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«Μέτρον τοιούτων λόγων ἀκούειν ὅλος ὁ βίος νοῦν ἔχουσιν».
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POETIC TRADITION IN SAPPHO: THE CONTRIBUTION OF VOCABULARY

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Our subject carries us way back in time, back to the most ancient stages of poetry in Lesbos, even before Sappho. This subject originated under a group of theories that emerged during the sixties in the 20th century. In order to explain it, one must refer to Sappho as well as Alcaeus, though undoubtedly, Sappho's poems have been much more important for the detailed study of the subject.

In an article dated in 1957, Hoekstra researched as far back as Hesiod's works and found traces of an oral poetry which he referred to as «continental» and which in general terms is different to what we call «Ionic», Homer being its greatest exponent¹. After Hoekstra, scholars have agreed to the existence of oral traditions similar to those of Homer, and some have seen in the works of Hesiod a continuation of a poetic tradition that can be more properly referred to as «Aeolian» in general. On one hand, they were based on historical, mythical and literary arguments, and on the other hand on the study of formulas and, to a lesser degree, of the language².

New ideas emerged from the research on Hesiod in relation to the Aeolian field in general and the Lesbian field in particular. In 1966, Rolf Hiersche exposed the possible existence of an Aeolian poetic tradition previous to Sappho and Alcaeus, which they would continue, and which

1. A. Hoekstra, «Hésiode et la tradition orale», *Mnemosyne* 10 (1957) 193ff.

2. Especially J. Notopoulos, «Homer, Hesiod and the Achaean Heritage of the Oral Poetry», *Hesperia* 29 (1960) 177ff.; G.P. Edwards, *The language of Hesiod in its Traditional Context*, Oxford 1971; C.O. Pavese, *Tradizioni e generi poetici della Grecia arcaica*, Roma 1972. There is a good summary of this question in P. Mureddu, *Formule e tradizioni della poesia di Esiodo*. Roma 1983, p. 9ff. For metrical aspects, cf. B. Peabody, *The Winged Word*, Albany 1975.

would also influence Hesiod. This implies that it is a continental and ancient tradition, previous to the Aeolian migration to Asia³. As we will see, various authors have tried to describe this tradition in more detail. First, however, we must expose a brief account of what modern critics have declared concerning the language of Sappho and Alcaeus, since these new ideas were born precisely from the study of the language.

Two opposing theories have formed since the 19th century in relation to the study of Sappho's language and -to a lesser degree- that of the language of Alcaeus, due to their isolation within the Archaic Greek Lyric and because they also constitute the only evidence of written language in the Aeolian area of Asia Minor during the Archaic Period. The first theory, which originated in Ahrens and reached its pinnacle with the works of Edgar Lobel, was based on the idea that Sappho's language corresponded with the Lesbian language spoken during her time. This idea did not take into account Sappho's poetic and musical context, nor did it consider the fact that she forms part of a tradition which was surely prior to her time. The main reasoning behind it was based on a literary prejudice that such personal poetry, often having a colloquial tone, was obligated to use an equally personal language and the use of any epic element would thus seem awkward.

However, the obvious contradiction between this idea and linguistic facts soon gave rise to contrary opinions. By the end of the sixties of the previous century, it was generally accepted that the language of the Lesbian poets is a literary language, a poetic dialect that represents a group of features common to other Archaic Greek poetic languages. Among these features, there is a large amount of forms and words borrowed from Homer.

The idea of Sappho's language not being pure Lesbian as Lobel stated was being extensively rejected around the same time that Hiersche's article appeared. This author started from the Aeolisms that appear in the Hesiodic description of the seasons: Hes.*Op.*510 *πίλνα*(i), 526 *δείκνυ* and especially 534 *οὐ ἐπί νῶτα ἔαγε*. The similitude between this last phrase and Sapph.31.9 *κάμ μὲν γλῶσσα ἔαγε*, with *digamma* and hiatus in both cases, was what brought about the appealing idea that Hesiod as well as Sappho had been influenced by a poetic formula belonging to an Aeolian

3. R. Hiersche, «Zu Sappho 2.9 D² *κάμ μὲν γλῶσσα ἔαγε*, die Zunge ist gebrochen», *Glotta* 44 (1966) 1ff.

tradition independent from Homer. Hiersche hypothesized that $\xi\alpha\gamma\epsilon$ as well as $\kappa\alpha\nu\acute{\alpha}\xi\alpha\iota\varsigma < \kappa\alpha\phi\alpha\xi\alpha\iota\varsigma < \kappa\alpha\tau\text{-}\phi\alpha\xi\alpha\iota\varsigma$ aor. opt. of $\kappa\alpha\tau\acute{\alpha}\gamma\upsilon\mu\iota$, Hes.*Op.*666, 693), are old relics of an Aeolian poetry, though he only expressed his opinion without being overly emphatic or reaching any definite conclusions.

However, his suggestion led to a new series of studies that accepted the existence of this Aeolian tradition, which would not only influence Sappho and Alcaeus, but also Homer, Hesiod and other epic and lyric authors. As we can see, Hesiod's language was also used as a starting point for these investigations, because his Aeolisms, different to those of Homer's, provided a valuable comparison. Also because of its familiar origin -Cyme, in the Aeolis-, one would expect a larger influence of the Aeolian language whether spoken or poetic.

Extralinguistic evidence:

I want to summarize the extralinguistic evidence in favour of the existence of one or more Aeolian poetic traditions:

1. The first evidence is the fact that there were other Lesbian poets before Sappho and Alcaeus. First, Lesches from Pyrrha, probably dating from the beginning of the 7th century B.C., and whom many sources affirm that is the author of the *Ilias Parva*. Then, of course, comes Terpander, who must have composed during the first half of the 7th century, because he supposedly won the first musical competition in the festival of the Carnea in Sparta in 646 B.C.⁴ Although Terpander's poetry was sung by a soloist, it was accompanied by a chorus. According to Pindar's information, Terpander composed scolia (T 25 Gostoli) and this could take him closer to the monodic poetry developed by Sappho and Alcaeus; hymn proems are also common to Terpander and Alcaeus. After Terpander comes Arion from Methymna who lived during the end of the 7th century

4. His evidence and fragments are presented and commented in the excellent edition by A. Gostoli, *Terpander* (Rome 1990). It is believed that Terpander is the creator of the barbiton, the composition of hexametric proems that are sung and the nome. There are various reports that confirm his fame, according to which he was called to Sparta due to a political revolt. Terpander is also at the origin of the proverb $\mu\epsilon\tau\acute{\alpha}$ Λέσβιον ᾠδόν· παροιμία ἐπὶ τῶν τὰ δεύτερα φερομένων, echoes of which may be found in Sappho (fr.106 πέροχος, ὡς δτ' αἰδοῖς ὁ Λέσβιος ἀλλοδάποισιν).

and the beginning of the 6th. He supposedly created the dithyrambus and he is associated to the fantastic legend of the dolphin, though no one doubts his historical existence. However, Arion's type of choral song has no relation to the Lesbian monody. Finally, we have information of two more poets: Periclitus, who is said to have been the last Lesbian to win the Carnea at the end of the 7th century, and Cepion, who was supposedly a disciple of Terpander and who, just like him, has a nome named after him. We must add to these historical names other mythical or semidivine poets connected in one way or another with the Aeolian area, among them and above all Orpheus⁵. It is no coincidence that Orpheus' head flowed along the Ebrus River and to the sea until it reached Lesbos. Probably, the myth refers to the antiquity of the prestigious citharoedic school represented by Terpander, his disciple Cepion and Arion from Methymna. In any case, all these facts prove that when Sappho and Alcaeus began to compose, there was already a lyric tradition in Lesbos and their poets had acquired fame outside the island.

2. Secondly, we must consider the metrics. Since Antoine Meillet, we know that the metrics used by Sappho and Alcaeus have special characteristics, such as the isosyllabism and the Aeolic base, that take us up to the common Greek time and even further, which we have to connect with the Indo-European metrics due to their parallelism with the Vedic metrics⁶. Sappho and Alcaeus inherited these metric forms from a long tradition, and they may have varied them only in certain cases. In 1974, Gregory Nagy investigated the «Homeric» formulas of Sappho fragment 44 and reached the conclusion that they reflect an inheritance independent from Homer, and that in each tradition they were adapted to the different metrics, which was lyric in the case of Sappho. In fact, Nagy found that the metrical and phraseological connections between the *Vedic Hymns* and Sappho are more than those with Homer⁷. Angus Bowie refers to metrics in the first chapter of his book concerning the language of the Lesbian poets, and he concludes that during a certain period, there was no difference between lyric metrics and epic metrics, so logically, there was

5. Also Linus, Pierus from Pieria, Oeager, Olen, Amphion, Anthedon and Tamyris. On some of them, cf. J. Pòrtulas, «Poetas míticos de Grecia», en *Actas del X Congreso Español de Estudios Clásicos*, Madrid 2001, pp. 289-312.

6. A. Meillet, *Les origines indo-européennes des mètres grecs*. Paris 1923.

7. G. Nagy, *Comparative Studies in Greek and Indic Metre*, Cambridge 1974.

also a common diction. This is important because it implies that not all metric connections between Lesbian poetry and Homer must necessarily be explained in terms of one influencing the other. And for the same reason, nor do the connections in vocabulary or phraseology have to be explained as homerisms⁸.

3. A third point to consider is that among Lesbian poets, we find versions of myths that vary from the official Homeric ones. The best example of this is Sappho's version describing the stay of the Achaeans at Lesbos after the sack of Troy (fr.17), since it varies from that transmitted by *Odyssey* 3.120ff. The myths created by the Lesbian poets have been especially studied by Eisenberger and more recently by Meyerhoff. The latter's main interest is precisely to separate the traditional mythical material of the Lesbian poets and then to discern those that move away from the Homeric tradition⁹.

Linguistic evidence

Under these assumptions, various scholars have tried to extract from Sappho and Alcaeus the text of new arguments that not only prove the existence of this Aeolian poetic tradition, but they also help to define it in more detail. In order to do this, they have carried out linguistic comparisons inside and outside the Greek language. In all this process, the above mentioned fragment forty-four (44) of Sappho has proven to be of great importance. As it is known, Lobel considered this poem to be false because it contained many linguistic and metric irregularities when compared to the supposed vernacular of Lesbos, and he also presented several formulas, expressions and epithets that were seemingly extracted from Homer. In general, the irregularities could also be interpreted as epicisms. Since the ideas of Lobel concerning the language of Sappho have been rejected, today there is no longer any doubt as to the authenticity of fragment 44.

1. First of all, it is important to mention the investigations that have

8. A.M. Bowie, *The Poetic Dialect of Sappho and Alcaeus*, New York 1981, pp. 16-46.

9. H. Eisenberger, *Der Mythos in der äolischen Lyrik*, Frankfurt 1956; D. Meyerhoff, *Traditioneller Stoff und individuelle Gestaltung. Untersuchungen zu Alkaios und Sappho*, Hildesheim 1984.

searched for a trace of the Indo-European *Dichtersprache* in the texts of Sappho and Alcaeus, and specially in Sappho's fr. 44. Marianne Naafs-Wilstra has investigated a group of nexus, epithets and concepts that may originate from the most ancient Indo-European poetry¹⁰. Some of these poetic expressions are well known, such as the formulas κλέος ἄφθιτον, μέλαινα γᾶ= and ε.υρηαν χθόνα, but there are others¹¹. The case of the formula κλέος ἄφθιτον in fr. 44 is no doubt the most striking, and more and more authors recognize an inheritance independent from Homer in Sappho's text. For example, the conceptual connection between Sappho and *Vedic Hymns* is very interesting because the nexus refers to fame in life, as opposed to Homer, where κλέος ἄφθιτον is the glory obtained after death¹². Trümpy also takes note of the dat. plu. φίλοις and the gen. Περάμοιο, both also from fr. 44¹³.

2. Authors such as Gallavotti, Grinbaum, Quattordio-Moreschini and Trümpy have also made the comparison with Mycenaean Greek¹⁴. Their research, originating from investigations concerning epics from the Mycenaean age, has explored the language of the Cretan-Mycenaean tablets for a trace of contact between Greek from the second millenium and Archaic lyric language. These investigations have been mainly focused towards the prehistory of choral lyrics, but a connection point between the Mycenaean texts and the monody of Lesbos has also been researched, as is the case of the above-mentioned Sappho's fragment 44. The compari-

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10. M.C. Naafs-Wilstra, «Indo-european «Dichtersprache» in Sappho and Alcaeus», *JIS* 15 (1987) pp. 273-283.
11. Βροδόπλαχυσ βροδοδάκτυλος, Ζεῦ πάτερ, Δίος θυγάτερ, κλυθί μοι, νέκταρ and expressions relating to the sweetness of voice.
12. E.D. Floyd, «*Kleos apthiton*: An Indo-European Perspective of Early Greek Poetry», *Glotta* 58 (1980) p. 133ff.; cf. also E. Risch, «Die ältesten Zeugnisse für κλέος ἄφθιτον», *ZVS* 100 (1987) 3ff., and A.T. Edwards, «κλέος ἄφθιτον and Oral Theory», *CQ* 38 (1988) 25ff.
13. C. Trümpy, *Vergleich des Mykenischen mit der Sprache der Chorlyrik*, Berna 1986, p. 14ff.
14. N.S. Grinbaum, «La koiné micenea e la formazione della lingua corale greca», en *Atti e Memorie del 1° Congresso Internazionale di Micenologia II*, Rome 1967, p. 875ff., and «Les textes créto-mycéniens et la langue de la poésie chorale grecque (Pindare)», *Studia Mycenaea. Proceedings of the Mycenaean Symposium*, Brno 1968, p. 75ff.; C. Gallavotti, «Tradizione micenea e poesia greca arcaica». *Atti e Memorie ...*, p. 831ff.; A. Quattordio Moreschini, «Tradizione micenea nella lingua della lirica greca», *RCCM* 19, (1977) 663ff.; C. Trümpy, *op. cit.*

son has not provided any significant information, which was expected considering the documentary character of the Mycenaean texts and the dialectal distance between Mycenaean Greek and the language of Sappho and Alcaeus¹⁵.

3. In the third place, there are two books written by Hooker and Bowie that are focused on internal study of the Greek language of the first millenium¹⁶. Their corresponding investigations, which can be mentioned in not detail here, basically examine the language and metrics of the Lesbian poems in relation to those of Homer, Hesiod and other Archaic authors. In general terms, both scholars defend the existence of an Aeolian traditional poetry that, as opposed to Nagy, they doubt whether it can be qualified as epic or as lyric. According to Hooker, this poetic tradition was formed during the 8th century B.C., but according to Bowie it originated in the Mycenaean times because it inherits the poetic *koine* which was prior to the migrations and the formation of dialectal groups, although he does accept of course that the tradition was reborn and extended again after the Dark Age. This poetic tradition would explain at least some of the controversial Aeolisms of Homer, as well as those of Hesiod, Eumelus from Corinth and the choral lyric (Alcman, Stesichorus, Ibycus, Pindar), and would certainly explain the seemingly spontaneous appearance of such an elaborated body of poetry with such complex meters as those of Sappho and Alcaeus. Bowie especially probes into linguistic aspects and arrives at the conclusion that the language of Sappho and Alcaeus must not be considered qualitatively different from that of other Archaic lyric poets; he also insists on the idea that everything that coincides with epics does not have to come from it. In his view, the language of Sappho and Alcaeus is a mixed poetic language in which the following coexist: 1) Lesbian dialectal forms as well as 2) Aeolian Archaisms derived from the poetic tradition he defends and 3) other Archaisms shared with the epic language but perhaps belonging to the language of Aeolian poems. They could be said to add also 4) morphological transformations created for metric reasons, 5) forms having Ionic

15. Only certain lexical and semantic coincidences can be registered, generally able to be described as Archaisms that are not necessarily lyrical, as well as some linguistic forms such as the dat. ἄρα of Alcaeus, also easily interpreted as epicism.

16. J.T. Hooker, *The Language and Text of the Lesbian Poets*. Innsbruck 1977; A.M. Bowie, *op. cit.*

influence but not obtained directly from the epic, and finally 6) forms taken directly from the epic. All this leads to the appearance of doublets. In the poems considered «abnormal» by Lobel, the high frequency of apparently epic forms could be explained by the basically dactylic nature of the meters in which most of them are composed.

The contribution of the vocabulary

In my opinion, there are undeniable arguments that can defend the existence of an Aeolian poetic tradition. This arguments may also be applied to acknowledge the undifferentiated character of this poetry which would not be referred to as lyrical nor epic until at least the 8th or the 7th century. This poetry maintained reciprocal influences with the Ionic tradition, just like the dialect had done since ancient times. It seems highly attractive to consider the idea that the Aeolisms from Eumelus and from mixed and choral lyrics, which are partly different from those of Homer, originate from an Aeolian poetic tradition.

As a starting point everything is correct, and I consider the extralinguistic arguments to be irrefutable. However, when one attempts to obtain specific results related to the linguistic, formulaic and thematic material that this Aeolian tradition must have handled, it becomes difficult to advance beyond mere hypotheses. Nevertheless, I believe some data from the vocabulary can contribute to this question. The field of vocabulary has been especially unattended by the modern critics of the language of Lesbian poets.

In a previous study, I researched all the non-Homeric vocabulary of the Lesbian poets with the intention of differentiating the traditional from the innovative¹⁷. Although I am aware of the difficulties involved in handling the vocabulary when studying literary traditions, I believe some interesting information can be obtained in relation to Aeolian poetry earlier to Sappho and Alcaeus. I will briefly enumerate them:

I. When comparing with the vocabulary from the Archaic non-Homeric hexametric poetry and the most Archaic lyrics, whether previous or contemporary to Lesbians, one may observe the following:

17. H. Rodríguez Somolinos, *El léxico de los poetas lesbios*. Madrid 1998.

1. The fact that sometimes Lesbians and the rest of the Archaic non-Homeric hexametric poetry contrast with Homer in their choosing of alternative forms *ἀίνναος*, *ἄχω*, *ὄχθος* as opposed to Hom. *ἀενάων*, *ἦχή*, *ὄχθη*, non-documented primary words in Homer (*ὄχλος*, *μόχθος*, *ἄνθεμον*, *μαχάνα*), terms with roots foreign to Homer (*ἄβρος*, *ἀμάρουχμα*, *βαῖος*, *κέγχρος*, *κίβισις*, *κωμάσδω*, *μέριμνα*, *ὄργα*, *σατίνα*, *σκόλυμος*) or themes different to those that appear with the same root in Homer (*ἀδίκημι*, *Ἐρραφιώταις εὔστρωτος*, *λύπημι*, *νόμος*, *σέμνος*, *χάλαμι*, *χρηστήριον*).

2. Evidence of *νόμος*, adjectival nexus or fixed expressions that contain terms foreign to Homer and common in non-Homeric poetry. Naturally, the formula adapts to the meter corresponding to each case. In the case of Sappho, for instance, we have:

1) *χρυσσοστέφαν'* Ἄφροδίτα (Sapph.33.1), comparable to Hes. *Fr.* 26.13 *χρυ[σ]τεφάνου* Ἄφροδίτης and with *h.Hom.*6.1 *χρυσσοστέφανον* ... Ἄφροδίτην, in the three cases at the end of the verse.

2) *χαλέπαν* δὲ *λύσον* ἐκ *μερίμναν* (Sapph.1.26) comparable to Hes. *Op.*178 *χαλεπὰς* δὲ *θεοὶ* δώσουσι *μερίμνας* and with Stesich.*PLille* 76A1.201 *μὴ χαλεπὰς* ποιεῖ *μερίμνας*.

3) *φαίνολις* ... *Αὔως* (Sapph. 104a.1, comparable to *hCer.*51 *φαινολις* Ἡώς).

4) The use of the adverbial neuter *ἀκαλάς*, a poetic Archaism, is also noteworthy in Sapph. 43.5 (*ἀκαλα κλόνειν*), in Hes.*Fr.*339 (*ἀκαλά προρέων*) and in the first element of the Homeric compound *ἀκαλαρρεΐτης* (*Il.*7.422 = *Od.* 19.434)¹⁸.

The imitation of Hesiod or the *Hymns* by Sappho can in no way be excluded, but the coincidence of more than two texts in three of these four examples seems to indicate an ancient tradition. And in the other example, the coincidence of *φαίνολις* accompanied by the name of the Dawn cannot be accidental.

3. In third place, we have a group of epithets that appear more than once in the Lesbian poems, often in Sappho as well as Alcaeus, and in Hesiod and/or the rest of the Archaic poetry. Usually, in the Lesbian poetry we see variations from the Hesiodic uses. In this aspect *βροδόπαχς*, *χρυσσοκόμαις* and the aforementioned *χρυσσοστέφανος* are especially

18. Also *ἀκαλά* *κτυπήσω* [in *Lyr.Alex.Adesp.*SHell.992.1 = *Lyr.Adesp.*475.1S, probably a Hellenistic poem.

noteworthy, as they are profusely used in Hesiod, Sappho (or Sappho and Alcaeus) and the lyric, specially choral¹⁹. Everything seems to indicate that these poetic terms were quite alive in the poetry surrounding Sappho. The words ἐρῶεις and ἄβρογ also seem to be ancient poetic words, often used by Sappho and Alcaeus and which both frequently employed by all the genres of post-Homeric poetry.

II. This is related to the repetition within the work of Sappho of certain nexus or quasi-formulas that may derive from an earlier tradition. For example, Sappho uses twice the nexus χρυσοπέδιλος Αὔωσ (Sapph. 103.10, 123), εὔποδα νύμφαν (Sapph.103.2, 103B.2) and λιγύραν αἰοίδαν (Sapph.101A.2, 103.7), as well as the sentences χρῶα γῆρας ἦδη (Sapph.21.6, 58.13) and φαίνεται μοι κῆνος (Sapph.31.1), with a minimum variation in φαίνεται Foi κῆνος (Sapph.165). The appearance of ἄχω θεσπεσία in Sapph.44.27 and Alc.130b.19, as opposed to Hom. ἦχη θεσπεσίη (II.8.159, etc.), is especially interesting. All this information indicates a traditional oral material connected with the type of verse and music that was available to the poets.

III. Last of all, within the vocabulary employed by the Lesbian poets, but absent from the previous or contemporary authors, we can isolate a group of unusual terms which are almost all *hapax* appearing to be the remains of an ancient language whether poetic or common.

In my opinion, what is really of interest in order to investigate an Aeolian poetic tradition earlier to Sappho is the search for elements that, apart from their poetic (and Archaic) character, demonstrate a probable Aeolian origin. With a similar procedure to the one used by Hooker and Bowie with phonetics and morphology, I have tried to look for such Archaic Aeolian terms in the poetry of Sappho and Alcaeus. However, this is not easy. The poetic Archaisms do not always seem Aeolian, and when their dialectal character is confirmed, it usually originates from lexicographers or commentators from various centuries after the disappearance of the dialects. This wide temporary lapse is the reason why these authors can only base their dialectal attributions on the use that Lesbian poets gave to certain terms. On other occasions, we obtain clear

19. Also χρυσοπέδιλος, if *Od.*11.604 is really to be judged spurious.

dialectal features, but they are not poetic and not always exclusive to the Aeolian area.

However, I believe that it is worthwhile to point out those terms that have an Archaic and poetic character, without considering whether they belong to the Lesbos (or Aeolian) area or not. The indicators of both characters are partly the linguistic features and partly the use that authors from before and after (especially Homer) apply to the same word or, more frequently, to other related forms.

In Sappho, we can point out:

- ἀβάκης, *calm, quiet* (Sapph.120.2), documented also in Hsch., *EM*, Zonar.; cf. ἀβακέω in Hom., ἀβακέως in poet. in *EM*.
- αὔα, *dawn* (Sapph.175), attested in A.D., *Et.Gud.*, *EM*.; cf. boeot. gen. ἄας.
- ἄωρος, *sleep* (Sapph.151); documented also in Call.*Fr.*177.28 in the form ὄρος; cf. Hsch.*s.u.* ὄρος and ὄριος as conjecture to Mesom.2.22 and Hsch.
- βόρημαι, *to devour* (Sapph.96.17), βορέω var. in Nic.*Th.*394; cf. βοράω in *EM* 216.14.
- δαύω *to sleep* (Sapph.126), also attested in Hsch. (*s.uu.* δαύειν and ἔδαυσεν), Hdn.Gr., *Et.Gen.*, *EM* and in the compound ἐνδαύει of Lyc.1353; cf. the adverb ἀδανῶς ἐγρηγόρως Hsch.
- ὄλοφυς *lament* (Sapph.21.3), attested in Hsch. ὄλοφυς· οἴκτος. ἔλεος. θρηῖνος.

Likewise, we could add ῥέθως, whose literary documentation is quite extensive (Homer, Sophocles, Euripides, Theocritus, Apollonius Rhodius, Nicander, Callimachus, etc.) Commentators refer to its Aeolian character, just like the compound ρ(ρεθομαλίδας, which is transmitted by grammarians and lexicographers and assigned by some modern authors to the work of Lesbian poets²⁰.

Alcaeus has also other such comparable words: ἀμάνδαλος, ἄρκος,

20. The two verbs that C. Gallavotti, «L'ode saffica dell' ostracon», *BPEC* 1 n.s. (1980) 3ff., felt he saw in the Sapphic *ostracon* are much more doubtful: the first is μαλίαιμι, *softly resounding*, resulting from the interpretation of μαλίαν as neutr. pres. part. arranged with ὕδωρ in the sentence ὕδωρ ψύχρον κελάδει δι' ὕδων μαλίαν and based on Hsch. μαλίαν· εὔφημον, ἥσυχον, πρᾶειαν. The second is θύσσομαι, *become agitated*, cutting as κασκίασται θυσσομένων what is usually read as ἐσκίαστ' αἰθυσσομένων (cf. Hsch. *s.uu.* θυσσόμεναι, θύσσειται).

ἴθαρος, ἰλλάεις, μάθος, μύναμαι, σέος and the thematic form τέρενος. Some of them only find linguistic parallels outside the Greek language, such as ἴθαρος (cf. ancient Indian *idhra-*, but also Mycenaean *i-ta-ra-jo*), μύναμαι (cf. Hittite *munnai-*)²¹ or τέρενος (cf. Sabinian *terenum* and Latin *tenero-*).

As a conclusion, I think there is no need to demonstrate the importance of tradition in Greek poetry from Homer to Nonnus; even less so with Archaic lyric. Although we speak of literary lyric since Alcman or Sappho, and poems were no doubt recorded in writing, the musical-poetic activity still had an oral and traditional character. However, probably the importance of Homeric tradition in the linguistic, formulaic and thematic material of the Archaic lyric in general has been somewhat exaggerated. The combination of all the information obtained by the various authors in relation to literary tradition, metrics, themes, phraseology and the language of Hesiod and the *Homeric Hymns* on one hand and Sappho and Alcaeus on the other, clearly speak in favour of the existence of traditional poetic materials belonging to the Aeolian areas.

It is well known that Sappho is a very innovative author, almost revolutionary, in the contents of her personal poems; but we find other poems that have many traditional and popular elements. This same complexity appears in the language and, as I have confirmed, in the way Sappho uses vocabulary. Along with a large amount of innovations, quantitatively larger than those of Alcaeus, the vocabulary and phraseology also allow us to trace certain elements that point toward earlier poetic traditions that were independent of Homer.

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