Gendered Spheres and Mythic Models in Sappho's Brothers Poem

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What is striking to me about the newest Sappho, the Brothers Poem, is its complex combination or interpenetration of two levels or spheres.¹ For here, we find the quotidian—we might even say, a view ‘behind the scenes’—progressively infused with mythic models or resonances. We see something of the same interpenetration of the individual with the divine or with epic or mythic resonances in several of Sappho's love poems. Thus Sappho fr. 1 combines an individual's love travails with an epiphany of Aphrodite and distinctive Homeric echoes to expand the poem's significance, while Sappho fr. 16 weaves together the individual's longing for Anactoria with the mythic exemplum of Helen and the vast perspective of the serried ranks of Lydian cavalry and foot soldiers.² Even in Sappho fr. 31, if we accept Jack Winkler's reading, the poem's progressive shift inward and anatomization of the *ego's* physical symptoms is deftly interwoven with echoes of Odysseus' first encounter with Nausicaa in *Odyssey* Book 6.³ Still, the quality of the quotidian or behind-the-scenes view is not represented in these poems to the same degree; it is perhaps something that distinguishes Sappho's poems about family, politics, and day-to-day life in Mytilene.

To get at these two levels or aspects within the poem, I will consider separately (1) gendered spheres, and then (2) epic or mythic models, along the way in each part paying careful attention to the structure and movement of the song. This division of topics (though to some extent it tracks the development of the poem) is simply a heuristic device to aid analysis, since what seems distinctive and unusual here is the interpenetration within a single poem of these

1 In addition to the editors and all the contributors to the volume, I would like to thank the following for ongoing conversations, the reading of various drafts, and invaluable input: Kate Gilhuly, Mark Griffith, Barbara Kowalzig, Donald Mastronarde, Kathy McCarthy, Melissa Mueller, Richard Neer, Nelly Oliensis, Alex Purves, Mario Telò, and Naomi Weiss. One of the great pleasures of a brand new Sappho poem is that the work of interpretation is necessarily collaborative and ‘choral’.

2 This reading of Sappho fr. 1 follows Marry (1979), Rissman (1983), Winkler (1990b) 166–176.

3 Winkler (1990b) 178–180.

two spheres. I will therefore return to this double quality at the end of my discussion and attempt to knit these two strands together.

Gendered Spheres

Dirk Obbink notes that based on the layout of the Brothers Poem on P. Sapph. Obbink, we can be certain that we have lost only one, two, or at most three stanzas at the beginning of our song. And if we accept M.L. West's proposal that P. GC fr. 1 represents the remains of the missing column (col. v) between the rest of P. GC (coll. i–iv) and the papyrus that contains the Brothers Poem (col. vi), the extent of the lost opening is narrowed to one to two stanzas (for a total of six to seven stanzas for the Brothers Poem).⁴ What we have starts with the *ego* reproaching somebody for the wrong kind of speech: 'But you are always chattering about Charaxos coming with a full ship'.⁵ *Θρυλέω* is a striking word in this context; it appears nowhere else in lyric and seems to be mainly a prose word—even colloquial.⁶ And at least down through Theocritus, it designates negatively-marked speech—babbling, silliness, common talk; speech not to be trusted.⁷ Because of this verb, I am strongly inclined to think that the *ego* (whom I will henceforth refer to indiscriminately as Sappho) is addressing a female within her own family sphere; I find it almost impossible to believe that Sappho is addressing a man, using this verb to characterize his speech.⁸ At the

4 Obbink (2014b) 34, West (2014) 1–2, 8, Obbink (2015b) 3–5.

5 The infinitive *ἐλθῆναι*, although aorist, must signify a future event; thanks to Donald Mastronarde for discussion and clarification of this point. He explains that the future infinitive is an Attic usage, which only spreads slowly to other dialects, and offers the following parallels for an aorist infinitive used to designate future time: Hom. *Od.* 20.120–121, Sappho fr. 147, Aesch. *Ag.* 674–675. See the full discussion of the possibilities in Obbink (2014b) 41–42; cf. West (2014) 8, 'Charaxos' arrival is something hoped for, not something that has already happened; the aorist *ἐλθῆναι* is purely aspectual, not temporal'. See Ferrari (2014) 3 and Lardinois' contribution to this volume, pp. 174–175.

6 Cf. Obbink (2014a) and Lidov, ch. 3, this volume.

7 Cf. Obbink (2014b) 41, Bettenworth (2014) 15, Ferrari (2014) 3. The verb *θρυλέω* is rare in poetry: see Ar. *Eq.* 348, Eur. *El.* 910, fr. 285.1 Kannicht, Anaxippus fr. 1.4 K.-A., Theoc. *Id.* 2.142; for prose occurrences, see Pl. *Phd.* 65b (of poets), Isoc. 12.237, *Ep.* 6.7, Dem. 1.7, 2.6, 19.156, 19.273, 21.160, Arist. *Rh.* 1395a10, 1415a3, *Hist. an.* 620b11.

8 But cf. Lardinois ([2014] 191 and this volume) who suggests the possibility that Sappho may be addressing her third brother, Erigyius, who was presumably, in the absence of Charaxos, her *kurios*. Lardinois' suggestion is based on the assumption that the person sending the *ego* to supplicate Hera must be male and therefore himself not an appropriate suppliant to Hera

same time, the *ego* is speaking to someone who has the authority to send her on a religious mission into the public sphere and who is equally concerned with the fate of Charaxos and Larichos—so her mother, older sister, or perhaps sister-in-law. Initially, these considerations led me to the conclusion that the speaker was addressing her mother, and I note that Dirk Obbink and M.L. West have come to the same conclusion.⁹

Indeed, the first two preserved stanzas seem to be all about a contrast in ways of speaking, both the style of speaking and the content of what is said.¹⁰ Thus Sappho contrasts the mother's silly chattering with the proper, correct kind of speech to be offered by the *ego*, which should be supplication and prayer (λίσσεσθαι, line 10).¹¹ At the same time, Sappho implicitly corrects the *content* of the mother's chattering, since νᾶϊ σὺν πλήαι in line 6 is pointedly contrasted with σάαν ἄγοντα νᾶα in lines 11–12 within the *ego*'s projected prayer to Hera.

(as Sappho's mother would be). But we cannot know the familial, cultic, or performance exigencies that dictate this 'sending'; for me, the issue of θρύλησθα trumps speculation on the gender of the addressee based on πέμπην. As a parallel for the derogatory tone of θρύλησθα used in address to a brother, Lardinois (this volume) cites the evidence of Hdt. 2.135.6, that Sappho 'heavily criticized' (κατεκερτόμησε) her brother Charaxos 'in song' (ἐν μέλει). But surely Herodotus (and Ovid, *Heroides* 15.68, '*libertas*') comment on Sappho's 'abuse' or '[excessive] freedom' in poems addressed to or concerning Charaxos because these are exceptional, rather than being the norm of the address of a sister to a brother.

Contrast also Stehle's contribution to this volume, pp. 268–269. Stehle contends that the addressee of the poem is Larichos, citing Sappho fr. 96 for a parallel shift from second-person address to third-person naming of Atthis. I find Stehle's argument very difficult, however, since there is nothing in the language of the Brothers Poem to justify or palliate the shift from second-person address to third-person naming. In Sappho 96, this is achieved by explicitly shifting the focalization to the thoughts and longings of the 'other woman' in Lydia; there is nothing comparable to this in the Brothers Poem.

9 Obbink (2014b) 41–42 favors the idea of Sappho's mother or other family member; cf. West (2014) 8, Ferrari (2014) 4. I will therefore henceforth simply refer to the second-person addressee as 'mother', while leaving open the possibility that it might be some other older female relative or in-law; see below, notes 26, 38. In addition, throughout this essay, I will make no reference to the whole Rhodopis/Doricha tradition that begins with Herodotus 2.135 in relation to the Brothers Poem. This is because I am persuaded (at least for now) by the arguments of Lidov (2002) that this tradition is likely to derive from portraits of Sappho on the Athenian comic stage, rather than from her own poetry. In general, I find the attempt to map Herodotus' relationships onto the Brothers Poem something of a red herring; it seems better simply to read the new poem on its own terms for what can be extracted about the family relationships.

10 Thanks to Richard Neer for this point (private conversation).

11 Cf. Obbink (2014b) 35, 37, 42.

The emphasis in the latter passage is thus on Charaxos' safe return, rather than on the abundance of cargo he will bring home.¹² In terms of the structure of the poem, the name of Charaxos frames the first two surviving stanzas with a neat chiasmus: NAME—ship—adj. in lines 5–6, then adj.—ship—NAME in lines 11–12. This chiastic structure (as Mario Telò points out to me) iconically renders Charaxos' wished-for safe return home within the movement of the poem.

Next, in the only significant enjambment within what we have preserved of the poem, we get part of a line opening stanza three that expresses a reciprocal relationship of safety—'that Charaxos arrive here leading his ship safe [STANZA BREAK] And find us safe and sound'. Thereafter, with a strong syntactic break (τὰ δ' ἄλλα) at line 13, we turn to the second movement of the poem, building up to the sudden appearance of Larichos and the wish for his success at the poem's end. These structural features strongly encourage me to think that perhaps only a single stanza has been lost at the beginning. In that case, we would have a perfect balance—three stanzas about Charaxos, three stanzas about Larichos, with the reciprocal relation of 'our' safety at the exact center of the poem, suturing the two halves together.¹³

On this reading of the opening of the fragment, there is a strict maintenance of gendered spheres within the poem, even if, in a sense, the speaker as poet has the power to mediate between male and female spheres; and between domestic, civic, and divine (as we shall see). Thus, Sappho here talks about the doings of men out in the public world—one brother's engagement in maritime trade, the other's (wished-for) full involvement in the world of the polis¹⁴—but all of this is filtered through the intimate domestic sphere of the family and

12 Cf. Nünlist (2014) 13, who likewise notes the contrast between 'full ship' and 'safe ship'. Nünlist also observes that the adjective 'safe' is usually applied to people in Greek; so here, it is a kind of transferred epithet that reinforces the contrast between the two modes of speaking and content of what's said. Mueller (2016) suggests that we might read this contrast meta-poetically—as a generic contrast between an epic/Odyssean voyage (where the goal is to get as much stuff as possible), and a modest 'lyric' voyage.

13 This proposal for the structure of the poem meshes well with Obbink's observation (2014a): 'The remarkable thing is that both texts—damaged as they are—read almost as though they were complete poems today, partly due to the unique qualities of a poet who cannot have foreseen her poetry's survival in fragmentary form'. On this reading, what assists our ability to read the Brothers Fragment as though it were a complete poem is the loss of only a single opening stanza, which included a second-person address.

14 For ἄνθρωπος used of Larichos as a very charged word for full participation in the polis, see Obbink (2014b) 34, 35, 45; cf. West (2014) 9.

women's proper religious activity of prayer.¹⁵ She addresses an older female relative, and wishes for the well-being, safety, and success of her two brothers.

This same maintenance of strictly separated gendered spheres characterizes the correct form of speech and ritual action the *ego* proposes. After contrasting the mother's empty babbling with what 'Zeus and all the gods know' in the first stanza, Sappho prescribes what the mother ought to do in the second: 'send me and bid me pray to Queen Hera many times that Charaxos arrive here leading his ship safe' (lines 9–12). It is notable that the gender segregation continues in the addressee of the prayer—so in contrast to Zeus and all the gods, mentioned for their omniscience in the first stanza, Sappho should supplicate Hera specifically.¹⁶ Like many scholars, I am inclined to connect this proposed supplication of Hera with the shrine at ancient Messon (modern Mesa), which seems to be the setting for both Sappho fr. 17 and Alcaeus fr. 129.¹⁷ Vinciane Pirenne-Delforge and Gabriella Pironti have recently argued that Hera, 'the glorious Aeolian goddess, mother of all' (Alcaeus fr. 129, lines 6–7) was in fact the primary divinity worshipped at Mesa, noting that she alone is addressed in the second person in both Sappho fr. 17 and Alcaeus fr. 129.¹⁸ I agree with this conclusion, and yet there still seems to be a significant pattern of gender differentiation in aetiological narrative, invocation, and prayer. Thus, in fr. 17 (as Claude Calame has noted), in its aetiological narrative for the foundation of a

15 There is also a distinction here between women's direct discussion of politics and their proper mediation in the public sphere through religion; for this pattern of distinct modes of gendered action in the public sphere, see Foley (1982).

16 Several scholars have noted that Hera is invoked here, as in Sappho fr. 17, for protection in a sea voyage: thus Lidov (2004) on Sappho fr. 17, Pirenne-Delforge and Pironti (2014) 28 on both poems, and Boedeker's contribution to this volume; cf. de Polignac (1997) for archaeological evidence for this role of Hera at other sites throughout the Aegean and in Southern Italy.

17 On the identification of the shrine in Sappho fr. 17 and Alcaeus frs. 129, 130a, and 130b with Mesa, see Robert (1960b), Nagy (1993), Nagy (2007b) 213–228, 263, Pirenne-Delforge and Pironti (2014) 27–28. For the connection between that shrine and the prayer to Hera in the Brothers Poem, see Obbink (2014b) 43, (2015b) 7; Lardinois (2014) 192, 194 (suggesting that these two poems may be part of a 'song cycle'); and Bierl (ch. 14), Boedeker, Lardinois, and Nagy in this volume. In support of this identification, Nikolaos Papazarkadas (private conversation) points out that the location of the shrine at Mesa would account for the use of the verb πέμπην in the Brothers Poem line 9, since the *ego* must be sent on a kind of pilgrimage or *theoria* outside the city of Mytilene to reach Hera's precinct. For πέμπην as the *terminus technicus* for sending a *pompe*, see also the contributions of Bierl (ch. 14) and Nagy to this volume. For the location of the shrine, see fig. 8.1, this volume, p. 199.

18 Pirenne-Delforge and Pironti (2014) 27–28.

cult of a triad of divinities—Zeus, Hera, and Dionysus—Sappho foregrounds Hera, whereas Alcaeus fr. 129, focusing on the same triad of divinities, significantly begins with Zeus.¹⁹

At the same time, Pirenne-Delforge and Pironti warn against the too hasty association of 'Queen Hera' and Zeus 'King of Olympus' of the Brothers Poem with the 'Lesbian Triad' of divinities worshipped at Mesa. They propose instead a local, civic representative of the 'glorious Aeolian goddess', perhaps paired with her spouse, and they cite as a striking parallel for the divine couple including a potent Hera a later public inscription from Mytilene.²⁰ And yet, here too, the pattern of strict gender segregation in prayers is rigorously maintained. For we find the same gendered opposition between Sappho's intended prayer in the Brothers Poem and the public inscription cited by Pirenne-Delforge and Pironti. This civic inscription from Mytilene, set up probably in the 330s in the aftermath of war and civil strife, includes a prayer to a string of divinities:²¹

[ἐγ]νω βόλλα καὶ δᾶμος. περὶ τῶν οἱ [-----]
[ε]ἰσάγηνται ὥς κεν οἱ πόλιται οἴκει[εν τὰμ π]-
[ό]λιν ἐν δαμοκρατίαι τὸμ πάντα χρόνον [ἔχον]-
[τ]ες πρὸς ἀλλήλοισ ὥς εὐνοώτατα· τύχαι ἀγ[άθ]-
αι, εὐξασθαι μὲν τὰμ βόλλαν καὶ τὸν δᾶμον τ[ο]-
ῖς Θέοισι τοῖς Δυοκαίδεκα καὶ τῶι Διὶ τῶι Ἡ-
ραίῳ καὶ Βασίλῃ καὶ Ὀμονοίῳ καὶ τᾷ Ὀμο-
νοίᾳ καὶ Δίκαι καὶ Ἐπιτελείαι τῶν Ἀγάθων,

- 19 C. Calame, 'Greek Myth, Poetry and Pragmatics: Between (French) Structuralism and (us) Performative Arts' (lecture delivered at Stanford University, Oct. 13, 2012); cf. Boedeker's contribution to this volume. Note also Obbink (2014b) 43, observing that Zeus is 'rarely named in Sappho' in contrast to Alcaeus. Note that the same argument about gender segregation also applies to prayers for safety at sea in the corpus of Sappho and Alcaeus: thus Sappho invokes the Nereids alone (as we now know; fr. 5, line 1) and Hera (Brothers Poem), whereas Alcaeus prays to the Dioscuri (fr. 34). Perhaps this gender segregation is one reason that Sappho's identification/alignment of her two brothers with the Dioscuri (for which I argue below) can only be implicit?
- 20 Pirenne-Delforge and Pironti (2014) 29: 'Il serait aventureux d'affirmer que les prières à adresser à Héra *Basiléa* pour le retour de Charaxos devaient l'être dans le sanctuaire de Mesa'. Contrast Obbink (2015b) 7–9, who is inclined to use the identification of the shrine with Mesa to advocate for Dionysus being the 'helper *daimon*' of the Brothers Poem line 18—thus ensuring that all three gods of the 'Lesbian Triad' figure in this poem as well.
- 21 For the full text of the inscription, see Rhodes and Osborne (2003) no. 85 (pp. 424–430).

The council and people decided. Concerning the things which the ... have introduced, in order that the citizens might dwell in the city in democracy for all time, as well disposed as possible toward each other: For good fortune, let the council and the people pray to the Twelve Gods and to Zeus *Heraios* and *Basileus* and *Homonoios*, and to *Homonoia* and Justice and the Fulfillment of Good Things,

Note that this inscription recording a public prayer invokes ‘the Twelve Gods’ and then Zeus significantly characterized by three epithets—‘of Hera’, *Basileus*, and *Homonoios*—together with a set of transparent personifications, to ratify and endorse civic ‘concord’ or ‘likemindedness’.²² As Pirenne-Delforge and Pironti note, Hera is crucial here as well,²³ but she is represented only in the form of an adjective built from her name attached to Zeus as the primary object of prayer. Where men in the public sphere invoke ‘Zeus of Hera and *Basileus*’, Sappho’s song shows us women in the domestic sphere praying exclusively to ‘Queen Hera’, while gesturing toward the ‘King of Olympus’ only in the generalizing gnome of the fourth complete stanza.

But within this system of strict gender segregation within the poem, there is a striking crux or tension to which Anja Bettenworth has called our attention. Bettenworth has objected to the assumption that the addressee could be Sappho’s mother on the grounds that θρύλησθα introduces a markedly disrespectful tone to the *ego*’s response to the *su*. Bettenworth notes that all other addresses and references to a mother within the Sapphic corpus are distinctly affectionate and respectful, even where we might expect some tension (e.g. frs. 98a, 102).²⁴ She contends that θρύλησθα could only be addressed to a lower-status figure and therefore suggests that Sappho is instead speaking to a slave member of the household, an aged nurse and confidante akin to Eurycleia in the *Odyssey*. Indeed, Bettenworth offers some excellent parallels for the combination of sharp remonstrance and deep affection in the speech of a mistress/for-

22 Thus I follow the interpretation of these lines offered by Pirenne-Delforge and Pironti (2014) 30 (vs. that of Rhodes and Osborne [2003] 431). Pirenne-Delforge and Pironti assume that the female divinities named are transparent personifications, not objects of actual cult worship. Note also that Rhodes and Osborne (2003) 425 mistakenly translate Βασίλη as ‘Queen’ here.

23 Pirenne-Delforge and Pironti (2014) 30: ‘Un tel processus met certes l’accent sur le théonyme, en l’occurrence, l’époux divin, mais cet agencement subtil signifie aussi que Zeus est souverain et maître de la concorde *en tant qu’époux d’Héra*’ (emphasis in original).

24 Bettenworth (2014) 15–16, followed by Nünlist (2014) 13.

mer charge to a lower-status nurse figure.²⁵ But her argument for a nurse figure as addressee to my mind founders on the language and content of the second stanza: 'but you [should] send me and bid me pray many times to Queen Hera that Charaxos come back here leading his ship safe ...'. As M.L. West has emphasized, only a figure of authority like the mother is in a position to send or dispatch the *ego* on a religious mission outside the home; I find it hard to imagine that a slave nurse could have the power to 'send' the *ego* and 'command' or 'bid' her what to pray.²⁶ Nonetheless, Bettenworth's point about θρύλησθα is important and should not simply be dismissed; there is a real tension between the colloquial, derogatory tone of this verb addressed to the *su* and the implication of authority over the *ego* encoded in the language and content of the second complete stanza.

Rather than trying to explain away this tension within the poem, I would like to acknowledge it by invoking a model of 'behind the scenes'—or even 'space-off'. Kate Gilhuly borrows the latter term from the feminist film critic Teresa de Lauretis to characterize the odd moment early in Plato's *Symposium* when Eryximachus proposes dismissing the flute-girl: 'Let her play for herself, or, if she wants, for the women within, but let us consort with each other today through speeches' (τὴν μὲν ἄρτι εἰσελθοῦσαν ἀνελτρίδα χαίρειν ἔαν, ἀλλοῦσαν ἑαυτῇ ἢ ἄν

25 See especially *Od.* 23.11–82 and Herondas *Mime* 1, cited by Bettenworth (2014) 16–17. In fact, the salient comparandum provided by these passages may instead be the frankness with which women (are imagined to) speak to each other when no men are present; see Mossman (2001) for a reading along these lines of the *agon* of Clytemnestra and Electra in Euripides' *Electra*, and see discussion below in the text. Thanks to Melissa Mueller for discussion of these issues, and for the Mossman reference.

26 Thus West (2014) 8: 'It is the family (the "us" of line 9) that pins its hopes on the merchant son's return from overseas with a rich cargo; it is his chattering mother who is counting her chickens before they are hatched; and it is only she who might "send" Sappho on a religious mission, much as Clytemnestra sends Electra in Aesch. *Cho.* 22 ff. and as Helen sends Hermione in Eur. *Or.* 107 ff.' Bettenworth (2014) 18 attempts to palliate this problem by assimilating the second complete stanza to the nurse's typical role of advising the mistress, but this does not acknowledge that the specific language of the poem suggests someone with authority over the *ego*. As a thought experiment, we might imagine how different the tone would be if this stanza instead began, 'but you [should] bid me go and pray to Queen Hera', etc. As an alternative, Bettenworth's arguments about θρύλησθα being inappropriately disrespectful toward the speaker's mother might encourage us instead to reconstruct the second-person addressee as the speaker's sister-in-law (i.e., Charaxos' wife; see below, note 38). This would then still be an older female with some authority in the household, but one with whom Sappho might imaginably have a somewhat more tense relationship.

- φαιδί]μαν ὥραι τέλε[σαι; τὸ δ' ἐστὶ
 (5) χάρμ' ἐ]παμέρων· ἔμ[ε δ' εὖφρον' εἴη
 τυγχά]νην, θᾶς ἄμ[μι θεοὶ δίδωσι
 φθόγγ]ον ἄκουσαι

πακτίδ]ων.

... call upon us ... completely. Mother, do you not have the means with which I might celebrate a fine festival at the due time? That is a joy for [us] mortals who live for the day. As for me, may I ever be cheerful, so long as the gods grant us to hear the sound of harps.²⁹

If we accept West's reconstruction, the opening of this poem shares three themes or elements with the Brothers Poem. First, in what I would describe as a similar 'behind-the-scenes' vignette of the preparations for a festival, we have a moment of initial tension between mother and daughter, as the *ego* addresses a somewhat impatient question to her mother.³⁰ Second, that 'behind-the-scenes' tussle of mother and daughter is juxtaposed in context with proper religious activity in the public sphere—here in fr. 9, the song and dance that are essential elements of the festival; in the Brothers Poem, the *ego*'s projected supplication and prayer to Hera. Third, in both poems the segue between these two spheres is accompanied by or finessed through a generalizing gnome or universalizing statement of truth. In fr. 9 this transition is accomplished by

29 Text and translation from West (2014) 7–8. As West observes, lines 8–21 are too fragmentary for reconstruction, though note δ' ἔγω in line 16 and perhaps μελλ[ίχων γλῶσσα]ν in line 17 (suggested by West [2014] 8). The text of West (2014) which I follow diverges from that of Obbink (this volume) at two points: (1) West reads ἄμ[rather than ἔμ[in line 6 (this is the reading of the 2nd-c. CE P. Oxy. 2289 rather than that of the 3rd-c. CE P. GC); (2) West proposes πακτίδ]ων as a supplement at line 8, but Obbink notes ']ω cannot be read'. (This means that this is not the correct supplement, and that there is less textual evidence to support it than West supposes.)

30 Thus West (2014) 7: 'We have the impression that Sappho, whose love of festivals is attested in other poems ... is remonstrating with her mother Kleïs (as probably in fr. 9a below). The issue is some lack or shortage in connection with a due celebration for which certain persons have issued a call or invitation. Perhaps Kleïs has said she cannot afford an expense that Sappho regards as appropriate. The motif is paralleled in fr. 98, where Sappho herself is the mother, telling her daughter that she cannot buy her a fashionable Lydian μιτράνα'. We might regard this kind of behind-the-scenes moment of preparation for a festival as itself a literary topos particular to partheneia and other women's genres, given Alcman fr. 3.5–10 and Eur. *El.* 167–212.

the simple statement [τὸ δ' ἐστὶ/ χάρις ἐ]παμέρων ('which is a pleasure for [us] creatures of a day'); in the Brothers Poem by the nautical-themed conclusion of the third stanza, 'For periods of fine weather come straightway from great stormblasts' (lines 15–16).

These parallels in turn allow us to see a further commonality. In fr. 9, the shift from the separate, estranged *ego* and *su* (represented by the verbs οὐκ ἔχη[σθα vs. [δυναίμην] and ἔμ[ε of line 5) to a unified, harmonious 'we' (ἄμ[μ, line 6) is effected through imagined religious activity—mother and daughter together enjoying the festival 'sound [of harps]' for as long as the gods grant them this pleasure. We find the same movement in the Brothers Poem. Here the strongly marked opposition between *su* and *ego* in the first two preserved stanzas (θρύλλησθα vs. οἶμαι and ἔμε in line 9) is transformed via the proper activity and content of prayer—in which the *ego* basically teaches the *su* behind the scenes what to tell her to say—into the unity of 'us' (ἄμμ, line 13) as the first word of the third complete stanza. Thus, just as in West's reconstruction of the opening lines of fr. 9, the action of prayer—of imagined or projected proper religious speech in the public sphere—works to reconcile and unite mother and daughter.

But in the much better preserved Brothers Poem, we can track this movement further. Here, as a result of the proper form of prayer the *ego* has taught the *su* to teach her, the two continue united in the first-person plural hortatory subjunctive ἐπιτρόπωμεν of line 14 and in the following generalizing gnome that rounds out this stanza. Given the progression of the Brothers Poem so far, we might be tempted to wonder where exactly the quoted prayer ends. Thus far I have assumed (as I think most scholars do) that the instructed prayer is completed with the enjambed words ἄμμ' ἐπεύρην ἀρτέμεας in line 13. And yet, the words of the prayer the *ego* teaches the *su* to teach her could imaginably extend to the end of the poem, moving through the resigned hortatory subjunctive of line 14 and the gnomic wisdom of lines 15–20 to return to 'us' and a final wish for our release from 'great heavinesses of spirit' in the poem's last stanza.³¹

On this reading, the poem's language morphs imperceptibly from behind-the-scenes verbal tussling to public performative utterance, which is effica-

31 For parallels for the shift from accusative + infinitive to direct discourse within quoted utterance, see Sappho's Tithonus Poem, lines 9–12—at least on one construal of this passage. For this interpretation (which reads the final lines of the poem as entirely dependent on ἔφαιτο in line 9), see Edmunds (2009). Alternatively, the translation offered in Obbink (2009) 15 assumes a break between ἔφαιτο + acc. and infinitive and the final ἀλλ' αὐτὸν ὕμῳ clause that follows. Note an analogous shift in Sappho fr. 1 from repeated ὅττι clauses as object of Aphrodite's verb of questioning to direct questions and direct speech starting at line 18.

cious in at least a couple of different senses. As prayer, the poem deftly reaches out through Hera to Zeus as 'King of Olympus', without ever invoking the high god directly. At another level, the language of the poem as imagined prayer itself accomplishes the reconciliation of *ego* and *su* as 'we' it appears merely innocently to represent. And here it is noteworthy that the poem's last stanza is entirely framed by first-person plurals, *καῶμμες* (line 21) and *λύθειμεν* (line 24), as *ego* and *su* are fully united in family solidarity and hope for Larichos' saving intervention. In other terms, if we read the quoted prayer as extending through the whole poem, we must imagine its words doubled and voiced simultaneously by *ego* and *su*, the two voices fusing as a kind of chorus, even as the language of prayer shimmers between and imperceptibly merges private and public spheres.³²

Mythic Models

At this point let me return to the enjambed line at the center of the poem—*καῶμμ' ἐπεύρην ἀρτέμεας* (line 13)—to consider Sappho's evocation of mythic models for her own family drama. As many scholars have noted, the wish for Charaxos' safe return from a sea voyage in the first two preserved stanzas inevitably conjures up general associations with the *Odyssey*.³³ But it is this phrase in line 13 that pinpoints a specific Odyssean intertext. To begin with, *ἀρτεμής* ('safe and sound') is a very rare word, occurring before Sappho just three times in Homer—in a line repeated twice in the *Iliad* and at a significant moment in the *Odyssey* (*Od.* 13.38–46).³⁴ Here at the beginning of *Odyssey*

32 In relation to *ego* and *su* fused as a kind of harmonious chorus at the end, I note Melissa Mueller's suggestion (*per litteras*) that the βαρυθύμιαι of the last stanza (like the βάρυς...ὁ θυμός of Sappho's Tithonus Poem, line 5) signifies the heaviness of limbs that prevents full participation in choral dance. For this specific significance of θυμός, see Lidov (2009) 95–96; for more on the 'virtual chorality' of the Tithonus Poem, see Bierl (2016). Thus in our song, if Larichos 'raise his head and become a man', mother and daughter both might return to the proper activities of choral dance and festival celebration.

33 Thus Obbink (2014a); cf. Nünlist (2014), West (2014) 9, Whitmarsh [Online], as well as Boedeker and Stehle in this volume.

34 See *Il.* 5.515 = 7.308. As Mario Telò points out to me (*per litteras*), *Il.* 5.515 may also furnish a significant intertext: 'since in this passage it's a specific god, Ares, who, complying with Apollo's request, makes Aeneas safe (*ἀρτεμής*). Ares saves Aeneas, but also instills μένος in him, and the Trojans are happy to see him both safe (*ζῶν τε καὶ ἀρτεμέα*) and μένος ἐσθλὸν ἔχοντα (514–516). This reminds me of the end of Sappho's poem, where Larichos' becoming a "man" (*ἄνθρωπος*) is seen as a source of relief and joy ... for Sappho and the family'. See also

Book 13, Odysseus addresses his last words to his Phaeacian host, Alcinous, before finally boarding the magical ship that will provide him safe passage home:

Ἀλκίνοε κρείον, πάντων ἀριδείκετε λαῶν,
 πέμπετε με σπείσαντες ἀπήμονα, χαίρετε δ' αὐτοί·
 ἤδη γὰρ τετέλεσται ἅ μοι φίλος ἤθελε θυμός,
 πομπή καὶ φίλα δῶρα, τά μοι θεοὶ Οὐρανίωνες
 42 ὀλβία ποιήσειαν. ἀμύμονα δ' οἴκοι ἄκοιτιν
 νοστήσας εὖροιμι σὺν ἀρτεμέεσσι φίλοισιν.
 ὑμεῖς δ' αὖθι μένοντες εὐφραίνοιτε γυναῖκας
 κουριδίας καὶ τέκνα· θεοὶ δ' ἀρετὴν ὀπάσειαν
 παντοίην, καὶ μή τι κακὸν μεταδῆμιον εἴη.

Lord Alcinous, pre-eminent among all people, having poured libation send me on my way without grief, and you yourselves fare well. For already all my dear heart wished for has been fulfilled for me—escort and welcome gifts—which may the Ouranian gods cause to prosper for me. And having returned home, may I find a blameless wife together with my near-and-dear ones safe and sound. But you in turn, remaining behind, may you cheer your wedded wives and children; and may the gods bestow every sort of success on you, and may there be no evil among the people.

In the context of Odysseus' wish for a successful *nostos* (νοστήσας, *Od.* 13.43), we find the collocation of a form of the verb εὕρισκω with the rare adjective ἀρτέμεας to characterize the condition in which he hopes to find his φίλοι at home.³⁵ This connection, in turn, invites us to notice a whole sequence of suggestive echoes of this passage in Sappho's Brothers Poem. There is of course the theme of *nostos*, but also of πομπή—in Sappho's song, significantly transferred from the man en route to the action of the women at home (πέμπην,

Stehle's contribution to this volume for extended discussion of the meaning of ἀρτεμής with a focus on these *Iliad* passages, and Boedeker's contribution to this volume.

- 35 Nünlist (2014) 13–14 also notes this likely intertextual echo of *Odyssey* 13 in line 13 of Sappho's poem, pointing to the shared themes of *nostos*, finding, and 'those at home safe and sound'; cf. Ferrari (2014) 3. Nünlist, however, does not pursue the further implications of this Odyssean intertext for a reading of the Brothers Poem, but see the perceptive comments of Prauscello *apud* Ferrari (2014) 3 n. 6.

line 9).³⁶ In addition, there is Odysseus' acknowledgment that ultimately the gods alone can confer *olbos* and success (*Od.* 13.41–42, 45–46; cf. Brothers Poem lines 10–11, 17–20), and his wishes for the reciprocal happiness and safety of those left at home. To be sure, in the Odyssean case, the families at home are doubled, since Odysseus is at this point in transit, suspended between his own family ideally 'safe and sound' on Ithaca and his wish for the future happiness and blessing of Alcinous and his women and children left behind in Phaeacia. We might say that Sappho's poem gathers in and appropriates all Odysseus' good wishes for the family Charaxos has left behind in Mytilene. Finally, it is suggestive that Odysseus completes the list of blessings he wishes for Alcinous and Co. by expanding to the civic level: 'And may there be no evil among the people' (καὶ μὴ τι κακὸν μεταδῆμιον εἴη, *Od.* 13.46). For Dirk Obbink has detected precisely the same shift in Sappho's closing prayer that Larichos 'at some point indeed become a man' (καὶ δὴ ποτ' ἄνηρ γένηται, line 22). That is, Obbink interprets this as a wish for Larichos' full engagement and participation in civic affairs, rather than merely a prayer that he survive to adulthood.³⁷ Thus this phrase at the center of our poem invites us to hear a whole set of Odyssean echoes, as well as subtle variations on Odyssean themes. As such, it fully justifies the scholarly impulse to read the newest Sappho in the framework of the *Odyssey* myth, casting Charaxos as a kind of Odysseus figure and the younger brother Larichos as 'a potential Telemachos'.³⁸

36 Cf. Mueller (2016), who emphasizes the ways in which Sappho's song 're-centers' the *Odyssey* narrative by focusing on the efficacious activity of the women at home.

37 Thus Obbink (2014b) 34, 35, 45; cf. West (2014) 9. For a similar interpretation, with a more iambic inflection, see Martin in this volume.

38 Quotation from Obbink (2014a). Cf. West (2014) 9: 'Her younger brother Larichos, who might be expected to take some initiative, remains inert and submissive, rather like Telemachos at the start of the *Odyssey* before Athena activates him. He has yet to assert himself and "become a man"'. Indeed, Obbink (2014a) goes further, suggesting that Sappho herself fills the Penelope role. In contrast to this equation, the particulars of Odysseus' wish here, with its pointed separation of a wife hopefully 'blameless' and φίλοι 'safe and sound', might encourage us to think that the addressee of the Brothers Poem is Sappho's sister-in-law—that is, her older brother Charaxos' wife. If the addressee were the sister-in-law, that might account better for the derogatory tone of θρώλησθα in the first stanza; on this model, the goal of the development I tracked in the first part of the paper might then be the merging or collapse of these two distinct categories, wife and φίλοι, into a single harmonious 'we'. On the other hand, the emphasis on Larichos and his saving role for the family still inclines me to think that the addressee is a family member equally invested in both brothers—so again, more likely Sappho's mother than her sister-in-law.

But this very obvious epic connection has tended to obscure another mythic model the Brothers Poem seems to me to evoke—and this starts from the imagery of lines 15–16, ‘For periods of fine weather (εὐδαίαι) come straightway from great storm blasts’. The imagery of the passing of a storm at sea, significantly applied in this stanza to ‘us’, reinforces the reciprocal relationship of wished-for safety between Charaxos and those at home I have already suggested.³⁹ But simultaneously this imagery sets up for a movement in the last three stanzas that implicitly equates or aligns Sappho’s two brothers with the Dioscuri, *daimones* who save beleaguered ships at sea. To demonstrate the kind of language that tends to be used to describe the saving intervention of the Dioscuri for storm-tossed sailors (both real and metaphorical), I will consider several parallel passages (full Greek texts provided in the Appendix to this chapter): (1) Alcaeus fr. 34, a prayer to the Dioscuri; (2) the longer of the two Homeric Hymns to the Dioscuri (no. 33); (3) two characteristically densely metaphorical passages that frame Pindar’s fifth *Pythian* Ode; and (4) a later adaptation of these same motifs in Theocritus’ Hellenistic hymn to the Dioscuri (*Idyll* 22, lines 14–22). To clarify: I am not claiming specific intertextual links with any of these poems, but rather using the ensemble to build up a set of characteristic themes or motifs associated with the saving action of the Dioscuri at sea.⁴⁰

I will first lay out the parallels, and then consider the application of this mythic model (which may seem *prima facie* implausible) to Sappho’s disparate or asymmetrical brothers. Let me begin with the closest parallel, Pindar’s *Pythian* 5, lines 5–10:

- 5 ὦ θεόμορ' Ἀρκεσίλα,
 σὺ τοί νιν κλυτὰς
 αἰῶνος ἀκρὰν βαθμίδων ἄπο
 σὺν εὐδοξίᾳ μετανίσσει
 ἔκατι χρυσαρμάτου Κάστορος·
 10 εὐδῖαν δς μετὰ χειμέριον ὄμβρον τεάν
 καταιθύσσει μάκαιραν ἑστίαν.

O Arcesilas, favored by heaven, you, to be sure, have been pursuing [wealth] from the earliest steps of your glorious life, together with good

39 Noted also by Nünlist (2014) 14.

40 Thus the dating of Homeric Hymn no. 33 is not an issue for my argument. For discussion of its date relative to Alcaeus fr. 34, see Page (1955) 267–268, contesting the early (pre-sixth c.) date proposed by Allen, Halliday, and Sikes (1936) 436.

repute, thanks to Castor of the golden chariot, who sheds good weather after wintry rain down upon your blessed hearth.

Here, it is Castor who 'sheds εὐδίαν (fine weather) after wintry rain down upon the blessed hearth' of the victor, Arcesilas, King of Cyrene.⁴¹ In this context, Pindar is playing on or conflating multiple different associations of Castor, as the divinity who presides over horse and chariot racing (the event in which Arcesilas won his Pythian victory), but who also, together with his brother, offers salvation from storm at sea.⁴² Pindar returns to this latter association at the end of the poem, weaving a complex metaphor within his prayer for the ongoing success and political stability of Arcesilas' reign:

θεός τέ οἱ

117 τὸ νῦν τε πρόφρων τελεῖ δύνασιν,
καὶ τὸ λοιπὸν ὁμοῖα, Κρονίδαι μάκαρες,
διδοῖτ' ἐπ' ἔργοισιν ἀμφί τε βουλαῖς
ἔχειν, μὴ φθινοπωρίς ἀνέμων
χειμερία κατὰ πνοά δαμαλίζοι χρόνον.

122 Διὸς τοι νόος μέγας κυβερνᾷ
δαίμον' ἀνδρῶν φίλων.

And the god, kindly disposed now, brings his [sc. Arcesilas'] power to fulfillment, and in future, blessed sons of Cronus, may you grant him to have like success upon his works and about his counsels, so that no fruit-destroying stormy blast of winds make havoc of his lifetime. To be sure the great mind of Zeus steers the personal fortune of men who are dear to him.

41 The metaphorical use of εὐδία is not that common overall, though it is clearly a favorite image of Pindar's; see Pind. *Ol.* 1.98, *Pyth.* 5.10, *Isthm.* 7.38, frs. 52b.52, 109.1; Aesch. *Sept.* 795; Soph. *Ichneutai* 346; Xen. *An.* 5.8.20; Herondas *Mime* 1.28. Cf. Obbink (2014b) 43, and especially Stehle's contribution to this volume for extended discussion of the metaphorical meanings of εὐδία in Pindar.

42 At *Isthmian* 7.38, Poseidon figures in a similar conflation of functions—he is both giver of victory and bringer of calm after metaphorical storm—again through the imagery of εὐδία. Much of the difference between my interpretation of Sappho's song and that of Stehle's contribution to this volume might be characterized by saying that she regards *Isthmian* 7 (with its use of εὐδία) as the crucial comparandum for Sappho's Brothers Poem, whereas I consider it to be the Castor/εὐδία nexus of *Pythian* 5.

Here the storm from which Castor has saved Arcesilas at the beginning of the ode clearly emerges as the threat of political turbulence, to be fended off by Zeus and his 'blessed' sons, the Dioscuri. (That is to say, I suggest that Pindar's invocation of the Κρονίδαι μάκαρες at line 118 includes not just Zeus, but also his sons, the Dioscuri.)⁴³ And I emphasize the political implications of this passage because many scholars likewise read Alcaeus' prayer to the Dioscuri (fr. 34) as a political allegory for the foundering 'ship of state'.⁴⁴ I would suggest that these same civic, political associations are also relevant for Sappho's artful evocations of the Dioscuri in her Brothers Poem.

But let me return to the Brothers Poem itself, to track its progressive evocation of the saving Dioscuri for Sappho's mortal brothers—and here, we need to be attentive to the precise syntax and connections of thought in the poem. First, there is a striking asyndeton in line 17, at the beginning of the fourth complete stanza. I take this to be explanatory or causal, linking the thought here to the imagery of calm from storm that immediately precedes.⁴⁵ So:

Periods of fine weather straightway come from great blasts of wind. *Since* of whomever the king of Olympus wishes a *daimon* as helper now to turn [them] round from toils, those men become happy and richly blessed.

The notion of a *daimon* sent by Zeus to be a 'helper' for men, who changes the weather from storm to calm, almost inevitably, I think, conjures up the Dioscuri. And this association helps explain the rare and striking word Sappho uses in this context—ἐπάρων, 'a helper'.⁴⁶ This unusual word occurs only once in all of Homer, used by the shade of Achilles in the *Nekuia* of *Odyssey*

43 Note also κυβερναί, which continues the maritime imagery and connects it with Zeus' particular favor to 'men who are dear' (ἀνδρῶν φίλων) in the final lines of the ode.

44 For the 'ship of state' in general in Alcaeus, see Page (1955) 179–197; for the extension of this allegorical interpretation to Alcaeus fr. 34, see Campbell (1982b) 289, Burnett (1983) 129, Robbins (2013) 248–249.

45 Cf. Obbink (2014b) 44, who notes the asyndeton, observing that such asyndeton is 'uncommon' in Sappho. For 'explanatory asyndeton', see Kühner and Gerth (1904) II.2 344–345. In contrast, such explanatory asyndeton is not infrequent in Pindar's 'austere style': see (for example) *Pyth.* 3.110–112, *Pyth.* 6.29, *Nem.* 3.44–46, *Nem.* 7.48–50. On asyndeton between propositions in Pindar, see Hummel (1993) 368–376; for explanatory asyndeton in particular, *ibid.* 372. Hummel also notes that asyndeton frequently occurs at the beginning of a triad or a strophe (375).

46 This is the correction by a second hand on the papyrus of ἐπαρήγων, although the η is not crossed out; see Obbink (2014b) 44.

Book 11 to bemoan the fact that his father Peleus lives bereft, without a 'helper' such as he himself was when alive (*Od.* 11.494–500; ἐπαρωγός at 11.498). Thus in its single Homeric occurrence, the 'helper' is son to the father. ἐκ πόνων in line 14 of the Brothers Poem also resonates strongly with language associated with the Dioscuri; thus note πόνου (line 16) and πόνοιο (line 17) in the Homeric Hymn to the Dioscuri (no. 33).⁴⁷

Then the fifth complete stanza begins with a strong connective: καὶ ἄμμες— that is, καὶ ἄμμες. This καὶ links the general proposition of the previous stanza to 'our' specific situation, so we might slightly over-translate, 'just so for us'.⁴⁸ In this last strophe of the poem, as the poet develops the parallel between general and specific, it emerges that it is Larichos himself who will be the savior, who by 'raising his head' will release 'us' from 'many βαρυθυμία' that are like a storm at sea. The parallelism between the many 'heavinesses of spirit' from which we 'would be released' and the calm after storm of lines 15–16 is underscored by their occupying the same position in the third and fifth complete stanzas, a resposion made even more conspicuous by the repetition of αἶψα ('straightway') in exactly the same metrical *sedes* in each stanza.

Finally, it is worth noting that the last stanza is all about vertical movement, up vs. down. If Larichos should raise his head, we would be released from the heavinesses of spirit that drag us down.⁴⁹ Intriguingly, this same emphasis on up vs. down motion characterizes the saving epiphanies of the Dioscuri in both Homeric Hymn 33 and in Alcaeus fr. 34. Thus in the former, lines 10–13 register that even the highest point of the stern—the poop deck—is ominously 'under water' (ὑποβρυχίην, line 12), before the sudden appearance of the saving gods 'rushing through the upper air on swift wings' (line 13). In like manner, Alcaeus' hymn describes the Dioscuri 'leaping upon the heights of ships' (θρόσσκοντ[ες ἐπ'] ἄκρα νάων, line 9), and 'running up the forestays' (πρό[τον] ὄν]τρ[έχον]τες, line 10). We might also note the emphasis in both descriptions on the speed and

47 There may be a textual corruption in πόνου in line 16 of the Homeric Hymn, but πόνοιο in the next line is secure; see Allen, Halliday, and Sikes (1936) 442. Cf. Obbink (2014b) 44 on ἐκ πόνων: 'i.e. such as Charaxos might experience at sea', and also Mueller (2016) on the poetics of ἐκ and ὑπέκ here.

48 Cf. West (2014) 9: 'In the closing stanza the general adage is applied to the present circumstances. "So we too, if Larichos will hold his head up and finally behave like a man, might soon find release from our hearts' heavinesses, however many"' (emphasis added).

49 Thanks to Richard Neer for this point. For the same imagery of 'raising the head' in a context of storm at sea, see Soph. *OT* 22–24 (cited as a comparandum by M.L. West *apud* Obbink [2014b] 45).

suddenness of the Dioscuri's saving interventions. Thus (just to focus on the Homeric Hymn) ἐξαπίνης (line 12), ἀΐξαντες (line 13), αὐτίκα (line 14), as well as the 'swift horses' the Dioscuri ride in the hymn's final *envoi* (line 18). We find this same emphasis on sudden transformation together with up-and-down motion in the repeated αἶψα of the Brothers Poem.

We might note how artfully the implicit pattern of Sappho's two brothers as the saving Dioscuri emerges as the poem progresses, starting to form first with the nautical adage of lines 15–16 and crystallizing only with the very last stanza in what is a veritable epiphany of Larichos raising his head and becoming a man.⁵⁰ Implicitly Sappho conjures up a vision or after-image of two different or asymmetrical brothers whose mutual χάρις and cooperation will make both immortal.⁵¹

- 50 In relation to this veritable epiphany of Larichos at the end of the poem, cf. Morgan this volume, who suggests significant echoes of the Brothers Poem in the second half of Horace *Odes* 3.29. Note especially the last two strophes of Horace's ode, which introduce the imagery of storm at sea and end with the sudden epiphany of 'twin Pollux' saving the *ego* amidst 'Aegean storms':

*non est meum, si mugiat Africis
malus procellis, ad miseras preces
decurrere et votis pacisci,
ne Cypriae Tyriaeque merces*

*addant avaro divitias mari:
tunc me biremis praesidio scaphae
tutum per Aegaeos tumultus
aura feret geminusque Pollux.*

If Morgan is correct in seeing echoes of our song in Horace *Odes* 3.29, the ending of the latter suggests that Horace might have recognized an evocation of the Dioscuri as saviors from storm at sea in the last two strophes of Sappho's song.

- 51 For χάρις and shared immortality as powerful motifs of the Dioscuri legend, cf. Pindar *Nem.* 10. And on the weird collapse of mortal and immortal brothers in our poem, cf. Obbink (2014b) 44, who notes that the words μάκαρ and πολύολβος in Sappho most commonly refer to divinities (for πολύολβος, see Sappho fr. 133.2). So here he notes of lines 15–16: 'In the present case a collapse of the distinctions [between human and divine] is anticipated'. See also Robbins (2011) 240–242, 250 on the Dioscuri as generally close to men and on Pindar's *Olympian* 3 as another poem where we find a doubling of the divine brothers with the human brothers Theron and Xenocrates as hosts of the Dioscuri at a Theoxeny in Acragas.

If this argument about the evocation or implicit identification of Sappho's brothers with the saving Dioscuri is accepted, it has several significant implications for our reading. First, such a subliminal identification would help explain and justify the somewhat awkward syntax and confusing imagery of the song's fourth complete stanza. M.L. West goes so far as to emend the papyrus' *ἐπαρήγον*' / *ἐπάρωγον* (line 18) to *ἐπ' ἄρην*, defending his editorial choice thus:

In 14 [18] the papyrus has *ἐπαρήγον*, with an omega written above the eta: 'helper', whether *ἐπαρήγονα* or *ἐπάρωγον*. But all attempts to translate the clause with this reading have inevitably been tortured and strained. As Obbink makes it, 'Of whomsoever the King of Olympus wishes a divinity as helper now to turn them from troubles', and he glosses *κῆνοι* as 'those mortals assigned a special guardian divinity by Zeus'. My emendation to *ἐπ' ἄρην* simplifies the theology and produces a more natural sentence. *τῶν* then depends on *δαίμονα*, which is used in the sense of 'their fortune'. This, not they, is what is 'turned around', and it is Zeus himself who does it, he does not delegate it to a lesser deity. 'Those whose fortune the ruler of Olympus chooses to turn around from hardship for the better, they come out blessed and prosperous'.⁵²

Other scholars likewise have objected to these lines' tortured syntax and a theology that strikes some as weirdly Neo-Platonic, with its hierarchy of different levels of gods and *daimones*.⁵³ *ἐπ' ἄρην* undeniably simplifies the syntax, but does so at the cost of eliding the vivid and consistent imagery of the second half of the poem, which progressively conjures for 'us' at home the threat of storm at sea to be allayed by a 'helper *daimon*' sent by Zeus. Likewise, *ἐπ' ἄρην* 'simplifies the theology', as West notes, but not necessarily correctly. For in fact, there is nothing strange or 'Neo-Platonic' about the hierarchy of divinities here evoked; that they are 'sent by Zeus', and subject to the will of Zeus and the greater gods is another traditional element of the Dioscuri myth. Thus in addition to their close identification with Zeus in Homeric Hymns 17 and 33, and at the end of Pindar's fifth *Pythian* ode (cited above, p. 253), we might consider the epiphany

52 West (2014) 9, followed closely by Ferrari (2014) 2–3. See Obbink (2015b) 6 for other arguments against West's emendation, the most significant of which is an echo of the Brothers Poem in Theocritus *Idyll* 17, lines 123–132, detected originally by Albert Henrichs (*apud* Obbink).

53 Benjamin Acosta-Hughes (*per litteras*); Lardinois (2014) 190 alternatively suggests a parallel with the *daimones* who are 'watchers from Zeus' in Hesiod *Op.* 122–126.

of the Dioscuri that closes Euripides' *Helen*.⁵⁴ In Euripides' play, the chorus of Greek slave women call upon the Dioscuri to come as 'saviors of Helen' at the end of their last choral ode (*Hel.* 1495–1505):

- 1495 μόλοιτέ ποθ' ἵππιον οἶμον
 δι' αἰθέρος ἰέμενοι
 παῖδες Τυνδαρίδαι,
 λαμπρῶν ἀστέρων ὑπ' ἄέλ-
 λαις οἱ ναίετ' οὐράνιοι,
 1500 σωτῆρε τᾶς Ἑλένας,
 γλαυκὸν ἐπ' οἶδμ' ἄλιον
 κυανόχροά τε κυμάτων
 ῥόθια πολιά θαλάσσας,
 ναύταις εὐαεῖς ἀνέμων
 1505 πέμποντες Διόθεν πνοάς,

May you come at some time along your horsey path, rushing through the upper air, sons, Tyndaridai, you who inhabit the heavens under the whirling motions of the bright stars, saviors of Helen, over the grey salt swell and the dark-blue and white breakers of the waves of the sea, sending for sailors favorable blasts of winds from Zeus,

This miniature inset hymn to the Dioscuri includes several *topoi* we have already noted—it registers the brothers' speed, the calming of storm at sea, and (thereby) their saving of beleaguered sailors. What Euripides' hymn crucially adds is that it is *Zeus* who works through his sons; this is the force of the climactic Διόθεν in line 1505.

Then, when the Dioscuri finally appear as *dei ex machina* (as if in response to the chorus' summons), Castor(?) pauses to explain the lateness of their intervention (*Hel.* 1658–1661):

πάλαι δ' ἀδελφὴν κἄν πρὶν ἐξεσώσαμεν,
 ἐπεὶ περ ἡμᾶς Ζεὺς ἐποίησεν θεούς·
 ἀλλ' ἤσσαν ἡμεν τοῦ πεπρωμένου θ' ἅμα
 καὶ τῶν θεῶν, οἷς ταῦτ' ἔδοξεν ᾧδ' ἔχειν.

54 Thanks to Mario Telò for calling my attention to the Dioscuri at the end of Euripides' *Helen*.

And long before now we would have saved our sister, since Zeus made us gods. But we were weaker than fate and the gods, who wanted these things this way.

As William Allan notes, it is not uncommon for a Euripidean *deus ex machina* to offer some excuse for his/her non-intervention, but here Euripides seems to be exploiting—and therefore unpacking—a traditional element of Dioscuri theology to do so.⁵⁵

But it might be objected that the Dioscuri model does not in fact fit Sappho's two brothers, since only Larichos is represented as a savior within the song, whereas Charaxos, suspended in the limbo of a sea voyage, is himself potentially in need of saving intervention. And of course it is noteworthy that the 'helper *daimon*' sent by Zeus in line 18 of the Brothers Poem is singular. But here I get back to the Dioscuri as disparate or asymmetrical brothers. By that I mean to reference first and foremost the fact that Castor and Polydeuces have different fathers and therefore (at least originally) different fates—one originally a son of Zeus and immortal; the other a son of Tyndareus and mortal. In fact, Pindar's *Nemean* 10 shows us Polydeuces (the immortal one) as savior first and foremost of his own mortal brother Castor, in a narrative that includes many of the elements of what I have identified as 'Dioscuri theology'. Thus Polydeuces comes at great speed (ταχέως, *Nem.* 10.73) to his mortally wounded brother and saves him through the special dispensation of 'father' Zeus (*Nem.* 10.73–90). We might even see an extreme version of the Dioscuri's characteristic up-and-down motion in Pindar's repeated references, framing the mythic narrative of *Nemean* 10, to their shared split immortality, since for Pindar this is all about the regular alternation of locations—'underneath the earth' and 'in the golden

55 For excuses for non-intervention offered by Euripidean *dei ex machina*, see Allan (2008) 341, citing parallels. The language of Euripides' *Hec.* 159–164 also supports the argument for keeping the papyrus' ἐπάρων, in place of West's emendation ἐπ' ἄρην (as Mario Telò points out to me). For here, precisely in the context of bemoaning the fact that she has lost all her family ('husband' and 'children', lines 159–161), Hecuba cries out in despair, ποῖ δὴ σωθῶ; ποῦ τις θεῶν ἢ δαίμων ἐπαρωγός; Obbink (2014b) 44 suggests that this might be a deliberate echo of the Brothers Poem, but even if we assume that τις θεῶν ἢ δαίμων ἐπαρωγός represents merely a conventional topos, the use of the phrase δαίμων ἐπαρωγός by a mother in the context of a threat to or loss of her children is very suggestive. Note that earlier in the play, Hecuba had referred to Polydorus, whom she believes to be her sole surviving son, as 'the only anchor of my house' (lines 79–80), and that when they bring the news of the planned sacrifice of Polyxena, the chorus of Trojan slave women urge Hecuba, 'but go to the temples, go to the altars' (line 144) to pray for her salvation.

halls of heaven' (*Nem.* 10.84–88; cf. 55–58). And lest we regard all these elements as Pindar's invention, Proclus' summary of the *Cypria* shows that this story was traditional.⁵⁶ If we apply this primal scene of salvation to Sappho's Brothers Poem, it suggests that one brother (Larichos) can choose to act in such a way as to make both brothers μάκαρες and πολύολβοι. As for the reference to a singular *daimon* in the Brothers Poem line 18, it is a striking feature of the Dioscuri in Pindar's rendering that they are an inseparable pair, and yet one can stand in for both (as Castor does in *Pythian* 5).⁵⁷

Other implications of the Dioscuri paradigm must remain more speculative, since we lack the broader context of what André Lardinois suggests might be a whole 'song cycle' on Sappho's brothers and family life.⁵⁸ Here I would simply note that the Dioscuri model is a flexible one that could accommodate different constructions of Charaxos and Larichos and the speaker's relation to them. Thus, if we follow Dirk Obbink's suggested reading that Charaxos is characterized negatively as a commercial trader in contrast to the positive valuation of Larichos as (potentially) a fully-engaged political actor,⁵⁹ this opposition could be mapped onto the original asymmetry of the Dioscuri which I have already noted. Alternatively, if we follow Richard Martin's suggestion that we should read the newest Sappho as an example of her 'iambic' mode, deftly skewering both brothers within the ostensible frame of a wish for *nostos* and prayer, we might say that the hovering after-image of the Dioscuri sharpens the blame for both under-achieving human brothers by contrast.⁶⁰

Finally—and most speculatively—if the poem hints at an identification of Charaxos and Larichos with the Dioscuri, it thereby also aligns the *ego* with their sister Helen.⁶¹ This implicit identification could also play out in different

56 For the *Cypria* version, see Proclus *Chrest.* 80 Severyns (= p. 40 Bernabé). Note that even in this brief summary, we have all the same elements of a cattle raid by Castor and Polydeuces; Idas killing Castor; Polydeuces killing Idas and Lynceus; and finally, Zeus' dispensation of 'every-other-day immortality' for the two brothers (καὶ Ζεὺς αὐτοῖς ἑτερήμερον νέμει τὴν ἀθανασίαν).

57 Cf. again the last line of Horace *Odes* 3.29, *aura ... geminusque Pollux*, where, as Nisbet and Rudd (2004) 364 note, Horace's 'brachylogy' implies Castor as well as Pollux without naming him.

58 Lardinois (2014) 192, 194 and in the present volume.

59 Thus Obbink in his talk at Berkeley in September 2014.

60 See Martin's contribution to this volume; for Sappho's iambic mode, see also Rosenmeyer (2006).

61 Scholars have detected an alignment or identification of the poetic *ego* with Helen in other Sapphic compositions—most obviously Sappho fr. 16. For this alignment, see duBois (1984), Winkler (1990b) 176–178.

ways, depending on the broader narrative of which our poem forms a part. Of course in both *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, Helen functions as a poet figure, so that the alignment of the *ego* with Helen is particularly apt.⁶² But otherwise we might feel that the different tonality of Iliadic and Odyssean Helens would significantly change and inflect our readings of the Brothers Poem. If we imagine the more comic Odyssean Helen behind our poem, she provides a point of intersection for the two different aspects or spheres I identified at the outset. By this I mean to capture two aspects of Helen in the *Odyssey*. First, within the domestic setting of Sparta, she twice preempts Menelaus' speech with her own authoritative utterance, essentially teaching him what he should say in significant contexts.⁶³ Second, Helen functions here as a seer figure, a powerful mediator between divine and human spheres and skilled reader of divine signs.⁶⁴ In the former role, Helen furnishes an epic model for the *θρύλησθα*—*κέλεσθαι*...*λίσσεσθαι* dynamic of our poem,⁶⁵ while in the latter capacity, she might be said to model the way the *ego* of our poem reaches out in prayer through Hera to Zeus, 'King of Olympus', and to his 'helper' *daimon*. Alternatively, we might imagine the speaker of the Brothers Poem in relation to the more somber Helen of the *Iliad*, longing in the *Teichoskopia* to see her two brothers before her on the plain of Troy, poignantly unaware that they are already dead and buried far away.⁶⁶

Even allowing for these contrasting tonalities, the epic Helen is a powerful figure who effortlessly slips between and mediates different spheres—domestic and public, male and female, human and divine. As such, she offers

62 See *Il.* 3.125–128 (Helen weaves a figured robe that doubles the *Iliad* narrative); *Od.* 4.235–264 (Helen tells a story that doubles the *Odyssey* narrative), 4.277–289 (Helen's uncanny mimetic abilities, imitating the voices of the wives of all the Greek warriors hidden in the wooden horse). There is of course a vast literature on the Homeric Helen as a poet figure; for excellent early discussions of these aspects in both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, see the essays collected in Bergren (2008) 43–57 and 111–130.

63 See *Od.* 4.116–122, 137–154, where Helen jumps in to identify Telemachus while Menelaus is pondering what to say, and *Od.* 15.166–178, where, after Peisistratus specifically asks Menelaus to adjudicate the target audience for a bird omen, Helen 'anticipates him, speaking a *μῦθος*' (15.171).

64 See *Od.* 15.172–178, Helen's authoritative (and entirely accurate) interpretation of a bird omen.

65 Though admittedly, within the exquisitely maintained decorum of epic/Sparta, Helen is always unfailingly polite to her ineffectual husband as she jumps in to speak for him (so no *θρύλησθα* moment). Cf. *Od.* 4.263–264, where Helen ends her tale of Odysseus by graciously noting that Menelaus as husband 'lacks nothing, either in wits (*phrenas*) or in form'.

66 See *Il.* 3.234–244, with thanks to Richard Martin for this suggestion.

an effective model for the *ego* as speaker of our song, with her protean and elusive verbal skills interweaving or fusing the poem's disparate spheres.⁶⁷

Appendix (Dioscuri Passages)

1 *Alcaeus Fr. 34*

δεῦτε μοι νᾶ]σον Πέλοπος λίποντε[ς
παῖδες ἴφθ]ιμοι Δ[ίος] ἡδὲ Λήδας,
εὐνῶ]ι θύ[μ]ωι προ[φά]νητε, Κάστορ
καὶ Πολύδε[υ]κες·

οἷ κατ' εὖρηαν χ[θόνα] καὶ θάλασσαν
παῖσαν ἔρχεσθ' ὦ[κυπό]δων ἐπ' ἵππων,
ῥῆα δ' ἀνθρώποι[ς] θα[ν]άτω ῥύεσθε
ζακρυόεντος,

εὐσδ[ύγ]ων θρώσκοντ[ες ἐπ'] ἄκρα νάων
πῆλοθεν λάμπροι πρό[τον' ὄν]τρ[έχο]ντες
ἀργαλέα δ' ἐν νύκτι φ[άος φέ]ροντες
νᾶϊ μ[ε]λαίναι·

Here for me, having left the Peloponnese, mighty sons of Zeus and Leda, appear with kindly heart, Castor and Polydeuces, you who go over the broad earth and the entire sea on your swift horses, and easily save men from chilly death, leaping on the heights of their well-benched ships, bright from afar as you run up the fore-stays, bringing light in grievous night to a black ship;

67 Thus the Brothers Poem offers us a remarkable and largely unexpected new view of the range of Sapphic poetics. In its abrupt shifts of tonality, juxtaposition of different spheres represented, and complex genre amalgam, all in the service of conjuring a fragmented 'storyworld' of 'everyday life', the Brothers Poem exhibits forms of artistry we had thought distinctive to Latin poets like Catullus, Horace, and Propertius. For the complex narrative effects produced by these poets, I have been particularly inspired by McCarthy (2010) and (2013).

2 *Homeric Hymn to the Dioscuri (No. 33)*

- Ἀμφὶ Διὸς κούρους ἐλικώπιδες ἔσπετε Μοῦσαι
 Τυνδαρίδας Λήδης καλλισφύρου ἀγλαὰ τέκνα,
 Κάστορά θ' ἱππόδαμον καὶ ἀμώμητον Πολυδεῦκεα,
 τοὺς ὑπὸ Ταυγέτου κορυφῇ ὄρεος μεγάλοιο
 5 μιχθεῖς ἐν φιλότῃ κελαινεφεῖ Κρονίωνι
 σωτήρας τέκε παῖδας ἐπιχθονίων ἀνθρώπων
 ὠκυπόρων τε νεῶν, ὅτε τε σπέρχωσιν ἄελλαι
 χειμέριαι κατὰ πόντον ἀμείλιχον· οἳ δ' ἀπὸ νηῶν
 εὐχόμενοι καλέουσι Διὸς κούρους μεγάλοιο
 10 ἄρνεσσιν λευκοῖσιν ἐπ' ἀκρωτήρια βάντες
 πρύμνης· τὴν δ' ἀνεμός τε μέγας καὶ κύμα θαλάσσης
 θῆκαν ὑποβρυχίην, οἳ δ' ἐξαπίνης ἐφάνησαν
 ξουθῆσι πτερύγεσσι δι' αἰθέρος ἀΐξαντες,
 αὐτίκα δ' ἀργαλέων ἀνέμων κατέπαυσαν ἀέλλας,
 15 κύματα δ' ἐστόρεσαν λευκῆς ἀλὸς ἐν πελάγεσσι,
 ναύταις σήματα καλὰ ἑπὶ πόνου σφίσιν· οἳ δὲ ἰδόντες
 γήθησαν, παύσαντο δ' οἷζυροῖο πόνοιο.
 Χαίρετε Τυνδαρίδαι ταχέων ἐπιβήτορες ἵππων·
 19 αὐτὰρ ἐγὼν ὑμέων καὶ ἄλλης μνήσομ' ἀοιδῆς.

Whirling-eyed Muses, tell about the Tyndarid sons of Zeus, shining children of lovely-ankled Leda, horse-breaking Castor and blameless Polydeuces, the sons whom she bore under the peak of the great mountain Taygetos when she had been mixed in love with the black-clouded son of Cronus, as saviors of men upon the earth and of swift ships, when wintry stormblasts rush over an unfriendly sea. But they, praying from ships, call upon the sons of great Zeus with [sacrifice of] white lambs, when they have gone up to the poop-deck. But it [the stern] both great wind and the swell of the sea have caused to be submerged. But they [sc. the Dioscuri] suddenly appear, rushing through the air on swift wings. And immediately they stop the blasts of grievous winds and they smooth out the swells of white salt water on the plains of the sea, as noble signs of toil(?) for sailors; but they [sc. the sailors] rejoice when they see [them], and they cease from grievous toil. Hail Tyndaridai, riders of swift horses! But I will remember you and another song.

3 *Pindar Pythian 5, Lines 1–11, 117–123*

- 'Ο πλούτος εὐρυσθενής,
 ὅταν τις ἀρετᾷ κεκραμένον καθαρά
 βροτήσιος ἀνὴρ πότμου παραδόντος αὐτὸν ἀνάγῃ
 πολύφιλον ἐπέταν.
 5 ὦ θεόμορ' Ἀρκεσίλα,
 σύ τοί νιν κλυτὰς
 αἰῶνος ἀκρᾶν βαθμίδων ἄπο
 σὺν εὐδοξίᾳ μετανίσσαι
 ἔκατι χρυσαρμάτου Κάστορος·
 10 εὐδίαν δς μετὰ χειμέριον ὄμβρον τεάν
 καταιθύσσει μάκαιραν ἐστίαν.

....

- θεός τέ οἱ
 117 τὸ νῦν τε πρόφρων τελεῖ δύνασιν,
 καὶ τὸ λοιπὸν ὁμοῖα, Κρονίδαι μάκαρες,
 διδοῖτ' ἐπ' ἔργοισιν ἀμφί τε βουλαῖς
 ἔχειν, μὴ φθινοπωρὶς ἀνέμων
 χειμερία κατὰ πνοᾷ δαμαλίζοι χρόνον.
 122 Διός τοι νόος μέγας κυβερνᾷ
 δαίμον' ἀνδρῶν φίλων.

Wealth is broad in strength, whenever any mortal man leads it forth mixed with pure excellence, when fate has transmitted it to him as an attendant that has many friends. O Arcesilas, favored by heaven, you, to be sure, have been pursuing it from the earliest steps of your glorious life, together with good repute, thanks to Castor of the golden chariot, who sheds good weather after wintry storm down upon your blessed hearth.

....

And the god, kindly disposed now, brings his [sc. Arcesilas'] power to fulfillment, and in future, blessed sons of Cronus, may you grant him to have like success upon his works and about his counsels, so that no fruit-destroying stormy blast of winds make havoc of his lifetime. To be sure the great mind of Zeus steers the personal fortune of men who are dear to him.

4 *Theocritus Idyll 22, Lines 14–22*

πολὺς δ' ἐξ οὐρανοῦ ὄμβρος
 νυκτὸς ἐφερπούσης· παταγεῖ δ' εὐρεῖα θάλασσα
 κοπτομένη πνοιαῖς τε καὶ ἀρρήκτοισι χαλάζαις.
 ἀλλ' ἔμπης ὑμεῖς γε καὶ ἐκ βυθοῦ ἔλκετε νῆας
 αὐτοῖσιν ναύτησιν οἰομένοις θανέεσθαι·
 αἶψα δ' ἀπολήγουσ' ἄνεμοι, λιπαρὴ δὲ γαλήνη
 ἄμ πέλαγος· νεφέλαι δὲ διέδραμον ἄλλυδις ἄλλαι·
 ἐκ δ' Ἄρκτοι τ' ἐφάνησαν Ὀνων τ' ἀνὰ μέσσον ἀμαυρὴ
 Φάτνη, σημαίνουσα τὰ πρὸς πλόον εὖδια πάντα.

And there is much rain from heaven as the night comes on, and the broad sea roars as it is struck by blasts of wind and relentless hails. But still you [sc. the Dioscuri] drag ships even from the depth [of the sea], together with their sailors, who think they will die. And straightway the winds cease, and there is bright calm upon the plain of the sea, and the clouds scatter in different directions here and there. And the Bears appear, and in the middle of the Asses the dim Manger, signifying that all is good weather for sailing.