'ta, kwu? mnamosu'na se'ðen
e?'sset? ou?'te to't? ou?'t? u'?steron. ou? ga`r pede'xeis bro'down
tw^n e?k Pieri'as a?ll? a?fa'nhs kh?n' ?Ai^da do'mois
foita'seis ped? a?mau'rwn ne'kuwn e?kpepotame'na.
```

But thou shalt ever lie dead nor shall there be any remembrance of thee then or ever, for thou hast none of the roses of Pieria; but thou shalt wander unnoticed, even in the houses of Hades, flitting among the shadowy dead.

Forever shalt thou lie dead, nor shall there be any remembrance of thee now or hereafter, for never has thou had any of the roses of Pieria; but thou shalt wander, eternally unregarded in the houses of Hades, flitting among the insubstantial shades.

Quoted by Stobaeus about A.D. 500 as addressed to a woman of no education. Plutarch also quotes this fragment, twice in fact, once as if written to a rich woman, and again when he says that the crown of roses was assigned to the Muses, for he remembers that Sappho had said these same words to some uneducated woman.

66

```
Ou?d? i?'an doki'moimi prosi'doisan fa'os a?li'w
e?'ssesðai sofi'an pa'rðenon e?is ou?de'na pw xro'non toiau'tan.
```

I think that no maiden whall ever see the sunlight, who shall have thy wisdom.

```
No maiden, I think, more wise than thou
Shall ever see the sun.
```

Quoted by Chrysippus, and may be part of the preceding poem.

67

```
Ti's d? a?groiw^ti's toi ðe'lgei no'on,
ou?k e?pistame'na ta` bra'ke? e?'lkhn
     e?pi' tw^n sfu'rwn;
```

What rustic girl bewitches thee who knows not how to draw her dress about her ankles?

```
What rustic girl bewitches thee,
Who cannot even draw
Her garments neat as they should be,
Her ankles roundabout?
```

Athenaeus and others quote these lines.

68

```
H?'rwn e?ksedi'daks? ek Gua'rwn ta`n tanusi'dromon.
```

Hero of Gyara, that swift runner, I taught.

Quoted by Choeroboscus to show an Aeolic form of the accusative.

69

```
A?'lla' tis ou?k e?'mmi paligko'twn
o?'rgan, a?ll? a?ba'khn ta`n fre'n? e?'xw.
```

I am not of a malign nature but have a calm temper.

Quoted in the "Etymologicum Magnum" to show the meaning of `a?ba'khs`, "innocent", "unsophisticated."

70

```
Au?ta`r o?rai^ai stefanhplo'keun.
```

Then sweet maidens wove garlands.

Quoted by the Scholiast upon the "Thermophoriazusae" of Aristophanes to show that the weaving of floral garlands is a sign of being in love.

71

```
----- Su' te ka?'mos ðero'pwn E?'ros.
```

Thou and my servant, Eros.

Quoted by Maximus Tyrius.

72

```
?All? ?'ewn fi'los a?'mmin [a?'llo]
le'xos a?'rnusw new'teron
ou? ga`r tla'som? e?'gw ksunoi'khn
newj g? e?'ssa geraitera.
```

For if thou lovest us, choose another and a younger spouse, for I will not endure to live with thee, old woman with young man.

From the anthology of Stobaeus.

73

```
Eu?morfote'ra Mnascidi'ka ta^s a?pa'las Guri'nnws.
```

More shapely is Mnasidica, than gentle Gyrinno.

Quoted by Hephaestion as an example of metre.

74

```
Acarote'ras ou?'gdam? e?p w?^ p?a'nna seðen tu'xoica.
```

One more scornful than thee, O Eranna, I have never found.

Quoted by Hephaestion. The reading is doubtful.

75

```
Su` de` stefa'nois, a Di'ka perðe'sað? e?ra'tais fo'baisin,
o?'rpakas a?nh'toio sun r?rais? a?pa'laisi xe'pcin,
e?ga'nðesin e?'k ga`r pe'letai kai` xa'ritos makaira^n
ma^llon prote'rhn, a?sterfanw'toisi d? a?pystere'fontai.
```

Do thou, O Dica, set garlands upon thy lovely hair, weaving sprigs of dill with thy delicate hands; for those who wear fair blossoms may surely stand first, even in the presence of Goddesses who look without favour upon those who come ungarlanded.

Athenaeus quotes this fragment, saying that according to Sappho those who approach the gods should wear garlands, as beautiful things are acceptable to them.

76

```
E?'gw de` fi'lhm? a?brosu'nan, kai` moi to` la'mpron
e?'ros a?eli'w kai` to` ka'lon le'logxen.
```

I love refinement and for me Love has the splendour and beauty of the sun.

From Athenaeus.

77

```
Ka`m me'n te tu'lan kaspole'w.
```

And down I set the cushion.

From Herodian.

78

```
O? plou^tos a?'neu seu^ g? a?re'ta c?t? ou?k a?si'nhs pa'roikos,
[h` d e?ks a?mfote'rwn kra^sis eu?daimoni'as e?'xei to a?'kron.]
```

Wealth without thee, Worthiness is no safe neighbor, [but the mixture of both is the height of happiness].

From the Scholiast on Pindar. The second line is apparently a gloss of the commentator.

79

```
Auta de` su' Kallio'pa.
```

And thou thyself, Calliope.

Quoted by Hephaestion when discussing a metre of Archilochus.

80

```
Dau'ois a?pa'las e?ta'ras e?n sth'ðesin.
```

Sleep thou, in the bosom of thy sweetheart.

From the "Etymologicum Magnum." This fragment probably belongs among the Epithalamia.

81

```
Deu^ro dhu?^te Moi^sai xru'sion li'poisai.
```

Hither now, ye Muses, leaving golden [surroundings].

Quoted by Hephaestion.

82

```
E?'sti moi ka'la pa'is xrusi'oisin a?nðe'moisin
e?mfe'rhn e?'xoisa mo'rfan, Klh^is a?gapa'ta,
a?nti ta^s e?'gw ou?de` Ludi'an pai^san ou?d? e?'rannan.
```

I have a fair daughter with a form like golden flowers, Cleis the belovedest whom I cherish more than all Lydia or lovely [Lesbos].

```
A fair daughter have I, Cleis by name,
Like a golden flower she seems to me.
Far more than all Lydia, her do I love,
Or Lesbos shimmering in the sea.
```

Quoted and commented upon by Hephaestion.

83

```
      Po'lla moi ta`n
    Pwluana'ktida pai^da xa^irhn.
```

From all joy to me, O daughter of Polyanax.

From Maximus Tyrius.

84

```
    Za` d? e?leksa'man o?'nar Kuprogenh'aj.
```

In my dream, I spoke to the Cyprian goddess.

From Hephaestion.

85

```
    Ti' me Pandi'onis w?^ p?'anna xeli'dwn;
```

Why lovely swallow, Pandion's child dost thou [weary] me?

From Hephaestion. Another reading suggests `w?ra'na`.

86

```
    A?mfi` d? a?'brois lasi'ois eu?^ ve pu'kassen.
```

She wrapped herself well in gossamer garments.

Pollux says that the line refers to finely woven linen.

87

```
Glu'keia ma^ter, ou?' toi dy'namai kre'khn to`n i?'ston,
po'ðwj da'meisa pai^dos bradi'nan di? A?fro'ditan.
```

My sweet mother, broken by soft Aphrodite's spell, longing for a youth, I can no more weave the cloth.

```
My sweet mother! Fair Aphrodite's spell
Has from me sense and reason all bereft,
And, yearning for that dear beloved youth,
No longer can I see the warp or weft.
```

Quoted by Hephaestion as an example of metre.

88

```
I?'psoi dh` to` me'laðron,
     U?mh'naon
a?e'rrete te'ktones a?'ndres,
     U?mh'naon
ga'mbros e?'rxetai i?^sos A'?reuï,
     [U?mh'naon]
andros mega'lo po'lu mei'zwn
     [U?mh'naon]
```

```
Raise high the roof beams, Workmen!
     Hymenaeus!
Like Ares comes the bridgroom!
     Hymenaeus!
Taller than all tall men!
     Hymenaeus!
```

Quoted by Hephaestion as an example of mes-hymnic poem.

89

```
Pe'rroxos w?s o?'t? a?'oidos o? Le'sbois a?lloda'poisin.
```

Towering like the singer of Lesbos among men of other lands.

Quoted by Demetrius about A.D. 150. It is possible that Terpander is meant, but the line may be merely a reference to Lesbian poets in general.

90

```
Oi?^on to` gluku'malon e?reu'ðetai a?'krwj e?p? u?'sdwj
a?'kron e?p? a?krota'twj lela'ðonto de` malodro'pnes,
ou? ma`n e?klela'ðont?, a?ll? ou?k e?du'nant? e?pi'kesðai.
```

As the sweet apple blushes on the end of the bough, the very end of the bough which gatherers missed, nay, missed not, but could not reach.

```
At the end of the bough--its uttermost end,
Missed by the harvesters, ripens the apple,
Nay, not overlooked, but far out of reach,
     So with all best things.
```

Quoted by the Scholiast on Hermogenes and elsewhere. The "sweet-apple" to which Sappho refers was probably the result of a a graft of apple on quince.

91

```
Oi?'an ta`n u?a'kinðon e?n ou?'resi poi'menes a?'ndres.
po'ssi katastei'boisi, xamai d? e?piporfu'rei a?'nðos.
```

As on the hills the shepherds trample the larkspur (?) under foot and the flower lies empurpling in decay on the ground.

```
O'er the hills the heedless shepherd,
  Heavy footed, plods his way;
Crushed behind him lies the larkspur,
  Soon empurpling in decay.
```

Quoted by Demetrius, who comments on the ornament and beauty of the lines. Bergk was the first to assign the lines to Sappho. The last three words contain a picture of a crushed flower decaying on the ground, which would perhaps be impossible to put in so few words in any language but Greek. The Greek word u?a'kinðos does not mean the flower which at the present day is called "hyacinth". The Greek name was applied to several flowers of which one was almost certainly the larkspur, and another, as noted elsewhere, the iris.

92

    Ve'spere, pa'nta fe'rwn, o?'sa fai'nolis e?ske'das? agws,
    fe'reis oi?'n, fe'reis ai?^ga, fe'reis a?'pu mate'ri pai^da.

Evening, thou that bringst all that bright morning scattered, thou bringst the sheep, the goat, and the child back to its mother.

    Hail, gentle Evening, that bringst back
    All things that bright morning hath beguiled.
    Thou bringst the lamb, thou bringst the kid,
    And to its mother, her drowsy child.

From the "Etymologicum Magnum," where the meaning of au?'ws ("dawn") is discussed. The beauty of the fragment needs no emphasising.

93

    A?ïpa'rðenos e?'ssomai.

Ever shall I be a maid.

From a manuscript in Paris, edited by Cramer.

94

    Dw'somen, h?^si pa'ter.

We will give, says the father.

From the same manuscript as the preceeding.

95

```
Ðurw'rwj po'des e?ptoro'guioi
ta` de` sa'mbala pempebo'na,
pi'suggoi de` de'k? e?ksepo'nasan.
```

To the door-keeper, feet seven fathoms long, and sandals of five bulls' hides, work for ten cobblers.

Quoted by Hephaestion as a specimen of metre.

96

```
O?'lbie ga'mbre, coi` me`n dh` ga'mos, w?s a?'rao
e?ktete'lest? e?'xeis de` pa'rðenon, a?'n a?'rao.
```

Happy bridegroom! Now has come thy wedding as thou wished, and thou hast the maiden of thy desire.

```
Thou happy bridegroom! Now has dawned
  That day of days supreme,
When in thine arms thou'lt hold at last
  The maiden of thy dream.
```

From Hepaestion.

97

```
Melli'xios d' e?p? i?mme'rtwj ke'xutai prosw'powj.
```

And a sweet expression spreads over her fair face.

From Hepaestion. Compare Catullus, "Mellitos oculos." and "Pulcher es neque te Venus negligit."

98

```
O? me`n ga`r ka'los, o?'sson i?'dhn, pe'letai [a?'gaðos]
o? de` ka?'gaðos au?'tika kai` ka'los e?'ssetai.
```

He who is fair to look upon is good, and he who is good, will soon be fair also.

```
He should be good who is fair of face,
And he will be fair whose soul has grace.
```

Galen, writing about A.D. 160, says: "It is better therefore, knowing as we do that youthful beauty is like the flowers of spring, its allurement lasting but a short time, to agree with the Lesbian poetess, and to believe Solon when he points out the same."

99

```
H?^r? e?'ti parðeni'as epiba'llomai;
```

Do I still long for maidenhood?

Quoted by Apollonius to show the Aeolic form `h?^ra`, the interrogative particle `a?^ra`, and also as a specimen of metre.

100

```
Xai'roisa hu'mfa, xaire'tw d? o? ga'mbros.
```

The bride [comes] rejoicing, let the bridegroom also rejoice.

From Hephaestion as a specimen of catalectic iambic.

101

```
Ti'wj, s?, w?^ fi'le ga'mbre, ka'lws e?'ika'sw;
o?'rpaki bradi'nwj se ka'list? e?'ika'sdw.
```

To what may I liken thee, dear bridegroom?
Best to a tender shoot may I liken thee.

From Hephaestion as an example of metre.

102

```
...Xai^re, nu'mfa,
Xai^re, ti'mie gambe, po'lla.
```

Hail bride, and all hail! noble bridegroom.

Quoted by Servius about A.D. 390, and referred to by Pollux and Julian.

103

```
Ou? ga`r h?^n a?te'ra pai^s, w?^ ga'mbre, toau'ta.
```

For, like her, O bridegroom, there was no other maiden.

From Dionysius of Halicarnassus.

104

```
A. Parðeni'a, parðeni'a, poi^ me li'pois? a?poi'xhj;
B. Ou?ke'ti h?'ksw pro`s ce', ou?ke'ti h?'ksw.
```

Maidenhood, maidenhood, whither art thou gone from me?
Never, O, never again, shall I return to thee.

Quoted by Demetrius, to show the beauty of Sappho's style, and her successful use of repetition.

105

```
Fai'netai' voi kh^nos...
```

To himself he seems...

Quoted by Apollonius to show the use of digamma in Aeolic Greek.

106

```
W?ï'w po'lu leuko'teron.
```

[A thing] much whiter than an egg.

From Athenaeus.

107

```
Mh't? e?'moi me'li mh'te me'lissa.
```

Neither honey nor bee for me.

This is a proverb quoted by a number of late authors. It is an example of Sappho's successful use of alliteration.

108

```
Mh` ki'nh xe'radas.
```

Stir not the pebbles.

Mary Barnard translates this: "If you're squeamish, don't prod the beach rubble." *{jbh}*.

From the Scholiast on Apollonius Rhodius. `Xera'des` were little heaps of stone.

109

```
O?'ptias a?'mme.
```

Thou burnest us.

From Apollonius, showing Aeolic form `hma^s`, "us".

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110

```
H?mitu'bion stala'sson.
```

A napkin dripping.

From the Scholiast on the Plutus of Aristophanes to show the meaning of `h?mitu'bion`. This was a piece of soft linen for wiping the hands.

111

```
To`n vo`n paida kalei.
```

Him she called her son.

From Apollonius to show the use of digamma.

112

```
Paides, a?'fwnos e?oi^sa to'd? e?nne'pw, ai?' tis e?'rntai,
     Fwna`n a?kama'tan katðe'mena pro` podw^n,
A?iðopi'aj me ko'raj Latou^s a?ne'ðhken A?ri'sta
     E?rmokleidai'a tw^ Saonaïa'da,
ca` pro'polos, de'spoina gynaikw^n, a?^j su` xarei^sa
     pro'frwn a!mete'ron ei?kkle'ïson genea'n.
```

Maidens, although I am dumb, yet thus I speak, if any ask and place at your feet one with an untiring voice: To Aethopia the daughter of Leto was I consecrated by Arista, daugther of Hermocleides Saonaiades, thy servent, O queen of women; whom mayest thou bless and deign to glorify our house.

From the Greek Anthology. It is a difficult and obscure piece. Bergk has not attempted to restore the Aeolic form.

113

```
Tima'dos a?'de ko'nis, ta`n dh` rpo` ga'moio ðanou^san
      de'ksato fersefo'nas ku'aneos ða'lamos,
as kai` e?pofðime'nas pa^sai neoða^gi cida'rwj
      a?'likes immerta`n kra^tos e?'ðento ko'man.
```

This is the dust of Timas whom the dark chamber of Persephone recieved, dead before her wedding; when she died all her companions clipped with sharpened metal all their lovely tresses.

```
Here rests the dust of Timas who, unwed,
Passed the dark portals of Persephone.
With sharpened metal, when her spirit fled,
Her mourning friends each shore her fair-tressed head.
```

The version of J.A. Symonds is as follows:

```
This is the dust of Timas, whom, unwed,
Persephone locked in her darksome bed:
For her, the maids who were her fellows, shore
Their curls and to her tomb this tribute bore.
```

The verse is from the Greek Anthology.

114

```
A?'nðe? a?me'rgousan pai^d? a?'gan a?pala'n.
```

A most tender maiden gathering flowers.

Quoted by Athenaeus.

115

    Po'lu pa'kidos ?adumeleste'ra, xru'sw xrucote'ra.

Than the lyre, far sweeter in tone, than gold, more golden.

    Far sweeter than the throbbing lyre in sound,
    A voice more golden than gold, new found.

Quoted by Demetrius to show the poetical value of hyperbolical phrase.

116

Maximus Tyrius says that Socrates calls Love the wizard, while Sappho uses the term myðoplo'kos, "fiction weaving."

117

Aristides quotes Sappho as saying to` ga'nos ... ou? diafðei^ron ta`s o?'pseis, "the brightness...not destroying the sight."

118

    'Podopth'xeis kai 'e?likw'pides kai` kallipa'rhjoi
    kai` meilixofwnoi.

With rosy cheeks and glancing eyes and voices sweet as honey.

Philostratus says that this indeed is Sappho's sweet salutation.

Aristaenetus says that Sappho in a hymeneal song uses the epithet meilixo'fwnoi, "soft voiced".

119

Pausanias, about A.D. 180, says of Sappho that concerning love she sang many things that do not always agree with one another.

120

Himerius, apparently quoting, says "Thou are the evening star, of all stars the fairest I think," and he says that the line comes from Sappho's song to Hesperus. Again, he says, quoting: "Now thou didst appear like that fairest of all stars; for the Athenians call thee, Hesperus."

Himerius also refers to an ode which was apparently an imitation of the work of Sappho. The ode has been transcribed by J.A. Symonds.

121

The Scholiast on Hesiod, Op. et D., 74, says that Sappho calls persausion, A?frodiths ðugate'ra.

122

Athenaeus mentions Ba'rwmos and sa'rbitos, two stringed instruments in use in the time of Sappho. Their exact character is not known. He also gives the form Ba'rmos for the name of the former instrument.

A few single words or short phrases attributed to Sappho have been preserved here or there by various writers. Some examples may be given as they have a certain interest.

Eustathius speaks of a "vagabond friendship, as Sappho would say," kalo`n dhmo'sion--"a public good."

The "Lexicon Sequerianum" defines A?'kakos as meaning "without experience of ill," and says "so Sappho uses the word."

The "Etymologicum Magnum" defines A?mamaksu's as a vine trained on poles, and says that Sappho makes the plural a?mam'ksudes. The same work mentions Sappho's use of the form au?'ws for h?'ws, "the dawn."

Pollus says that Sappho used the word Beu^dos for a woman's dress.

Phrynichus, the grammarian, says that Sappho calls a woman's dressing-case where she keeps her scents,

gru'th.

A Parisian manuscript (ed. Cramer) says: "Among the Aeolian z is used for d, as when Sappho says zabaton for dia'baton, 'fordable'."

Cheoeroboscus says: "Sappho makes the accusative of ki'ndunos, danger, ki'ndun." Another writer says ki'nduna.

Photius, in his Lexicon (ninth century) says: "ða'psos is a wood used to dye hair and wool yellow, which Sappho called ksu'lon Skuðiko'n, Scythian wood."

The Fayum fragments in the Egyptian Museum in Berlin, brought there in 1879, contain among other things a very small scrap with a very imperfect text on both sides of it. The fragment is considered to be of the eight century A.D., and Professor Blass of Kiel ascribes the text to Sappho, judging by the metre and the dialect. There is a posthumous essay by Bergk on this subject in the fourth edition, 1882, of his "Poetae Lyrici Graeci," but the text of the fragments is so exceedingly imperfect that attempts at restoration are the merest conjectures.

Finally, the following verse may be quoted:

```
Kei^non a?^ xruso'ðrone Mou^s?, e?'nicpes
u?'mnon e?k ta^s kalligu'naikos e?sðla^s
Thios xw'ras o?'n a?ei'de terpnw^s pre'sbus a?gauo`s.
```

O Muse, golden throned, sing that strain which the revered elder of Teos, from the rich land of fair women, sang so melodiuosly.

This verse was almost certainly not written by Sappho. Athenaeus says that "Hemesianax was mistaken when he represented Sappho and Anacreon as contemporaries, for Anacreon lived in the time of Cyrus and Polycrates [about 563-478 B.C.], while Sappho lived in the reign of Alyattes, father of Croesus." It is extremely improbable that Sappho was still living when Anacreon was born.