Sappho and Kypris: ‘The Vertigo of Love’ (P. Sapph. Obbink 21–29; P. Oxy. 1231, fr. 16)*

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Our knowledge of ancient Greece advances in three ways: via the discovery of new documents; via the development of new approaches to ancient materials related to the evolution of technology and experimental sciences; finally, via the evolution of epistemological tools of history and of cultural and social anthropology.¹ The recent discovery of a Sappho papyrus, and especially of the new poem of Sappho’s that has become known as the ‘Kypris Song’, offers papyrologists, historians, and anthropologists this threefold possibility: an unexpected papyrological discovery, which is still being discussed, new technical means of reading the papyrus and working out any overlap with fragments already published,² and the possibility of addressing the poems of Sappho with the approaches and conceptual tools provided by the human sciences. It is important to stress this third method, which is what the vast majority of publications on various areas of Classics rely upon, but which can sometimes be overlooked when understandable enthusiasm regarding a material discovery overtakes us.

In the case of the corpus of (fragmentary) poems by Sappho, the contributions of linguistic pragmatics and gender studies, two areas that experienced significant epistemological development during the last two decades of the twentieth century, are essential. Our understanding of archaic melic poetry, at the beginning of a new century, is no longer that of the German philologists in the late nineteenth and the whole twentieth centuries, who saw in it an expression of a “lyrical” self,³ just as our interpretation of the love described in the poems is no longer—or at least less systematically—the object of con-

* Translated from the French by Paul Ellis and Chiara Meccariello.

- 1 On constantly renewed historical methods and the importance of taking into account the ‘organising praxis’ see the thoughts of Michel De Certeau (1987). On the pragmatics of ancient poetic texts see the works cited in Calame (2004).
- 2 See, for example, the technical tools used by Obbink in reading and restoring the new Sappho in Obbink (2015b).
- 3 A history of these interpretations of “the lyric genre” is set out in Calame (1998/2008) and (2006).

demnation or censorship on account of its immorality or unnatural behaviour.⁴ Thus, recent studies in the field of the analysis of discourse and ethnopoetics have made it necessary to take into account the different forms of logic that link verbal expressions with any form of music, dance or physical expression, in the context of a political, cultural or religious performance.⁵ Similarly, many works of the late twentieth century on ancient eroticism and sexuality, echoing the pioneering work of Michel Foucault, have helped draw a new landscape of Greek and Roman eroticism, by historicizing current categories of gender and sexuality. They place the texts and images in the context of societies ‘before sexuality’⁶—an expression denoting worlds where sexuality, defined by Michel Foucault as ‘constitutive of the bond that requires people to be tied to their identity under the form of subjectivity’⁷ does not possess the identity role that it currently has; these are worlds where the male/female dichotomy as we define it did not exist—or at least not in the same way; these are worlds where identification of individuals based on sexual orientation defined by the gender of the desired person is completely anachronistic.⁸

The Kypris Poem has received detailed scrutiny from the most important papyrologists and philologists, and whilst its fragmentary nature should certainly encourage the greatest caution, it does however deserve to be read with the same attention as that given to Sappho’s other poems by those engaged in the fields of gender studies and sexuality on the one hand, and of enunciation and pragmatics on the other. It is proceeding along these twin tracks that we want to read this fragment, this paltry but precious trace of melic poetry, in the cultural context of a Lesbos ‘before sexuality’.

4 For a summary of the various interpretations since antiquity see Boehringer (2007a) 37–70. For a deconstruction of the figure of Sappho as schoolteacher, priestess, sexual instructor or trainer of girls from good families for married life, see Parker (1993). On the various myths of Sappho (courtesan, pervert, whore, or even psychopath) in the modern and contemporary era, see Dejean (1989) and Albert (2005). On the descendants of Sappho and their poetic reception, see the contributions collected by Greene (1996b).

5 On the method of ethnopoetic and cultural anthropology, see Calame, Dupont, Lortat-Jacob, and Manca (2010).

6 This expression is taken from *Before Sexuality. The Construction of Erotic Experience in the Ancient World*, edited by David M. Halperin, John J. Winkler, and Froma I. Zeitlin (1990).

7 Foucault (1978) 570. Engl. tr. R.A. Lynch in Carrett (1999) 130.

8 Publications on these themes have been particularly numerous since 1990: see, though not exhaustively, Halperin (1990), Winkler (1990a), Calame (1999b), Williams (1999), Hallett and Skinner (1997), Dupont and Éloi (2001), Rabinowitz and Auanger (2002) or, more recently, Masterson, Rabinowitz, and Robson (2014) and Blondell and Ormand (2015).

'Now, Here, the One You Love': A New Poem⁹

πῶς κε δὴ τις οὐ θαμέως ἄσαιτο,
 Κύπρι, δέσποιν', ὅττινα [δ]ὴ φίλ[ησι,
 [κωὺ] θέλοι μάλιστα πάθαι χάλ[ασαι;]
 [ποῖ]ον ἐχρησθα

5 [νῶν] ζάλοις μ' ἀλεμάτῳς δαΐςδ[ην
 [ἰμέ]ρω(ι) λύ[ι]σαντι γόν' ὠμε-[x
 [. . .] .α .α . . [. .]αἰμ' οὐ προ[ο-3] .ερης[
 [- ~]νεερ . [.]αἰ

[c.8] . . . [. .] cέ, θέλω[~ - x
 10 [- ~ - x τοῦ]το πάθη[ν ~ - x
 [- ~ - x -] .αν, ἔγω δ' ἐμ' αὖται
 τοῦτο κύνοιδα

[c.13] . [.] . τοῖς[. . . .] .
 [c.13]εναμ[
 15 [] . [.] . [.
 [c.12]

How is it possible, now, not to feel endlessly dizzy,
 O Kypris, mistress, whoever the person whom one loves here,
 how (is it possible) not to want one's sufferings to be eased?
 What is your intention

5 to stir me up and tear me apart madly
 with desire which loosens the knees?
 ...] not [...
 [...]

...] you, I want [...
 10 ...] to suffer that [...
 ...] for my part I am
 aware of that.

9 We use the text published by Obbink, chapter 1 in this volume. For other conjectural restitutions of the text by West (2014), Ferrari (2014), and Benelli (2015), see the critical position assumed by Bierl, in this volume, chap. 15.

Taken from a third century AD papyrus (P. Sapph. Obbink), these fragmentary lines, in the Aeolian dialect of Lesbos, are found immediately following the poem rightly or wrongly called the 'Brothers Poem'. These meagre poetic utterances supplement the small fragments previously known from P. Oxy. 1231 fr. 16 and published as fr. 26 v. of Sappho. This poem has therefore been placed in the first book of the Alexandrian edition of Sappho, which collects poems written in Sapphic stanzas. The first four lines reproduce the colometry of a Sapphic stanza, and the forked *paragraphos* in the margin, which acts as a coronis and therefore separates this stanza from the preceding one, confirms that it is indeed the beginning of a different poem.

The song begins with an appeal to Kypris, a deity frequently evoked and or invoked in the few stanzas that have come down to us of the poems collected in the first book. The state of the fragment also enables us to learn, thanks to the grammatical gender of the pronoun αὐταί in line 11 that this appeal to the goddess is made by a fictional female 'I', as is the case in many poems by Sappho.

Despite the remaining lacunae, the sense of the poem is clear: in the vocative, an appeal to Aphrodite calling upon her divine power; justification for this address to the goddess by reference to a general experience, namely the desolation, the dizziness, the vertigo and the suffering caused by the feeling of love as a result of the power of Aphrodite, and the desire to be released (χαλ[ατται in the same sense, intransitively, as in fr. 70.10 of Alcaeus). This is an expression of the imperative nature of erotic desire, which stirs up and melts the poetic (or fictional) 'I'¹⁰ at the conscious desire of the goddess; an expression by the *persona cantans* of her own desire (the object of which is yet unknown); a declaration by the female poetic 'I' of her own awareness (by the power of Aphrodite?) of the suffering she is undergoing (most likely because of the effects of *eros*).

Does this mean the new poem represents another example of a dialogue between the poetess and Aphrodite, as some interpretations of the hymnic poem that opened the Alexandrian edition of Sappho would have it?¹¹ Does this mean the poem represents an "intimacy" that, in terms of irreducibly specific gender distinction, should be attributed exclusively to women? Does this mean that the poems of Sappho would transcend the "performance culture" of her male colleagues in circulating principally as texts?¹² Finally, does this mean that

10 When in this article we refer to the poetic—or fictional—'I', we mean the *persona cantans* speaking in the first person, who, in the recitation of the poem, presents herself as the person who sings the verses in a musical performance, usually the poetess.

11 See bibliographical references given by Aloni (1997) x–xvi.

12 Stehle (1997) 323.

the explicit statement of awareness by the poetic 'I' conveys directly to us the feelings of the poetess of Lesbos? No. We must take into account firstly the use of the traditional language that forms the basis of melic erotic poems composed by male poets (either addressed to young people or young girls) and secondly the use in the poem of deictics such as occur in highly ritualised poetry. Shared poetic language and the presence of deictics lead us to consider the verses composed by Sappho as romantic lyric poetry. Whilst the exact contextual setting of the poem eludes us—as is the case for many poems of Sappho—it is possible at least to think that this poem is intended to evoke, in and through the singing and dancing involved in its performance, the effects of sexual desire; the performance itself undoubtedly allows to call for and invoke the presence of the beloved person, in the hope that this person will come, with the aid of the goddess.

Sappho Summed Up in a Single Poem

Given the significant number of lacunae, how to go beyond a merely interpretive reading? We may follow the tried and tested method of looking for parallels, refining our analysis by drawing conclusions based upon pragmatics and gender analysis. However, the scope for such analysis will here be limited to the fragments of the vast poetic production of Sappho of Lesbos that have come down to us.

The initial address to Kypris naturally brings to mind the opening words of the 'Hymn to Aphrodite' (fr. 1); hence this poem, consisting of seven Sapphic stanzas, was the first in the Alexandrian edition of Sappho. If it could be regarded as a hymn, it is not only because of its tripartite structure (invocation, narrative, prayer), but above all on account of the different qualifiers used in asyndeton to describe Aphrodite, the daughter of Zeus, to invoke her presence through the force of the poetic words used. The goddess is called upon to 'come here' (and now) at the beginning and end of the poem, in a combined deictic and circular structure (ἀλλὰ τίθεις ἔλθεις in l. 5; ἔλθεις μοι καὶ νῦν in l. 25).¹³ We find the same enunciative movement in the ostrakon poem (fr. 2) but without the initial invocation, although that may have occurred in a previous stanza. In any event, at the end of the poem, Kypris is invited to come here and now (ἔνθα δὴ σύ, l. 13), to pour nectar into golden bowls and take part in the musical

13 For an extensive list of examples of the efficacious power of using the names and epithets of gods at the beginning of various types of hymns, see Calame (2012b) 55–59 and (2014).

celebration. In the new 'Kypris Song', Kypris is described only as 'mistress' and is merely asked about her intentions.

Again in terms of enunciation, the double initial interrogative is marked by the recurrence of the Greek *demonstratio ad oculos*¹⁴ particle par excellence, namely δῆ. The explicit invocation is no longer of Aphrodite (in the vocative), but of the person with whom one is engaged in a relationship of φιλία (in the third person). It is the same relationship that Aphrodite evokes in the "hymn" poem when she tells Sappho about the person wronging her, 'If she does not love (φιλει), now soon she will love (φιλήσει), even against her will (fr. 1.23–24)'. But that is not all. In the initial enunciation of the new poem, the demonstrative δῆ is accompanied by an adverb of reiteration θαμέως, 'frequently', 'endlessly'. The urgent desire to end the pain of love is indeed the object of the same reiterative movement in the present, *hic et nunc*, that marks, in Sappho's work, many erotic enunciations. In Sappho's 'Hymn to Aphrodite', the goddess herself asks Sappho, addressing her in direct speech, whom she can 'again, here and now (δηῦτε)' return to her 'love' (φιλότατα, fr. 1.18–19).¹⁵

This has already been indicated by the editor princeps of the new papyrus:¹⁶ the state of suffering, of dizziness and vertigo (ἄσαιτο, l. 1), mentioned in the indefinite mode at the beginning of the poem is the state of the poetic 'I' earlier at the beginning of the 'Hymn to Aphrodite' (fr. 1.3). In the hymnic poem, this sense of loss, combined with pain, is the subject of the initial prayer by the poetic 'I'; by her presence, by coming here and now, Aphrodite will dispel this feeling and this grief. In the new poem, this same condition is also linked to an absence (real or felt), namely that of the beloved. Invoked in this context, Kypris, with her divine power, is implicitly likely to alleviate this suffering (πάθων χάλ[ατται, l. 3) and thus to ease the absence, by bringing about the presence (in and by the poetic performance?) of the person whose absence the 'I' is feeling.

Hence the enunciative shift that runs throughout the very fragmentary verses on both these papyri provides a link between the divergent development of two almost complete poems. On the one hand, as has often been noted, fragment 16 also begins with a general statement:

- 14 On the *demonstratio ad oculos* as a deictic procedure in Greek, using demonstratives in *-de* to denote both a proximate reference in the text and what the audience has in mind, see references in Calame (2004) 415–423.
- 15 See also, in the same context of erotic poetry, Alcman fr. 59 (a), Anacreon fr. 358.1–4, and Ibycus fr. 287.1–4; see Mace (1993). On the formulaic and at the same time pragmatic nature of this expression, see Calame (1997).
- 16 Obbink (2014b) 46–47.

[ο]ἱ μὲν ἱππῆων στρότον οἱ δὲ πέδων
οἱ δὲ νάων φαίς' ἐπ[ι] γὰρ μέλαι[ν]αν
[ἔ]μμεναι κάλλιστον, ἔγω δὲ κῆν' ὅτ-
τω τις ἔρεται·

Some say that the most beautiful thing
on the black earth is a host of cavalry,
others an army of infantry, others still a fleet of ships;
for my part, I say that it is what someone loves.

If the situation presented as a prelude to the new poem of Sappho does not provide a contrast between a statement by *they* and one made by the poetic 'I', on the other hand it also deals with love—not any trust-based relationship which may be its foundation, but an engagement marked by erotic desire. As in the new poem, the general tone of the first lines presents the protagonists of this relationship in epicene fashion, gender is thus for the time being unspecified; here, the object is also gender neutral: κῆν' ὅττω τις ἔρεται (ll. 3–4).

This gnomic statement is further illustrated by the example of Helen, who, arousing desire while experiencing it herself, abandons her husband, daughter, and parents to follow Paris to Troy. If Helen is both subject and object of erotic desire, it is by the will of Aphrodite that she is led astray.¹⁷ Moreover, if, as the result of *eros*, Helen forgets her parents, it is nonetheless the evocation of the heroine's seductive beauty that brings to mind for the poetic 'I', here and now (νῦν, l. 15), the memory of Anactoria, who is absent. Hence the desire to see the 'step' full of erotic charm, and the 'look' illuminating the face of the beautiful girl (rather than the Lydian chariots or armed infantry: according to the new text proposed following the integration of *P. GC. Inv. 105*, poem 16 ends at l. 20 in a circular or "ring" structure¹⁸).

On the other hand, the "Hymn to Aprodite", in recalling previous interventions by Aphrodite and having the goddess actually speak, follows the pattern of other erotic melic poems. Here again by utterances in the form of questions and the use of the indeterminate τις, repetition of a recurring situation leads to a request for Kypris to intervene.

17 See the suggested reading of this poem by Calame (2005) 107–130, with papyrological supplements (*P.G.C. Inv. 105*) proposed by Burris, Fish, Obbink (2014) 9 and 16–18; in this regard see West (2014) 2–3 and Thévenaz (2015). On the close link between fr. 16 and the 'Kypris poem', see the contributions by Bierl, ch. 15, and Schlesier, ch. 17, in this volume.

18 See the contribution by Lidov, ch. 3, this volume.

You, o blessed one,
 with a smile on your immortal face,
 you asked me what was the matter with me again (δηῖτε),
 why I was calling (κάλημι) again (δηῖτε),

What I wished strongly to happen
 in my maddened heart. Whom am I to persuade again (δηῖτε)
 to return to your love? Who
 wrongs you, Sappho?

The new poem thus combines the general statement using τις (in this instance, τῆς), the evocation of the beloved and the repetitive enunciation to set the situation described in the *hic et nunc* of the performance of the poem. The poem apparently leads to a description of the situation, here and now, in which the *persona cantans* finds herself. If the expression of awareness has no parallel in the verses of Sappho that have survived,¹⁹ the ‘passion’ of love (πάθαν in l. 3 and πάθην in l. 10) is attested both in the Hymn to Aphrodite (πέπονθα, fr. 1.15) and in another poem of remembrance (πεπόνθαμεν, fr. 94.4), in an appeal using direct speech, which a young girl addresses to Sappho using the vocative case. Furthermore, through the common use of the form ἔμ’ αὖται, to the feeling of death expressed at the end of the first stage of fr. 31.15–16, the new poem seems to add a clear awareness, perhaps, of this passionate state.

This short poem, although containing many lacunae, thus provides us with a host of parallels in the Sapphic corpus and these new parallels allow us to attach greater weight to a number of assumptions and analyses. These concern, as we shall see, two major aspects of the poetry of Sappho in particular.

A Fictional and Poetic Female ‘I’

Most of Sappho’s poems celebrate the *eros* felt by a woman for a woman. Clearly, the works on sexuality and gender in the Greek and Roman worlds, mentioned above,²⁰ and our own research,²¹ have stressed that it was not relevant in antiquity, and still less so in archaic Greece, to try to distinguish forms

19 Unless one accepts the conjecture proposed by Luca Benelli for l. 3 of the new fragment 16a: cf. Burris, Fish, and Obbink (2014) 18.

20 See note 8 above.

21 Calame (1999b) and (1998b), Boehringer (2007b) and (2014).

of eroticism that Greeks, both male and female, would categorize according to the sex of the person loved by assigning identity and psychological functions to "sexual orientation". But it is precisely for this reason that, on every occasion, all the information on gender at our disposal should be provided; it should be noted, where appropriate, the intention of the poet or poetess to specify the gender of the person in love and of the beloved. The expression of *eros* between women is not so common in ancient times nor has it been the subject of so many academic publications that we can consider it as self-evident.²²

The choice by the anthropologist to offer as complete a description as possible of the object of study prevents the imposition, even before any interpretation, of an anachronistic schema; any deliberate exclusion of information—any list and the way it is divided are, anyway, always informed by ethical categories²³—introduces approximation and risks interference of our perception of emic categories, those that make sense for the listeners of Lesbian poetry, at the dawn of the sixth century BC; it is they who are the subject of our investigation. It is therefore not about attributing specifically "female" feelings to Sappho or a "naturally" different *eros* but simply analysing all the characteristics that Sappho attributes to this *eros* and which lie behind her address to the goddess.

A list of personal forms used leads inexorably to the following conclusion: in the Sapphic corpus, when the gender of personal form is clear (i.e. when the forms are not gender-neutral) the *persona cantans* is female. With the exception of the choral partheneia by Alcman or Pindar the presence of a fictional female voice is sufficiently rare—even if it is not unique²⁴—in the ancient literary corpus that it is worth taking the time to emphasize this fact. Whether it

22 Contributions directly addressing the issue of female homoeroticism in general are few: see, foremost, Hallett (1989) and Rabinowitz in Rabinowitz and Auanger (2002). For monographs see Brooten (1996) and Boehringer (2007), and her summary in English, Boehringer (2014) 150–164. For this work, see Lear and Altman (2010) on the amazing reactions that treatment of this topic has provoked in France.

23 Here we resort to the distinction proposed by the linguist Kenneth Pike in the 1940s between the view and thought categories appropriate to the ethnologist ('etics') and those which are the subject of the investigation, namely indigenous categories, specific to the societies surveyed ('emics'); for the use of this working distinction in cultural anthropology see the important qualifications proposed by Olivier de Sardan (1998).

24 There are obviously other instances of female authors: for an edition of texts by Greek female poets see, e.g. Snyder (1989), Battistini (1998), Greene (2005), and Klinck (2008). Unfortunately, only a tiny proportion of ancient documents that have survived are the work of women. On monodic or choral enunciation in the works of Sappho, see the excellent study by Lardinois (1996).

may be related to a possible—albeit not certainly proven—performance by a woman in front of an audience of women or girls²⁵ does not diminish its importance.

Often the first lines do not reveal information about the gender of the poetic 'I' but clues appear in the following stanzas. This is the case, to mention one of the most famous instances, in fragment 31 (where the adjective *χλωροτέρα* at l. 14 and the pronoun *αὐταί* at l. 16 remove ambiguity) or, as noted at the beginning of this article, in the Kypris Poem, with *αὐταί* on l. 11. Sometimes, the actual name of Sappho appears, again removing ambiguity. Although very incomplete, our corpus offers four occurrences of this (fr. 1.21; fr. 65.5; fr. 94.5; fr. 133.2). In these cases the name of Sappho always appears as the second person, questioned via a vocative that takes place in the context of a dialogue which is embedded in the poem. This inclusion of direct speech in a sung poem identifies the fictional 'I' with the character of the poet (in this instance, the female poet).

In the majority of poems this poetic and fictional 'I', a woman sometimes indirectly named Sappho, speaks of intense love, draws parallels with Homeric or divine *palaia*, evokes the context in which these poems were sung and danced; this 'I' calls upon the goddesses Hera and Kypris, describes the effects on the body of passing time, sets out the qualities of the young women around her, talks about departures, separations, radiant memories, and bright hopes. Because of these recurring themes and multiple lexical clues, many commentators have inferred that the female 'I' refers in general to Sappho, that she is the main protagonist of the action referred to in the poems even where the actual name of Sappho does not appear. Whether the performance of the poem is choral or monodic,²⁶ and regardless of the gender of those singing, during the performance they all pronounce the lines composed by Sappho in the first person female voice.

25 On the extensive debate concerning the context in which the poems of Sappho were performed, cf. Lardinois (1996). See also Snyder (1991) and (1997), and the contributions collected by Greene (1996a). More recently, see Ferrari (2007) 11–12 and 23–25, for the intended target of the poems of Sappho, between an 'internal' and 'external' audience; likewise also Caciagli (2011) 135–199. Contra: Calame (forthcoming).

26 On the enunciative polyphony and the different scenarios presented by the poetry of Sappho, see Lardinois (1996) in a study aptly entitled 'Who Sang Sappho's Songs?'

A Female Object of Love: Is Eros 'Gendered'?

In the same vein, what about the loved one? In the vast majority of the fragments that have survived, the person who is the cause of the erotic impulse of the fictional 'I' and whose lack is felt so keenly turns out to be a woman.²⁷ Sometimes the woman is named (Atthis, Anactoria, Mnasidika or Dika), sometimes not, but the indications given by the poem often allow us to deduce the sex of the individual (that is the case, in particular, in frs. 21, 22, and 31). A few very rare passages are exceptions to this rule, and in these the erotic pattern differs from the majority of cases, in that love for a man is in fact felt by a third party and is not assumed by the poetic 'I'.²⁸ Thus, fr. 44 narrates the wedding of Hector and Andromache without the fictional 'I' being involved. In fr. 16, Helen leaves her home country because of her love for someone; fr. 15 discusses the complicated relationship between Doricha and Sappho's brother, Charaxos, whose distress is mentioned in fr. 5 and in the 'Brothers Poem'. So, to put it more clearly, when the poetic 'I' relates to Sappho, the person loved by this 'I' is not a man.

The very incomplete nature of the corpus has undoubtedly often removed elements conveying information about the gender of the person who is the object of this love felt by the fictional 'I'; but even in these cases, lexical and thematic repetitions enable parallels to be established with the more complete, continuous fragments.

The poem now known as the 'Kypris Song' is therefore doubly important: a new fragment of Sappho is a valuable discovery; and given the large body of texts and images that document the relationships between men and women or between men in ancient Greece, a poetic fragment describing love between women is even more important.²⁹

Does this mean that, given that the love described in the poem is felt by a woman towards a woman, *eros* would be "gendered"? Would it be different from the one linking Paris to Helen, or Aurora to Tithonus? That is not what we are saying. Instead, the way Sappho describes the symptoms caused by *eros*, if she does so in purely poetic terms, are not fundamentally different from the symp-

27 We are using the generic term "woman" for this discussion on gender. According to the poems, however, these can of course be girls (παρθέναι or κόραι; see also νύμφαι): see Calame (2013b).

28 The brief fr. 121 is an exception, but its context does not seem to represent Sappho as the poetic 'I'. See also frs. 102, 137, and 138.

29 On the important corpus of texts and images concerning male homoeroticism, see *inter alia* Dover (1978), Halperin (1990), Lear and Cantarella (2008).

toms that Anacreon or Theognis describe.³⁰ Moreover, nothing in the poems of Sappho leads us to believe that the poetess wants to express a difference in kind between *eros* as it develops between two women and *eros* between a man and a woman, let alone the idea of a hierarchy of love on the criterion of normality or conformity to tradition, according to the moral arguments³¹ or rhetorical reasons the *sunkriseis* would develop in later centuries.³²

Whilst parallels may be discreetly established between erotic relationships, there are many possible identifications and they are not limited by the gender of the individuals. In fr. 16, the departure of Helen arouses memories of Anactoria for the fictional 'I'—an erotic situation substituting 'Sappho' implicitly at the same time for the abandoned Menelaus, for Helen, who is both the subject and object of desire, and perhaps for the amorous Paris (the hero is not specifically mentioned in these lines). Similarly, the (new) fr. 58, which is a poem about love rather than old age, by recalling the love of Aurora for the youthful Tithonus, unfurls a plethora of possible parallels between the fictional 'I', Aurora and Tithonus.³³ Finally, the love of Hector and Andromache is described at length in fr. 44: it gives rise, in the final lines, to a synaesthetic celebration by evoking variegated colours, mingled smells and music that rises to the abode of the gods.

This "fluidity" in the gender of *eros* in the poetry of Sappho could give the impression of a multiple *eros*, since it characterizes without distinction the erotic urges of men and women for men and women, but this is an optical illusion. This variety of erotic forms exists only in *our* understanding of the term. There is, for the Greek culture of the seventh and sixth centuries BC, consistency and a significant homogeneity. *Eros* is the same for everyone, in a society 'before sexuality'; its essential characteristic is not a gender issue but lies, as we shall see, in the effect it produces.

30 See Calame (1999b) 25–49.

31 On the criteria of normality or abnormality in the field of ancient sexuality, which do not overlap with those of contemporary sexuality, see Winkler (1990) and, more recently, Ormand (2008).

32 This is the case with Lucian, *Amores*; Plutarch, *Dialogue on Love*, or even Achilles Tatius, *Leucippe and Clitophon* 2.37–38. On the practice of erotic comparison and for an anthropological interpretation in terms of standards, see Boehringer (2007b).

33 On the "transgendered" *eros* in fr. 58, see the different interpretations of Winkler (1990b), Boehringer (2013) and Calame (2013a); on this poem, see also the contribution of Bierl (2016).

Dizziness and Vertigo of Love

In the general enunciative passage that opens the Kypris Song by establishing the relationship between the *you* (the goddess who is invoked) and the poetic 'I' (μ', l. 5), the passionate state causing the feeling that the invocation of the loved one could put aside, with the help of Aphrodite, is specifically evoked: it is the erotic desire that 'stirs up and tears apart'. From this perspective the likely occurrence of the term ἵμερος (l. 6) is particularly interesting in this context. Indeed the term is used not only in poem 31 (ἱμέροεν, l. 5) to describe the smile of the woman which arouses the state of passion felt and described by a female 'I', but it also appears in one of the poems of remembrance to describe the effect caused on the heart of a woman consumed with desire by recalling the youthful Atthis (fr. 96.15–17; see also fr. 1.26–27).

We should recall the etymology that Socrates attributes to the term ἵμερος (ἰέμενος ῥεῖ) in *Cratylus* (420a) as corresponding with ἔρως (ἐσπεῖν) the fluid and dynamic aspect of the two terms is emphasized, referring to a moving force, an impulse, not a state or identity. Could it be the influence of melic poetry that drives Socrates to consider the terms ἵμερος and ἔρως following his analysis of θυμός (419), and to emphasize the strength of a current (τὴν ἔσιν τῆς ῥοῆς) that pulls (ἔλκοντι) attracts (ἐπισπᾶ) and moves? It is obviously not possible to invest the melic θυμός with the meaning and importance conferred by Plato, two centuries later, in his representation of the various movements of the soul.³⁴ We should instead see Socrates as influenced by the melic and epic concept of this idea in the development of his own system.

Shifting and movement are an important characteristic of desire in Sappho, with the difference that movement is neither uniform nor channelled like the flow (ῥοή) described by Socrates. The 'Kypris Song' evokes a moving force to which the 'I' is subjected and whose effects it suffers (πάθαν in l. 3 and πάθην in l. 10). The person in love is stirred up in all directions, incoherently: a seemingly futile and crazy movement, expressed by the adverb ἀλεμάτως (l. 5) that P. Oxy. 1231 allows us to restore. The description of this movement might seem metaphorical to us, as our culture distinguishes the mind from the body, but the 'Kypris Song' immediately portrays the 'I' as being in both body and mind able to perceive the body—and it is not illogical to think that the term θυμός, as a place stricken by desire, may appear in the missing lines. In this poem, the 'I' is aware that she is literally transformed by shaking (σάλοισι, l. 5), a

34 In his recent study on the mediation of emotions in Plato, Renaut (2014) 26–47 studies the characteristics that distinguish the Platonic θυμός from the Homeric θυμός.

phenomenon which the poetess describes elsewhere by verbs also expressing the action of an external and irresistible force: in fr. 130 ('Eros again here [δηῖτε] stirs me [δόνει]'), Sappho uses the verb that refers to the effect of the wind in the Homeric epics,³⁵ the wind to which the poet specifically compares *eros* in fr. 144: 'Eros manhandled (ἐτίναξε) my heart like the wind in the mountains falls on the oaks'.

The disorganized nature of this movement, and thus the legitimacy of the question that Sappho asks Kypris about her intentions ([νῶν]), is even more striking in the infinitive δαΐσδην. Far from being the cause of a consistent 'flow' *eros* splits up and tears apart, and this feature clearly recalls the many, contradictory symptoms described in fr. 31. There, the body is shaking, it sways under the force of a desire that, in the 'Kypris Song', loosens the limbs (λύσαντι γόν', l. 6), possibly preventing them from dancing, as in fr. 58. The lethal effect is a common feature: 'I feel close to death (τεθνάκην)', reads fr. 31. In the new fragment 58, the embedded structure of the poem draws parallels between the symptoms of passing time and those of *eros*.³⁶ Finally, recurrent expressions for this force that breaks the limbs (λυσιμέλης, fr. 130.1) and knees (ἰμέ]ρωι λύσαντι γόν', l. 6) are a reprise of a traditional formula to describe the death of a warrior in the Homeric corpus.³⁷ There is the new paradox of a soul sleeping as if near death yet fully aware of its condition (τοῦτο σύνοιδα, l. 12) and capable of intent (θέλω, l. 9).

The congruence of these contradictory statements is expressed in the first line of the 'Kypris Song': the verb ἄσαιτο (l. 1) indicates a condition of pain or painful pleasure caused by the sense of loss, of dizziness; laced here, it reveals the symptoms the poetess sets out in the following lines. This same feeling is described by Sappho in the 'Hymn to Aphrodite' in which the poetic 'I' asks the goddess not to overwhelm her θυμός by a sense of loss (ἄσαισι) and sorrow (όνίαισι, fr. 1.3). The adverb θαμέως, which is now attested, thanks to the 'Kypris Song' and the 'Tithonos Song' (fr. 58.7) in the Sapphic lexicon, gives an indication of how this sensation manifests itself: not as a brutal attack, shock or acute pain, but as a persistent and repetitive psycho-physiological state that is stubborn and enduring, just like a constant bass backing in music (in fr. 58, it is actually the sound of a complaint, the στεναγχίσδω in l. 7). This is to say an inexorable sense of loss that is not erased by other sensations but to which

35 Hom. *Il.* 12.157, 17.55.

36 See Boehringer (2013).

37 Τοῦ δ' ἀδθι λύθη ψυχὴ τε μένος τε, *Il.* 5.296, 8.123, 8.315. Our thanks to Olivier Renaut for drawing our attention to the almost oxymoronic aspect of this hendiadys.

pain, joy, surprise are added, mixed, and impressed upon. The 'I' is in the grip of vertigo, at the same time as having the insight to observe its effects. *Eros* is the sum total of these effects.

Thus, the 'new new Sappho' contains a lexical and semantic richness that its fragmentary character would scarcely have led one to suspect. Whereas the 'Brothers Poem' provides new data for the biographical fiction of the poet, the 'Kypris Song', for its part, with its ritualized language and poetry, decidedly makes Sappho the poet of *eros* between women, and of *eros* in general. Hence, probably, the (re-)performance of her poems in male symposia during the classical period.

If we possessed the poem in its entirety, perhaps we would hear the goddess name Sappho, as is the case in fragment 1. Prayers to the deity and the appeals by the fictional 'I' created the circumstances during the singing performance for the name of the poet to be heard, placed, via reported speech, in the mouth of both Kypris and the poetic performer(s). If the names of the gods need to be uttered in order to make them appear, Sappho, in turn, only occurs in the erotic act of being named by the goddess of love. A good reason, once again, to address Aphrodite.