

## SAPPHO, HERODOTUS, AND THE *HETAIRA*

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THIS STUDY BEGAN with a dot—or rather, two dots. The first is the editorial dot printed by Lobel and subsequent editors under the first omega of Sappho fragment 15b.11 L-P, V (= *P Oxy.* 1231 frag. 1.i.11), as supplemented by Wilamowitz:

Δ]ωρίχα τὸ δεύ[τερον, ὥς πόθε[ννον

That dot leads to the second, for what is visible on the papyrus before the rho is merely a dot of ink, and it is not compatible with an omega.<sup>1</sup> The printed text depends entirely on a story about Sappho and her brother Charaxus. According to ancient reports, Charaxus went to Egypt as a wine merchant, became enamored there of a slave-prostitute named Rhodopis, and lavished sums on her; at the least he bought her her liberty. Upon his return to Mytilene, Sappho, calling the woman not Rhodopis but Doricha, composed a poem or poems attacking him, or perhaps both him and her, on account of this expenditure. With Δ]ωρίχα, fragment 15b could be interpreted as part of Sappho's invective.

The discrepancy between the printed text and the papyrus led me to re-examine our understanding of the evidence for the story. It first occurs in a digression in Book 2 of Herodotus (without the name Doricha) and it recurs with additions (including the name) and variations in Strabo, Athenaeus, Ovid[?], and other late sources; an epigram of Posidippus also refers to it. I have concluded that all the evidence that bears on the story will not help restore this or any other fragment of Sappho and does not point to the existence of any such narrative or rebuke in poems known or lost to us. For from Herodotus' tale of the *hetaira* Rhodopis, interpreted in the context of his narrative, and from the hints in the later sources, what we can reconstruct is not a poem of Sappho's but a stage in the fifth-century reception of Sappho and her poetry, one most likely represented in the work of Cratinus or of another of Herodotus' comic contemporaries.

1. The dot of ink is easily visible in the photograph (pl. 6) in Williamson 1995 and in *P Oxy.* vol. 10, pl. 2; I am grateful to Dr. Dirk Obbink, Lecturer in Papyrology at Oxford, for assisting me in examining the original in the Bodleian Library, where he confirmed my reading of the papyrus. The *editio princeps* printed Δωρίχα, ignoring the dot; Lobel (1925) printed the omega outside the bracket. I will discuss the text in more detail in section 6.

I will refer to the texts and apparatuses in the editions of Sappho by Voigt (1971), Lobel and Page (1963), and Campbell ([1982]1990) by the editors' names or initials. "Sa." = "Sappho" in abbreviations.

## 1. COMPILING THE EVIDENCE

The references to this story are presented as testimonia in the modern editions of Sappho, but shorn of the original contexts that would allow us to judge their significance. Although slight differences in the presentations in recent editions hint at difficulties in interpreting them,<sup>2</sup> these all reflect the assumptions, which Denys Page states explicitly in his commentary, that we can see Sappho's text through the transparent filter of the later authors, who would have read in the poems the biographical information they report: "that Herodotus (*with Sappho's poems in front of him*) confused two different persons, seems to me as devoid of likelihood as of confirmation" and "the extravagance of the liaison . . . aroused her fury. [note:] *The tradition is uniform on this point, and there is little room for doubt that the common source was Sappho's text*" [my emphases].<sup>3</sup>

These assumptions are problematic. Recent studies have given us more insight into how both ancient biographical inferences and modern preconceptions have influenced our reading and reconstructions of the texts. The link between the story and the text could be discussed in the light of these as an episode of modern reception; the starting point could be Wilamowitz' Δωρίχα as a typical instance of his expectation that he would find proper names.<sup>4</sup> But the problem is complicated by the authority of Herodotus and the apparent confirmations of his narrative in Strabo and Athenaeus. These have conferred on the story the status of a given, and exempted it from review.<sup>5</sup> Yet in the last few decades discussions of Herodotus have come to examine (in the light of modern criticism generally) the structure and func-

2. In L-P we need to look at Sappho frag. 202, which puts it among the evidence for Sappho's poetry. But Voigt, who adheres to the enumeration of L-P, vacates position 202 (without comment) and presents the relevant testimonia as frag. 254a–g, among the evidence for the poet's life that had not been included in L-P. Campbell ([1982]1990) retains the number 202, but includes additional material among the "Testimonia" that he places before the fragments, with new numbers; this procedure has the odd result, in one case, of separating into two parts a continuous passage from Athenaeus. The fullest citations and least analytic collection of material are in Gallavotti (1962, vol 1, esp. Test. 13–15, 29, 71); I will cite sources not included in 202 L-P = 254 V by Campbell T and Voigt numbers. No editor of Sappho includes the alternate stories about Rhodopis that I will discuss.

3. [1955] 1965, p. 49, n. 1, p. 51 with n. 1; Page supplies here, in his discussion of frags. 5 and 15, a much fuller version of the passage from Herodotus, but not of the later tradition. His discussion is primarily a polemic against interpretations that cite Sappho's disapproval of her brother's behavior as evidence of her good character (he names only Weir Smyth [p. 50, n. 3], but the original is in Wilamowitz 1913, 73).

4. Cf. \*Αγαλλι in frag. 16 (Nicosia 1976, p. 130, n. 23). I will not rework that approach here, but I do rely on the studies that have been devoted to reading Sappho, and to understanding the context in which she composed poetry, without adopting biographical hypotheses or any of the tendentious assumptions that mark her modern reception. Critical overviews of the biographical traditions, followed by attempts to confront the texts or particular problems without their influence, can be found in Williamson 1995, esp. her first chapter, and Most 1996; the polemical treatment by Parker 1996, which is directed especially at modern constructions of Sappho's social circumstances, has full bibliographic notes; duBois 1995 emphasizes the importance of confronting the texts without familiarizing biographical expectations. For bibliography on the reception, see Most, Parker, and the other essays in Greene 1996, and add Prins 1999. On ancient biography, see below, and n. 30.

5. The restoration of Sa. 15.11 is now so completely taken for granted that the fragment itself has come to be regarded as proof of the story on which it depends. Thus Lloyd's claim, "Sappho's F5 and 15b both speak of her brother's indiscretions, F15b naming the woman as Doricha" (1975–88, 3:86), overlooks the fact that even if we extend the greatest credulity, frag. 15b contains no reference to indiscretions and is only connected to Charaxus by the mention of the restored name. Denys Page, in his rebuttal to Wilamowitz'

tion of his narrative, his stated or implied purpose, his assertions of authority, his modes of reporting, and his cultural context, greatly widening the simple controversy, begun in antiquity, over his reliability. These discussions suggest that it is worth asking what the story is doing in his history before we take it at face value.<sup>6</sup>

And it is even more open to question whether Strabo, Athenaeus, and the later sources are independent guides to what was in the poems. Each could have known a text of Sappho, but each was also a link in a chain of ancient scholarship and could have had in front of himself the text of Herodotus or various types of prior, post-classical scholarship, including peripatetic and Hellenistic biography, and have been repeating information from them. The work of, especially, Lefkowitz (1981) and Arrighetti (1987) has shown that "no one from the late fifth century onward expected what we call 'biography' to be historical in our sense of the word history, but that rather the work and the man defined and represented each other" (Lefkowitz 1991, 125), and in consequence the biographical tradition was rich in tendentious inferences and unconcerned with evaluating sources.<sup>7</sup> To use the Hellenistic testimonia, we need to consider what indications they give of their origin.

To reassess the evidence I will first examine the testimonia in their contexts. In the case of Herodotus, the information about Charaxus is just one

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estimation of Sappho, provided the most detailed, and most widely cited, account of the correlations between the fragment and the story ([1955] 1965, 48–51). Part of the tradition is cited as reliable information in *OCD*<sup>3</sup>, s.v. "Naukratis" (with an erroneous reference to Sappho) and the story is credited by historians of varying interests (Murray 1993, 231; Boardman 1980, 132; Reinsberg 1993, 170), and even by two recent literary critics explicitly wary of biographical data, duBois (1995, 181–82) and Williamson: "The number of allusions to this story suggest that it had some basis. . . and it is plausible that her main anxiety should have been for her family's name and fortune" (1995, 139).

6. The issues involved are represented in the papers and responses in Boedeker 1987b and are discussed especially in Dewald's and Marincola's bibliographic essay there (pp. 9–40); Moles (1993, 88–92, 114–21) gives a balanced account of the contemporary debate within his own argument; see also Thomas 1996. Different conclusions involve different claims about the thematic significance of the narratives. I rely here on a consensus that Herodotus' presentation of himself and his stories deserves careful attention. Thus, at one extreme, Fehling (1989) has called the veracity of almost every statement Herodotus makes into doubt and urged more attention to Herodotus' novelistic techniques, but Lateiner (1991), too, who argues on behalf of Herodotus as a historian, proposes that we pay attention to the nuances in his presentation of his sources. Hunter (1982, 304–13) surveys the range of opinions about Herodotus and the highly discrepant theories of Herodotus' sources for Book 2; Lloyd, in his three-volume commentary (1975–88), attempts, with complete confidence in the essential historicity of Herodotus' work, to tease out these sources in detail. In regard to matters that belong to early history, whether the story is true and what kind of claim Herodotus makes on behalf of his version are separate questions; in the case of this passage, the problem is what kind of claim we understand him to be making. Hartog (1988) has reformulated much of the debate over the *Histories* as a whole in terms of Herodotus' effort to establish credibility with his audience (see especially pp. 212–59, 310–22). My concern here is much narrower, but, as will appear below, I find the passage under discussion relevant to Herodotus' presentation of his efforts as a historian, and therefore I regard the audience as part of the context; I assume that the audience was Athenian.

7. Even those who attach considerable weight to the ancient evidence must have reservations: the whole matter of Sappho's unrequited love for Phaon has few, if any, adherents, and so it is generally recognized that comedy has infiltrated at least this falsehood into the biographical tradition. Dörrie (1975, 15–29) provides a hypothetical reconstruction of how the biography was derived entirely from the inventions of Middle Comedy and from gossipy exaggerations of Alexandrian scholarly conclusions. His model depends on the unlikely assumption of an almost complete ignorance of the actual poetry through the fifth and fourth centuries (apart from the probable efficacy of oral tradition, there is evidence of a book text; see Lobel 1925, xiii–xiv, on stichometric notations and Yatromanolakis 2001, 166, on a possible early vase representation).

part of a coherent story that is actually about Rhodopis and of which the other elements have no likelihood of an origin in Sappho's poems. That story, although apparently a digression, is linked thematically to its immediately preceding section, the story of the pyramid-builders, and to the whole preceding narration of Egyptian history.<sup>8</sup> Simply as a question of method, modern scholarship seems to have started off on the wrong foot by positing a separate source for the Charaxus element (and by implication requiring a separate source for each element) before investigating the larger question of origin raised by the narrative as a whole; in fact, it will appear likely that supposing a separate origin for the individual elements creates more problems than it solves, and that Herodotus' handling of the whole story is better explained by the assumption that he was putting to his own use a story already familiar to his audience. The fuller contexts will also make it easier to recognize the direct or indirect dependence of the later authors on Herodotus or subsequent scholarship, and the unlikelihood that they were consulting a text of the poems. I will also add the evidence of the epigram by Posidippus, which does not confirm the modern reconstruction of the story, and reexamine the possible references to any part of the story in the surviving fragments of Sappho. In the last two sections I will attempt to reconstruct an alternative origin for the story and speculate on what, in Sappho's poems and reputation, inspired the fiction.<sup>9</sup>

In the following three sections I have underlined the words in my summaries of the texts that correspond to the portions excerpted in Lobel-Page's and Voigt's testimonia, and I have italicized some words (in addition to significant transliterated terms) whose importance might become apparent only as the evidence accumulates.

## 2. HERODOTUS: PYRAMIDS AND PROSTITUTES

Among the many interwoven themes of Book 2, the story of Rhodopis' life brings together—partly concluding but not resolving—some topics and motifs related to the question of memory and memorialization. This theme, of course, occurs throughout his work, but Herodotus pointedly reminds us of his own interest in these topics near the start of the Egyptian *logos*, and they are also topics of particular importance for the Egyptians, so many of whose monuments are memorials (their interest in their own antiquity is

8. Boedeker shows how some stories, even though they are present in a "paratactic" rather than "syntactic" relationship to the main narrative, comment on it by "suggestion and juxtaposition" (1987a, 201). Benardete, who argues that all portions of the narrative are completely integrated into Herodotus' exposition of his thought, offers the fullest exploration of the themes of this passage, as well as helpful observations on the spiritual and the material in the Egyptian *logos* and in the pyramid story in particular (1969, 1–6, 30–31, and chap. 2, *passim*).

9. We are not faced with a stark choice of accepting the testimonia at face value or eliminating them in every respect. Parker's polemic (1996, cited above) rejects almost everything. Lardinois' reply (1994, 58–64) argues that the continued availability of the text gives some credibility to the testimonia, so that they should be read critically but can be trusted in some respects. He is, however, addressing a general feature of the corpus (the age of the audience) and not a particular event or story (he too cites the Phaon episode as an example of a misreading of a first-person reference that is typical of ancient biography). I will be more interested here in the literary history that the testimonia, collectively, imply.

the first thing we learn about them [2.2]).<sup>10</sup> It becomes clear that the Egyptian notion of preservation in time includes a conception of the afterlife radically different from the Greeks', for they take care to preserve the material body as a correlate of the individual soul even after death. One of the markers of Herodotus' identification of himself as a Greek—of his distancing himself from the Egyptians, whose concern for the past he seems to admire—is that he shrinks from—indeed, makes a point of shrinking from—the fact that they also preserve the body of a god who died; in these contexts he adopts a periphrasis that avoids both the name Osiris and (usually) the fact of his divinity.<sup>11</sup>

A peculiar aspect of Herodotus' presentation of this theme in the historical section of Book 2 that culminates in the Rhodopis episode is that he joins to it the theme of female sexuality. Stories and descriptions involving titillating sexual detail are characteristic of Herodotus' ethnographies in general, and are a key element in their orientalism: the "other" is defined by its deviance from "our" sexual practices. Many of the stories in Book 2 have parallels in the other ethnographies, and individually they may have additional thematic connections. But it is particularly characteristic of Book 2 that the stories involving sexual topics are closely interwoven with reports of memorial monuments and dedications. Note, in contrast, that sexuality does not figure at all as an aspect of the monumental buildings of the Babylonians (or others) in Book 1, although Book 1 certainly has its share of discussions of sexual interest. By this interweaving of sexual deviance with material preservation, Herodotus marks his awareness of the unreliability of the Egyptian form of memory and, indirectly, makes a case for his own way of understanding how, within the Greek tradition, memory of the past is to be achieved.

Book 2 of the *Histories* begins with a survey of the geography, anthropology, and natural history of Egypt. In chapter 77 Herodotus turns from the fauna to the people. He opens with the remark that by cultivating μνήμη the Egyptians of the land above the Delta have become λογιώτατοι (77.1). But the significance of that comment is left hanging, for instead of embarking on

10. His *apologia* for the length of the narrative in 35.1 (. . . πλείστα θωμάσια ἔχει καὶ ἔργα λόγον μέζω παρέχεται πρὸς πᾶσαν χώραν) closely connects it with the program of memorialization announced at the start of Book 1 (ἔργα μεγάλα τε καὶ θωμαστά). For a summary of the passages noting the Egyptian interest in recording and remembering, see Hartog 1988, 280. The use of major buildings and dedications as historical memorials is not unique to Book 2, of course, but it is especially prominent there; Erbse (1992, 149) supposes that Herodotus took his general pattern for the use of monuments from his Egyptian sources.

11. 2.61.1: τὸν δὲ τύπονται, οὐ μοι ὁσιόν ἐστι λέγειν, 86.1: . . . τοῦ οὐκ ὁσιον ποιεῖμαι τὸ οὐνομα ἐπὶ τοιούτῳ πρῆγματι ὀνομάζειν, 132.2: . . . τὸν οὐκ ὀνομαζόμενον θεὸν ὑπ' ἐμεῦ ἐπὶ τοιούτῳ πρῆγματι, 170.1: . . . τοῦ οὐκ ὁσιον ποιεῖμαι ἐπὶ τοιούτῳ πρῆγματι ἐξαγορεύειν τοῦνομα. Despite his language, there is no evidence that this scrupulosity has to do with respecting any Egyptian taboo. Most commentators have attributed Herodotus' refusal to name Osiris in these passages to his general reluctance (2.3.2) to relate what he heard in Egypt about *ta theia* (Lloyd 1975–88, 2:17–19, 356; Benardete 1969, p. 53 and n. 44; Lateiner 1991, 64–67), but there is a difference between this periphrasis, a *praeteritio* that occurs each time in a discussion of funerary practices or remembrances and that thereby emphasizes that the immortals died and have mortal remains among the Egyptians, and the passages in which he actually does not provide information (cf. the mystery practices connected to Osiris further on in chaps. 170–71). In chaps. 61–62 he is not otherwise reticent, nor does he identify the breast-beating he describes as in any way part of a religious mystery.

the history it could seem to promise, he continues as if he had merely made one ethnographic observation, and goes on to make others. He describes the care of the body and other customs of the Egyptians, and ends with a description of mummification, the longest and most detailed segment of the section. In this—the preeminent passage for the Egyptians' memorialization of the material body—the thematic elements I have mentioned are conjoined for the first time. Herodotus draws attention at the start (86.2) to the existence of the mummified body of the one whom he will not name (i.e., the god Osiris) and closes with the information that the bodies of prominent or beautiful women were kept back from the potentially necrophiliac embalmers for a few days (89). After this—as if he had forgotten something—he reiterates (91.1) an earlier observation (79.1) that the Egyptians do not adopt the customs of Greeks or others, in order to insert an exception, the Chemmites, who did observe the Greek form of memorialization, an ἀγῶνα γυμνικόν (91.4)—that is, a commemoration featuring the (non-sexual) Greek style of nudity—for the presence (not death) of a hero. After finishing the ethnography with remarks on life in the Delta, Herodotus begins the historical section anticipated in his opening remark, announcing his almost complete dependence on the *logoi* of the Egyptians (99.1). But these *logoi* now have a cultural context that sets them apart from those of the Greeks.

After describing the works of Min, the first king, he passes over 330 rulers who left nothing significant to show, mentioning only the one queen, Nitocris, famous for her revenge of her brother's assassination, and Moeris, who excavated a lake. The first career he describes at length is that of Sesostris, who, in addition to other markers of his achievements, commemorated his victories over enemies who lacked courage by setting up pillars marked with a woman's genitals (102.5, 106.1).<sup>12</sup> His successor Pheros suffered a blindness that could only be cured by the urine of a woman who had not committed adultery. He had difficulty locating one—his wife and the others who failed are commemorated in the existence of the city in which he put them to death by fire—but he married the woman whose urine proved successful; he also put up a number of dedications celebrating the recovery of his sight. Given the requirements of the cure, it is reasonable to see here a metonymic transformation of a story of *impotence*; just as the private incapacity is transferred to the visible eye, the women's normally hidden moral state is rendered material and verifiable. Pheros' successor was Proteus. In a lengthy digression (113–19), Herodotus recounts the Egyptians' story of Helen's sojourn in Egypt during his reign. In this account, Paris was forced ashore on his way back to Troy with Helen and the property he had stolen from Menelaus; Proteus, condemning Paris for this treatment of his host, deprived him of all his ill-gotten gains. Herodotus demonstrates that Homer must have known this version of Helen's story, but had rejected it because it is not so suitable to *epic poetry* as the story he does tell. The digression

12. Between the two mentions of the pillars, Herodotus discusses, among other things, the probable Egyptian origin of the non-Greek practice of circumcision. Sesostris' pillars reverse the Greek herm, which Herodotus took pains to describe as a wholly Greek invention in chap. 51.

emphasizes the contrast between *logos* (Egyptian and Herodotean) and Greek poetry as the memory of the past; the former prosaically makes sexual escapades unheroic and reprehensible, while Greek poetry treats them as a motive for heroic action.<sup>13</sup> He himself prefers the *logos* of the Egyptians, which agrees with his own estimation (*epilegomenos*) of the improbability of the Homeric version (120); but Herodotus emphasizes divine justice as the motivation. Throughout, Herodotus maintains his stance that he is reporting what he heard from the Egyptians; he makes no mention of Stesichorus or any possible Greek source.

Although the Egyptians may condemn adultery, we are at once reminded that their stories are marked by the aberrant treatment of female sexuality, as well as by their peculiar notions of how life continues after death. Herodotus makes an immediate transition in chapter 121 to a long story about Proteus' successor Rhampsinitus, who was enormously wealthy but plagued by a tricky thief; he set his daughter up as a *prostitute* as part of a plan to catch him, yet ultimately married his daughter to him.<sup>14</sup> The history of Rhampsinitus also makes prominent the theme of the continuity of life, for he visited the underworld. The description of the ritual that commemorates his trip gives Herodotus the chance to remark on the Egyptian belief in the immortality of the soul and in transmigration (123.2). This remark is immediately followed by the stories of the pyramid-builders, in which the two themes of sexuality and memorialization again come together.

Herodotus feels no need to introduce or describe pyramids or explain their purpose, either here or earlier in Book 2 when he referred to the pyramids as known landmarks (2.8, 2.12, 2.97; other pyramids are mentioned in 101 and more fully described in 148–49). He brings on Rhampsinitus' successor Cheops (124) with the report that he ended the long history of good rule for Egypt, for he closed the shrines, prevented sacrifices, and instead set his subjects to great labor on his own behalf.<sup>15</sup> Herodotus describes their labor of building what turns out to be Cheops' pyramid, and ends with the story that Cheops was so unrestrained in evil that he set up his daughter as a *prostitute* in order to acquire sufficient funds for it. She added a surcharge in kind, one brick from each customer, in order to *leave a memorial* (μνημῆιον καταλιπέσθαι) of herself: with these she built her own smaller pyramid, in front of her father's. Cheops' successor, his brother Chephren, gets less than a page (127), despite his pyramid; it was smaller than Cheops', but the lower course was of fancy (ποικίλος) *Ethiopian stone*. He continued Cheops' closing of the shrines; both brothers were hated by later Egyptians,

13. To Herodotus' question, whether the Greeks tell a μάταιον λόγον about Troy (118.1), the Egyptian answer appears to be, yes. "Empty" or "idle" words (LSJ, s.v.) are not merely false. Herodotus is picking up a theme from the start of Book 1, where he minimized the significance of the Homeric story and was clearly setting up his own history in competition with epic.

14. For an analysis of the structure of this story as a contest between the king and the thief in which other Herodotean themes are prominent, see Munson 1993, 38–41. Herodotus marks the prostitution episode as unbelievable (121ε1.4).

15. Benardete (1969, 55) notes the significant juxtaposition of the mention of metempsychosis and of Cheops' closing of the shrines (below); its significance is not lessened by the fact that a belief in metempsychosis is actually contrary to all evidence of Egyptian religion (Wilson 1970, 8–10).

who *name the pyramids* after a contemporary shepherd. Chephren's successor, Cheops' son Mycerinus, reopened the shrines and was a just ruler (129). He is also associated with a curious dedication and ritual, involving a gold-plated wooden cow and an adjacent chamber with statues of naked women (which Herodotus saw). There are alternative stories explaining this dedication. In one, the cow is simply the tomb of his beloved daughter; according to the other, the king had raped his own daughter. The cow is featured in an annual ritual of mourning for the god whom Herodotus does not name (132.2). Mycerinus also had a pyramid built for himself, much smaller than Cheops', but built half way up out of the *Ethiopian stone*; it is this pyramid that some Greeks (μετεξέτεροι Ἑλλήνων) say was built by Rhodopis the prostitute (ἐταίρης γυναικός, 134.1).

At this point Herodotus digresses from the royal history to discuss Rhodopis, asserting that those who attribute the pyramid to her can hardly have known who Rhodopis was; for her wealth was not adequate to the expense of a pyramid, and she lived much later, in the time of *Amasis*. The argument of his digression can be seen from an outline:

I. [Her background, which explains when she lived]

A. [her origin]

1. She was a Thracian, owned by Iadmon, and a fellow slave of *Aesop* the prose story-writer (τοῦ λογοποιοῦ).
2. We know that *Aesop* was a slave of Iadmon's from what happened later in *Delphi*:

Iadmon's grandson took recompense for *Aesop's* murder.

B. [The start of her career]

1. She was brought to Egypt to work by Xantheus the Samian.
2. She was freed at great expense by the Mytilinean Charaxus, son of Scamandronymus and brother of Sappho the song writer (τῆς μουσοποιοῦ).

II. [Her deeds, which explain her wealth]

A. [She was successful in her profession]

1. She stayed on in *Egypt* and by exercising her charm made a fortune, relative to who she was, but *not sufficient for a pyramid*.
2. We know the extent of her wealth from what is in *Delphi*.

Desiring to leave a *memorial* (μνημῆιον . . . καταλιπέσθαι) by doing something *unique*, she dedicated a tenth of her wealth in the form of iron roasting spits (ὀβελοῦς).

B. The *hetairai* of *Naucratis* typically exercise great charm.

1. [This is seen in their fame]
  - a. Rhodopis, the subject of this *logos*, was famous throughout Greece.
  - b. *Archidice*, who lived later, was the subject of *song* throughout Greece, although less gossiped about in conversation.
2. [and in the consequences of their activities]
 

When Charaxus returned home after freeing Rhodopis, Sappho, in lyric, rebuked him vehemently (κατεκερτόμησέ μιν).<sup>16</sup>

16. Compare the analysis by Lloyd (1975–88, 3:84–87), who remarks that the detailed comment on the expenditure is “deferred, somewhat untidily” to the next chapter after Herodotus first mentions it. But Herodotus has thematic concerns that provide the structure of the exposition and take precedence over the need—as perceived by Lloyd—to document his observations one at a time. The structure also reflects traditional formal features. The introduction of Charaxus begins a ring narrative that is closed by the reference to his fate at his sister's hands at the end of the chapter. That also closes (ῥοδόπιος μὲν νυν πέρι



After the digression on Rhodopis, Herodotus relates the activities of three more kings and brings what we might call his prehistorical section to an end. He repeats that this has been the *logos* of the Egyptians (142) and summarizes the account of human and divine chronology that they provided to him and, earlier, to the *logios* Hecataeus. When he resumes the history, he identifies what follows as the common *logos* of Egyptians and others. No sexual themes recur until the story of the final king, Amasis. In the story of the transition from Apries to Amasis Herodotus makes his next, and final, reference to the corpse of the god whom he will not name (170); he then relates how Amasis, upon coming to the throne, gave the Egyptians a lesson on the mutability of material things (172). Amasis, a pious philhellene, took a Greek wife, but, *impotent* with her, falsely accused her of using magic against him. Unlike Pheros' wife, however, she survived; after her silent vow of a statue dedicated to Aphrodite, the king was finally able to consummate their marriage.

The Egyptians' *logos* may be opposed to Greek song in respect to the latter's portrayal of erotic interest as a heroic motive, but it nonetheless features fathers who pander daughters and one who perhaps commits incest, adultery as a serious problem, pillars marked with female genitalia (the opposite of the Greek practice), and an emphasis on the body rather than the soul; their memory of the past mirrors their fear of necrophilia in their memorial practice of preserving bodies. Rhodopis, the third example of a prostitute, is correlated with Cheops' daughter; like her, she wanted to leave a memorial—*μνημῖον καταλιπέσθαι*—of her earnings. The term *μνημῖον* occurs only in these two places in Herodotus, despite the frequency of *μνη*-derivatives throughout the work and the ordinariness of that phrase in Greek. The repetition confirms that the Rhodopis episode is to be understood in thematic connection to the historical section, and is not just incidentally related to it by the attribution of the pyramid. (It does not matter whether one regards this as the unconscious reflex of a fabulist whose methods are essentially similar to those of an oral poet, or the deliberate signal of a self-conscious prose compiler.) And while Rhodopis is like the earlier prostitute in her desire for the memorial, she is like the later prostitute Archidice in being known in song (although more indirectly): through her association with the brother of the *musopoios* Sappho, her erotic exploit, however reprehensible, became a poetic subject. The digression about Rhodopis looks backward to the way the past is preserved in Egyptian *logos* and in Greek song.

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*πέπαι*) the encompassing narrative of Rhodopis that begins with the summary point—her wealth—and then drops back to tell her birth (Thrace) and upbringing (Iadmon, Xantheus, Charaxus), describes her exploits, and concludes with a generalization about the marvels of her class and a slight overshoot to the future of one character in the story (on the structure of such narratives, see Slater 1983; the influence of hymnic patterns—*genos, trophe, praxeis, kleos*—is also evident). The portion of the text quoted as a testimonium reads: 'Ροδῶπις δὲ ἐξ Αἴγυπτον ἀπῆκετο Ξάνθω τοῦ Σαμίου κομίσαντος, ἀπικομένη δὲ κατ' ἐργασίην ἐλύθη χρημάτων μεγάλων ὑπὸ ἀνδρὸς Μυτιληναίου Χαράξου τοῦ Σκαμανδρωνύμου παιδός, ἀδελφεοῦ δὲ Σαπφῶς τῆς μουσοποιού. . . . Χάραξος δὲ ὡς λυσάμενος Ῥοδῶπιν ἀπενόστησε ἐς Μυτιλήνην, ἐν μέλει Σαπφῶ πολλά κατεκερτόμησέ μιν. Note that ὡς is a temporal conjunction, not a causal particle; the reason for Sappho's response has to be inferred.

But the Thracian Rhodopis looked to Delphi for her memorial, says Herodotus. So she is also unlike Cheops' daughter. For both Rhodopis and Aesop, the memory of the person is marked by wealth at Delphi, not by a monumental tomb containing a ritually preserved body. The physical memorial of success is separated from the bodily remains, and enters the world of *logos* at Delphi.<sup>17</sup> Rhodopis transcends the world of song, unlike her Naukratite successor Archidice, and becomes more like the *logopoios* Aesop. She looks forward to the form of memory promoted by the fifth-century narrator.<sup>18</sup>

It seems to be Herodotus' desire that we take this story with a grain of salt. Although Herodotus indicts the association of Rhodopis and the pyramid on the grounds of chronology, the whole section on the pyramid builders is notorious for its chronological displacement. The builders are set after Proteus, who is coeval with the Trojan War, and Rhampsinitus, who appears to correspond to the series of Rameseses. This puts them about a millennium and a half too late; the pyramids in fact belong in the time of the more than 330 early rulers for whose reigns Herodotus has nothing remarkable to report. This is the only major part of Herodotus' chronology that is glaringly at odds with the modern reconstruction of early Egyptian history. Explanations have varied.<sup>19</sup> But he appears to be addressing an audience who has some awareness of Egypt, since the description of the building of the pyramids begins without any introductory statement about pyramids and even without mention of the word itself; he assumes the audience knows what Cheops built (2.124.1.5). So I would emphasize the splendid irony with which Herodotus, at the climax of the section most out of order chronologically, accuses others of being ignorant of chronology. While we can doubt whether a Greek audience would have appreciated the full extent of the chronological displacement, to appreciate the irony they would only need to recognize that he has placed after the Trojan War what should have gone be-

17. I am grateful to Jacob Stern for pointing out to me the importance of Delphi as a point of contrast to non-Greek memorials throughout the *Histories*.

18. What little material there is to document the character of Aesop in Greek literature and art suggests that in the classical period he is distinguished by the attributes (barbarian, slave, and deformed) that oppose him to a Greek male (Lissarrague 2000). But in Herodotus' use of him here the salient fact referred to is that Apollo made the Delphians pay recompense for murdering him; he had accused them of being greedy, and the implication is that Apollo vindicated him as a reliable witness. Hartog (1988, 296–97) treats *musopoios* and *logopoios* (here and in Herodotus' references to Hecataeus) as two species of *mythopoios*, *mythos* always being unreliable in Herodotus. But although *-poios* may be pejorative, given the prominence of the contrast between poetry and *logos* in the Helen digression (2.112–20, where the Egyptian version is always a *logos*, but the Greek version is only a *logos* in 118.1.1, when it is not attributed directly to Homer), and considering the emphasis on *logos* throughout Book 2, that contrast cannot be written out of this passage. Poetry is intimately connected with *mythoi*; *logoi* are not, and may or may not be reliable. Aesop is not Sappho, even if he is also not Herodotus.

19. Wallinga (1959) reviews the problem, and revives the theory of Flinders Petrie, that a scribe took one papyrus roll out of order: the passage 124.1.3 through the end of 136 (beginning μετά δε τούτων) should follow 99, even though such a move wrecks the μέν . . . δέ contrast of εὐνομήτην . . . κακότητα in 124. Lloyd (1975–88, 1:188–1889) rejects this and follows Erbse in making the error a consequence of Herodotus' understanding that there had been no great accomplishments before Moeris; he used the only place left by his scheme, and the pyramid builders were “finally allotted their place for artistic reasons.” This seems to be the modern consensus. Benardete (1969, p. 56, n.55) attributes the original mistake to the Egyptians, who preserved a reputation of good government for the kings before Rhampsinitus; he takes Herodotus' remarks on Rhodopis to signal his awareness of the error.

fore.<sup>20</sup> Another indicator of ironic intent is his report of what Rhodopis intended as a unique form of dedication, the roasting spits (ὀβελοῦς). Both Herodotus and his audience would have been aware that such spits were not unique at Delphi, either as “sacred furniture” or as the archaic units of exchange that gave a variant form of their name to a contemporary unit of money (Lloyd 1975–88, 3:87; Jeffery 1990, 122–24).

Herodotus chose to report one legend and then to oppose it with another, more complex story, but we should follow his hints by not taking the second to be a definitive statement either.<sup>21</sup> By her multiple ties—to the daughter of Cheops, pyramids, and the Egyptian materialism of memory, but also to Delphi and dedications of wealth; to Sappho (also famous for sex; see below) and song, but also to Aesop and *logos*; to ancient kings and legend, but also to the historical time of Amasis and Greek trade—his Rhodopis is a transitional figure. She both brings to a close and looks beyond this history of great and wondrous *erga*, for her story reminds us that, however remarkable it is for its scope, this record is flawed in its origin by its connection to the suspect memorial practices of the Egyptians, almost as flawed as the record preserved by Greek song.<sup>22</sup> The *logos* told by the Egyptians does not qualify as the permanent understanding of human achievement that Herodotus intended as his ἱστορίας ἀπόδεξις, and so he needed to make a fresh start. The close of the first portion of his Egyptian narrative (2.142–46) presented a somewhat rigorous discussion of human and divine chronology, in which he emphasized the difference between knowledge and belief. At 147.1 he announced that the continuation of Egyptian history would be based on *logoi* that others, beside the Egyptians, confirm. That history’s final episode is the career of Amasis; and, although Herodotus had said that Rhodopis belonged to this era, she is not mentioned again, replaced as an erotic figure by the king’s pious wife.

The details of Rhodopis’ life are essential to the function of the digression as a commentary on the history. Herodotus’ concern with his sources is explicit in Book 2, but in the Rhodopis episode we are given only a vague “some Greeks” for the incorrect attribution of the pyramid and, most

20. Lloyd (1975–88, 1:193) concludes that Herodotus was working with a well-established chronological framework, elaborated by his predecessors. On the audience’s familiarity with Egypt and the work of Hecataeus, cf. Marincola 1987, 123 and *passim*, and see below.

21. Lateiner (1991, 80–86) discusses Herodotus’ presentation of alternative versions, including those in which he distances himself from some narratives that he does not reject outright; in the appended inventory, he classes the Rhodopis passage as one in which Herodotus expresses a preference without regarding it as sufficiently convincing to reject the alternative. But in this case, obviously, what Herodotus does not reject is the possibility that the truth about Rhodopis lies elsewhere altogether; he certainly rejects the story that she built the pyramid.

22. For the most part, the Egyptian history falls in the middle ground between rejection (the story of Rhampsinitus’ daughter is incredible) and affirmation (the Egyptian story of Helen is credible because Homer knew it and his own version is improbable). Erbse (1992, 150) goes too far in saying that because the pyramid of Cheops’ daughter does not exist, it follows that Herodotus expects the reader to see through the irony of the unbelievable report of her career as a prostitute. There are smaller pyramids adjacent to the three great ones, so the nonexistence of her pyramid is not self-evident (see Lloyd 1975–88, *ad loc.*), and even if the story of her brick collection seems unrealistic to us, the episode gains in credibility as an instance of the extreme consequences of Cheops’ evil. Nothing in the episode itself or in its circumstances justifies treating it as ironic. Herodotus simply leaves it (in indirect discourse) as the Egyptians’ story, postponing his implicit judgment to the end of this portion of the narrative.

unusually for this book, no clue at all for his sources for the counter-story. In that respect, this digression is like the digression on Helen in the history of Proteus, which does not mention the Greek sources (although it at least attributes the story to the Egyptians) and which also occasions Herodotus' reasoning on comparative veracity. For the incorrect attribution Hecataeus and the Ionian geographers are the obvious choice; he will have some fun with Hecataeus' naiveté about the scope of Egyptian chronology in chapter 143. But Hecataeus can only have gotten the story from the Egyptian Greeks, that is from Naucratis.<sup>23</sup> That rules out both Hecataeus and the Naucratises as the source of the correct version. If we separate the elements, we need a minimum of five sources. Herodotus calls on Delphi to confirm the existence of the dedication; that is his only explicit citation in the whole digression. The story of Aesop at Delphi could have been a separate, commonly known Delphic legend. Delphi is a source of truth for Herodotus, and these two elements are the only ones for which he seems to engage in a process of inquiry to validate his statement. He gives no indication that the song of Sappho that he mentions is the source (or confirmation) of the details of his story about Charaxus and Rhodopis; if, nonetheless, we adopt the assumption that he is using it as a source, we need yet another source for the rest of the life of Rhodopis and the synchrony with Aesop—these can hardly have been drawn from Sappho's invective, and there is no hint at all of where they could have come from.<sup>24</sup> And, finally, the comment on Archidice (who is later than Rhodopis and therefore later than Sappho) requires that we additionally postulate the existence of the songs referred to there as popular songs. However, the fact that he can report the whole narrative without any pretense of offering a source suggests that, at least in broad outline, it must have been similar enough to something the audience knew, or thought they knew. Moreover, the ironic quality introduces a note of parody that depends on familiarity. Since the locale of the story turns out to be Naucratis—and that is explicit in the closing section of the digression (the part that mentions Sappho's poetry), where the emphasis is on the theme of the powers of the *hetairai* of Naucratis—it is *prima facie* simpler and more probable that the whole story belongs to a source concerned with tales, or a tale, from Naucratis and about Rhodopis (rather than from Lesbos and about Sappho), and that it does not represent a novel composition drawn from disparate sources. That would also explain the prominence of Aesop within the narrative. Yet since it is probably a Naucratisite version that he corrects, Herodotus would not have heard it there. Just as he was silent

23. Marincola (1987) demonstrates the unusual emphasis on sources in Book 2 of the *Histories*; he concludes that Herodotus is here most concerned to correct the accounts of Hecataeus and perhaps other Ionian geographers, whom he regularly refers to as unnamed Greeks or Ionians. But they could only have been intermediaries: the credulous geographers must have heard the information originally in the Greek milieu in Egypt.

24. Herodotus has a vocabulary that marks his practice (or, if one wishes, his pretense) of investigation using sources and proofs (see, in general, Fowler 1996, who shows how his practice places him in the fifth-century milieu); of course, he often does not cite sources, or cites them in ways we cannot credit. But I think that there is an extra burden of proof on any claim that something he mentions as part of his narrative is in fact his source, when he does not use any language to indicate that fact.

about Stesichorus, Herodotus may now be keeping silent about a poetic source that his audience would have known and recognized.

Before trying to determine more exactly where Herodotus found the story, however, the significance of the later testimonia must be evaluated. If they are the independent witnesses to the supposed diatribe of Sappho's that modern scholarship has taken them to be, the significance of her poem for Herodotus would have to be given greater weight; but even if they are not, they may still offer helpful evidence.

### 3. RHODOPIS IN STRABO AND IN HELLENISTIC SCHOLARSHIP

Strabo's mention of Rhodopis, like Herodotus', is part of a description of the great pyramids at Giza (in 17.1.33 = 3.379 Kramer). Strabo too describes the third as smaller but more expensive than the other two; however, his description of it is somewhat fuller. He says that the lower part is made of a *black stone* from *Aethiopia* that is hard and difficult to work; he continues: "It is said to be the tomb of the *hetaira*, made by her lovers, the woman who is called Doricha by Sappho the lyric poetess—she had become the beloved of her brother Charaxus when he imported Lesbian wine to Naucratis—but named Rhodopis by others."<sup>25</sup> He immediately adds another story (μυθεύουσι δ' ὅτι), which is an incompatible explanation of the association of Rhodopis with the pyramid: when she was bathing in the river an eagle snatched up one of her sandals, flew away, and dropped it in the lap of the king; stirred by the strangeness of the event and by the shape of the sandal, he sought out the owner; she was found and brought to Naucratis, and he married her. The pyramid is her queenly tomb.

Strabo records the variant stories without comment or criticism. Unlike Herodotus, he is following a geographical order, not a chronological one, but like him he is distracted by Rhodopis into telling stories about her from Naucratis. His first story adds details to what we find in Herodotus, but it also differs crucially in not attributing the actual building of the pyramid to Rhodopis. The version of the story in which the lovers build the pyramid is also found, in a fuller form, in the slightly earlier work of Diodorus Siculus (his information and most of his language are assumed to come from the late fourth-century description by Hecataeus of Abdera).<sup>26</sup> Diodorus (beginning in 1.63.2) includes an account of the architectural features of the pyramids, which is also fuller than Strabo's, as well as of the expense involved in building them. Diodorus does follow a chronological arrangement, but he gives less anecdotal information about the kings than Herodotus did, and his selection of detail shows little interest in the stories

25. λέγεται δὲ τῆς ἑταίρας τάφος γεγονός ὑπὸ τῶν ἐραστῶν, ἣν Σαπφὴ μὲν ἡ τῶν μελῶν ποιήτρια καλεῖ Δωρίχαν, ἐρωμένην τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ αὐτῆς Χαράξου γεγονυῖαν, οἶνον κατὰγοντος εἰς Ναύκρατιν Λέσβιον κατ' ἐμπορίαν, ἄλλοι δ' ὀνομάζουσι Ῥοδόπιν (Strabo 17.1.33). The editors' abbreviation of the quotations from both Herodotus and Strabo disguises their close similarity; Strabo's immediate transition from a description of the stone to the ascription to the prostitute is parallel to Herodotus' report: Mycerinus' pyramid is smaller than his father's, . . . λίθου δὲ ἐς τὸ ἥμισυ αἰθοπικοῦ. τὴν δὲ μετεξέτεροί φασι Ἑλλήνων Ῥοδόπιος ἑταίρης γυναικὸς εἶναι, . . . (2.134.6–7).

26. *FGrH* 264 F25 (vol. 3A; see especially pp. 43–44). In the commentary (3A Komm., 75–78) Jacoby justifies his claim that Diodorus Siculus is dependent on Hecataeus here.

Herodotus told; however, he characterizes Mycerinus' reign in very similar terms. His narrative emphasizes the pyramids as exceptional constructions; he says that Mycerinus' is built of a *black stone* similar to the Theban (1.64.7). At the end of his description (1.64.13), he remarks that on the subject of pyramids there is very little agreement either among local residents or among writers; to illustrate this he gives an alternative *name* for the builders of each of the three, none of them the same as the shepherd of Herodotus 2.128. Then he adds that some say that the third pyramid is the tomb of Rhodopis, which some nomarchs among her lovers built at their common *expense* out of their affection for her.<sup>27</sup> He has no interest in Sappho and her brother or in the glamor of Naucratis, and has nothing more to say on the subject, but proceeds to the successor of Mycerinus.

Strabo's Rhodopis, then, combines at least two sources. The mention of the devoted lovers indicates that one line of source material is what we might call (following Jacoby) Hecataeus-Diodorus, whether he used it directly, took it from someone who had used it, or found it in a common source. The inclusion of Charaxus indicates a line of source material more closely connected to the text of Herodotus. There is a similar mix in the description of the expensive lower courses of the third pyramid. Herodotus had described them as being of fancy (ποικίλος) Ethiopian stone, Diodorus as being of black stone, and Strabo as being of black stone that was from Ethiopia.<sup>28</sup> Since the Herodotean information about Charaxus has been supplemented (Charaxus was a wine merchant; Sappho calls Rhodopis Doricha), the source is not simply Herodotus. On the other hand, it is not likely that Strabo took the information independently from the text of Sappho. He has no concern here with Sappho; indeed, he shows very little interest in her, even when he reaches Lesbos and Mytilene in his survey. There he records her presence and describes her with stock Hellenistic praise as a wonder of nature, unrivalled as a poet by any other women, but has nothing more to say (13.2.3 = Campbell T7; his discussion of the Leucadian cliffs suggests a very different kind of source [see n. 32]). The additional story of the seductive sandal indicates that he is using source material that goes far afield from anything relevant to Sappho or Herodotus. Strabo's concerns are focused on what is said about Egypt and, more particularly, about either Naucratis or the pyramids of Giza. He does not appear to have had a book of lyric poetry in front of him, or a biography of the poets, from which he was constructing his own critique of Herodotus—to have decided to check up on Herodotus' story by looking through the text of Sappho. The added information, including the observation that Sappho and Herodotus use different names for the *hetaira* to whom the pyramid is said to belong, must have its source in Hellenistic scholarly traditions attached to or opposing

27. Diod. Sic. *Bibliotheca* 1.64.14: 'Ροδόπιδος τάφον εἶναι τῆς ἑταίρας, ἥς φασι τῶν νομαρχῶν τινὰς ἐραστὰς γενομένους διὰ φιλοστοργίαν ἐπιτελέσαι κοινῇ τὸ κατασκευάσμα.

28. Of course, he did not necessarily take this detail from prior writers. Dueck (2000, p. 42 and n. 20, p. 186) notes Strabo's recording of his personal experience in Egypt but shows that he does not present his own observations as exclusive of his use of earlier voyagers' books.

Herodotus' account of the pyramid-builders. Strabo is likely to have been using a commentary on Herodotus—Aristarchus wrote one in the second century (Pfeiffer 1968, 224)—or some form of compilation, perhaps a collection of local histories, that had taken over material from Herodotus and supplemented it with later scholarship.

This is not an infinite regress. Somebody, at some point, did compare Herodotus' text to Sappho's, and make the identification of Doricha and Rhodopis that became part of the Herodotean material that Strabo used. The question for us is whether we can rely on that identification as a confirmation of Herodotus' story about Sappho's poetry. The answer lies in what we can determine about how such information was compiled. Let us consider first the other material about Rhodopis that Strabo found.

Herodotus criticized the attribution of the pyramid to Rhodopis on the grounds that even a successful *hetaira* could not have amassed the necessary funds. Although Hecataeus-Diodorus does not share Herodotus' interest in the Sapphic connection, its version of the Rhodopis story, which features the devoted lovers who were nomarchs and shared the expense, answers this specific criticism. Strabo omits the extra detail about the financing and leaves the impression that Charaxus was one of the group, even as he proceeds to the alternative that has nothing to do with Charaxus or multiple admirers. His information appears to have been compiled from the efforts of earlier historians (such as Manetho) or ethnographers (such as Hecataeus of Abdera himself)<sup>29</sup> who responded critically to Herodotus' narrative; they would have provided alternate explanations of "the tomb of Rhodopis the *hetaira*" that saved the local tradition from Herodotus' rationalizing critique, or simply rejected him altogether (she was honored by a club of wealthy admirers, she was really a queen). Without the mention of financing, the polemical point has been lost and the original connection to a particular comment by Herodotus is obscured.

Similarly, the identification of Rhodopis as Doricha solves a particular problem: Herodotus says Sappho rebuked her brother for the relationship with Rhodopis, but the name "Rhodopis" does not occur in Sappho (that much is certain from Strabo's remark, whatever his source, and certainly no trace of it has ever been identified in our fragments). Hellenistic scholars explained its absence as best they could, by saying that "Rhodopis" was the same as "Doricha," a name they did find. In this case ancient commentary is not trying to disprove Herodotus' account, but to provide information on a single point in his text in order to reconcile it with what was known. From our point of view, the identification would only have fit if the story of Rhodopis in one author matched the story of Doricha in the other, but for ancient scholars exegesis began with biography, and their standards for the connection of biography to the text were rather less demanding than ours. The outstanding characteristic of such scholarship is its total lack of interest

29. Jacoby (*FGrH* 3A Komm., 79–82) argues that Hecataeus based his account on Herodotus', but interweaves both criticism of him and material from other sources.

in the poetic context: biographical explanations were constructed for words or phrases that proved, for whatever reason, puzzling.<sup>30</sup> This time they had the biographical information from Herodotus; the puzzle was to find a name to pin it to in Sappho. Doricha's availability to be Rhodopis need not have had much to do with the poem in which she appeared. Since the exegesis of the poets appears to have preceded the creation of commentaries on the historians, the explanation that Doricha was Rhodopis most likely originated as an explanation attached to the text of Sappho, but it was attached by someone who knew the version in Herodotus. Once it was assimilated into Hellenistic scholarship as independent biographical information, it would have been available to a subsequent commentator on Herodotus, perhaps in a commentary on Sappho's poems that he consulted at this point, but more likely as part of a separate *vita* or of other compendia, where it was joined with additional information on Charaxus. From him it passed to Strabo, or to the texts Strabo used.<sup>31</sup>

The context in which Strabo presents his information leads to the conclusion that his equation of Doricha and Rhodopis is likely to be a report of a Peripatetic or Hellenistic inference. There is no reason to suppose that it is a better inference than any other, such as, that Anacreon loved her, or that Sappho was a good housekeeper, or that she jumped off the Leucadian cliffs.<sup>32</sup> Strabo's collection of material does indicate that the name Doricha occurred in Sappho, but it offers no independent testimony for anything found in Herodotus.

It is useful to remember at this point that nowhere in the ancient tradition is any reason given for the different names. Page's claim ([1955] 1965, p. 49, n.1) that Rhodopis is a professional nickname, and that Sappho scorned to use it, is frequently cited, but, taken prejudicially, either name is "troppo parlante" and suited to an *hetaira* (Aloni 1983, p. 32, n. 75). The identity of the two is critical to any claim for the historicity of the story, because Herodotus' statement that Rhodopis was at her peak during the reign of Amasis strains the chronology for Sappho, although not quite to the breaking point

30. The earliest life that we know of is by the Peripatetic Chamaeleon (c. 350–after 281). On ancient biography in general see Lefkowitz 1981 and Arrighetti 1987, referred to above. The latter includes a discussion of Chamaeleon's methods (pp. 141–90), as does Lefkowitz' detailed examination of the Pindar *Vitae* (1991, 90–96). On the Hellenistic lack of interest in what we call context, see her discussion there of the Pindar scholia (147–60). On early collections of glosses, see Pfeiffer on Philotas, Zenodotus, and Callimachus (1968, 90–91, 115–18, 135); cf. his comments on Callimachus' pupil Hermippus, who wrote biographical supplements to the *Πίνακες* "in a more novelistic vein" (p. 150).

31. A modern parallel to Strabo can be seen in Boardman (1980, 132). In a topographically arranged work, he describes a variety of archaeological finds relating to the history, politics, and society of Naucratis. After mentioning one dedication to Aphrodite, he remarks more generally on the reputation of its women, adapting Herodotus' phrase, and repeats without comment the story of Rhodopis, adding the variants from Strabo and Athenaeus in a note.

32. Chamaeleon reported in his *Περὶ Σαπφούς* (frag. 26 Wehrli) that some explained that Sappho was the girl from Lesbos vainly pursued by Anacreon in *PMG* frag. 358; the story was also told by the poet Hermesianax (early third century B.C.E., frag. 2.47–51 Diehl) in his no doubt tongue-in-cheek catalogue of lovers. We are told all of this by Athenaeus (13.72 ff = T8 Campbell), who rejects it on the basis of chronology (he has no problem with the biographical interpretation of Anacreon's poem). The housekeeper reference comes from *P Oxy.* 2506 (see p. 221 below). The Leucadian jump is the most notorious piece of Sapphic biography; Strabo quotes it from Menander when he describes the cliffs (for a list of testimonia, see T23 Campbell with nn.).



(Saake 1972, 37–50; di Benedetto 1982, 228–30), and creates the suspicion that Herodotus' narrative might not be true.<sup>33</sup>

#### 4. SAPPHO AND CHARAXUS IN ATHENAEUS AND IN THE LATER TRADITION

The story that Athenaeus provides, two centuries after Strabo, is the most complete, because it employs motives. The passage occurs in his discussion of famous courtesans in Book 13 (13.69 = 13.596bc Kaibel); there is some suggestion of a geographical arrangement.

Athenaeus, of course, draws from a wide variety of sources; nonetheless, despite the absence of anything to do with pyramids, it is clear that this particular section is ultimately derived from Herodotus. A feature of the narratives in Book 13 is the devotion of the women's lovers. After concluding his discussion of Athenian courtesans with a description of the excessive tomb Harpalus built for one mistress and his excessive expenditure on another, Athenaeus introduces Naucratis with a generalization that recalls Herodotus': "Naucratis also produced famous *hetairai*, distinguished for their beauty: lovely Sappho in her poetry attacked Doricha, of whom her brother Charaxus had become enamored when he went to Naucratis as a merchant, for she had taken great sums from him."<sup>34</sup> Athenaeus then cites Herodotus by name: Herodotus calls her Rhodopis, unaware that the woman who dedicated the much talked of spits that Cratinus spoke of in [a lost quotation] is different from Doricha; Posidippus composed an epigram for Doricha, and mentions her frequently in his *Aethiopia* (*Aesopia*?).<sup>35</sup> After quoting Posidippus' epigram on the remembrance of Doricha in Naucratis (to which I will return), Athenaeus resumes reporting what is in Herodotus' text, even quoting him: Archidice was from Naucratis and a beautiful *hetaira*; for, as Herodotus says, Naucratis typically has charming courtesans.<sup>36</sup> Athenaeus thereupon moves on to a number of other cities and their famous courtesans, beginning, oddly enough, with Eresos on Lesbos. Some sources name

33. On the form of the name Doricha, see below. Aloni (1983), in what is perhaps the closest to a revisionist interpretation, makes the difference in names and the chronological difficulty the keystone of his argument. He adopts a functionalist reading of Sappho, following the lead of Rösler (*Dichter und Gruppe* [Munich, 1980]) on Alcaeus. He assumes that Herodotus' story is derived from frag. 5 (discussed below), frag. 15 (= an invective against Doricha), and the lost invective against Charaxus; and that, because his chronology is impossible, Herodotus must have confused two different women who figured in the same type of story. He then argues that this doublet establishes the existence of a genre of song: rebukes of merchants who squandered their wealth on a prostitute. The poems would thus link the addresses to Aphrodite in Sappho and the prominence of prostitution in major trading ports in the hypothesis that Sappho's *thiasos* represents the interests of an aristocratic circle engaged in commercial voyages, under the protection of Aphrodite, which were in opposition to the values of the traditional aristocracy represented by Alcaeus in the songs for his *hetaira*. This argument does not defend the historicity of the episode related by Herodotus.

34. The brevity of the quotation in Lobel-Page and Voigt and the ellipsis within it obscure the relationship to Herodotus: ἐνδόξους δὲ ἑταίρας . . . ἤνεγκεν καὶ ἡ Ναυκράτις· Δωρίχαν τε, ἣν ἡ καλὴ Σαπφὼ ἐρωμένην γενομένην Χαράξου τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ αὐτῆς κατ' ἐμπορίαν εἰς τὴν Ναυκράτιν ἀπαίροντος διὰ τῆς ποιήσεως διαβάλλει ὥς πολλὰ τοῦ Χαράξου νοσφισαμένην (L-P, V). Campbell puts the following section, through the quotation from Posidippus, in T15. Only Gallavotti (Test. 29) quotes the whole passage.

35. Schott's emendation of Αἰθιοπία to Αἰσωπία assumes that Posidippus' Doricha is Herodotus' Rhodopis, the fellow-slave of Aesop. The epigram appears to accept that equation, and it is even harder to imagine a connection of Doricha and Ethiopia.

36. Athenaeus 13.69.22: φιλεῖ γὰρ ποτὶ ἡ Ναυκράτις, ὥς ὁ Ἡρόδοτος φησιν, ἐπαφροδίτους ἔχειν τὰς ἑταίρας; compare Herodotus 2.135.5 φιλέουσι δὲ καὶ ἐν τῇ Ναυκράτι ἐπαφροδίτοι γίνεσθαι αἱ ἑταίραι.

Eresos as Sappho's birthplace,<sup>37</sup> but Athenaeus associates it with the Sappho who was a prostitute and the lover of Phaon and gives no hint that he connects this Sappho (the "other Sappho," see below p. 229) with the poet whom he has just mentioned.

Whatever may have induced Athenaeus to proceed from Naucratis to Eresos, the passage with which we are concerned seems to contain some of the same expansions as the sources Strabo used. There is no indication here that Athenaeus is thinking of, let alone using, a text of Sappho, rather than material from a commentary on Herodotus, which he may have second-hand, as part of a history of Naucratis. That explains and is confirmed by two strange features of this passage. The first is that he does not quote Sappho on Doricha, even though he quotes Posidippus. Posidippus' lines are appropriate to a discussion of Naucratis, as are, apparently, Cratinus'. For Athenaeus does not say that the Rhodopis of Cratinus is not a Rhodopis from Naucratis; he says that the Rhodopis of Naucratis who dedicated the spits is not the woman from Naucratis, also called Doricha, who seduced Charaxus.<sup>38</sup> In the context of Naucratis and famous prostitutes, neither he nor his source appear to have any lines of Sappho to quote that mention Doricha. Athenaeus makes only one other possible reference to Sappho's work or life that is not accompanied by a quotation (10.425a = Sa. 203 L-P, V); in that he mentions Sappho's praise of her brother Larichus in his capacity as a wine steward. This example both reminds us of the rarity of such unaccompanied references and reinforces the suspicion that biographical "information" about Sappho's relations with her brothers had become separated from the poems—if it was ever attached to them in the first place.<sup>39</sup>

37. *Suda* Σ 107 = T 2; *Anth. Pal.* 7.407 = T 58; and see Campbell's note to T 12.

38. Athenaeus believed that Herodotus did indeed confuse two different persons. Gow and Page on Posidippus are slightly more cautious than Page in his commentary on Sappho (cited above): "... Doricha, who seems to have been confused with Rhodopis, if indeed they were different persons ... Athenaeus does not disclose the grounds for his belief, but Doricha may well have assumed, or been given, a name more suitable to her profession" (Gow and Page 1965, 2:497). Lloyd (1975–88, 3:86–87) misreads the referent of the relative pronoun, so that he has Athenaeus ascribe the dedication to Doricha.

The discussion has been confused by the discovery in Delphi of a fragment of the base of a dedication bearing the inscription ... ΚΕΡΟΑ ... and datable to after 540 (described by Jeffrey 1990, p. 102, pl. 12.7 = SEG 13.364). This could be supplemented as ... ἀνεθέκε Ροδ[ῶ]πις ..., and would not be inconsistent with Herodotus' story (as Jeffrey cautiously remarks): a Naucratis *meretrix* celebrated her successful career some decades after Charaxus sponsored it. But that should not be regarded as more than a possibility (so too Treu 1963, 235). The inscription need not have been metrical, for example, and could have been dedicated by someone from Rhodes. It is only wishful thinking to say, as Lloyd does, that "the identification of Sappho's Doricha and Rhodopis, though frequently disputed, is supported by epigraphic evidence ... Rhodopis being Doricha's nickname," since neither Herodotus nor the inscription make any mention of Doricha (and once we allow the professional nickname, we have to wonder about the number of Rosefayes in the business). And Lloyd's rationalizing observation that spit dedications had possibly become a "standard way of testifying to one's devotion or leaving a personal memorial" (p. 87) ignores what Herodotus says about her intent to leave a unique dedication. Most to the point, a dedication by a Rhodopis is also not inconsistent with what Athenaeus says when he alleges that Herodotus made a mistake. There is no reason to think that Herodotus made up either the name Rhodopis or the existence of a dedication at Delphi; possible archaeological confirmation of a dedication by someone named Rhodopis confirms nothing in his text or in Athenaeus' in regard to Charaxus.

39. A little earlier in the same long list of examples of notable wine stewards he does quote Sa. frag. 141, which mentions Hermes; it is possible that the mention of Larichus was in the same poem, but he gives no indication of that. (I am relying on Voigt's compilation of the testimonia, pp. 427–28.)

But the stranger feature of the passage is the gender of Sappho's target. Athenaeus here is the only source for the datum that Sappho attacked Doricha. According to Ovid[?] (see below) and Herodotus, her ire was directed against Charaxus. Strabo says nothing about the content of the poem in which Doricha is named. It is possible that there were a number of invectives, although no one testimonium suggests in any way that Sappho attacked both of them. But it is simpler not to multiply entities. Athenaeus or his source, in haste or misled by a condensed quotation, must have misunderstood the antecedent of the gender-neutral Ionic pronoun in Herodotus' concluding phrase, κατεκερτόμησέ μιν, even though the context makes it quite clear. So although this solitary mention of an invective against Doricha may tempt us to look for the poem, it is not grounds for concluding that it must have existed, especially in the face of evidence to the contrary—evidence that, we shall see, does exist. The passage from Athenaeus adds nothing to confirm the story in Herodotus or clarify the content of Sappho's poetry, but it does make even clearer what we learned from Strabo, that material from a commentary on Herodotus had become part of the Hellenistic scholarly apparatus used for discussing Egypt and Naucratis.

The information on Sappho and Charaxus that Strabo and Athenaeus report appears to represent a common Hellenistic biographical tradition of which various details appear in late sources.<sup>40</sup> Ovid[?] *Heroides* 15 (T16 Campbell, 263V ref. only, not in L-P) also has the story (marvellously condensed: 63 *arsit inops frater meretricis captus amore*); his Sappho says that she directed her remarks against her brother, who has now gone to sea to repair his losses, although she characterizes what she said as dutiful advice (*monui . . . pia lingua*). The *vita* of Sappho found in *P Oxy.* 1800 frag. 1 (252 V, T1 Campbell, cf. 202–3 L-P) reports names for her father (Herodotus' and a close variant), the names of her three brothers, Charaxus' excess expenditure on Doricha, and her affection for Larichus.<sup>41</sup> The *Suda* entry for one of two Sapphos (Σ 107 = T2 Campbell) also names the three brothers, but it gives eight different names for her father, records the apparently comic name for her husband, and reports her reputation for *aischra philia*.<sup>42</sup> Among a large set of fragments from a scholarly compendium of the first to second century C.E. (*P Oxy.* 2506 = T14 Campbell; frag. 213A V, Campbell; *SLG* S273–78), there are many places in which the name Charaxus could be read (as well as the mention of Sappho's care for her brother Erigyius' clothes) but nothing is certain.<sup>43</sup> The only addition to the information in Strabo and

40. Dörrie (1975, 29) conjectures that Didymus, in the first century B.C.E., must have compiled all the then existing biographical traditions in the work that Seneca scornfully cites, *an Sappho publica fuit* (*Ep.* 88.37 = T22 Campbell).

41. . . . [πατὴρ δὲ Σκαμάνδρου, κατὰ δὲ τινὰς Σκαμάνδρων[μου· ἀδελφοῦς δ'] ἔσχε τρεῖς, [Ἐρ]ιγύιον καὶ Λάριχον, πρεσβύτατον δὲ Χάρμαξον, ὃς πλεύσας εἰς Αἴγυπτον Δωρίχαι τινὶ προσε[νεχθε]ῖς κατεδαπάνησεν εἰς ταύτην πλεῖστα. τὸν δὲ Λάριχον <νέον> ὄντα μάλλον ἡγάπησεν.

42. This Sappho comes from Eresos; the second entry, Σ 108 = T3, records a Sappho from Mytilene who was a lyre player and perhaps a poet, and who drowned herself for love of Phaon; this attribution of birth-places apparently reverses Athenaeus'.

43. Page, its original editor, calls the compendium a commentary, but Pfeiffer (1968, 222) denies this, and says it belongs to the category of "περὶ τοῦ δεῖνα" literature, in which "the interweaving of biographical

Athenaeus is a late report that Charaxus had children by Rhodopis; this is found in the *Suda* entry for Aesop (I will return to it below).<sup>44</sup>

The late tradition of Charaxus' adventure appears to be built from materials that originally excerpted, expanded, or contested Herodotus' narrative. It offers no independent confirmation of his story and gives no indication that there was a self-evident source for it in the poetry of Sappho. The only things we can infer with certainty are that the name Rhodopis did not occur in the text of Sappho and that the name Doricha must have been found somewhere in it.

##### 5. DORICHA: THE TESTIMONY OF POSIDIPPUS

Herodotus' story contains two biographical details that have been considered essential to the reconstruction of Sappho's text: that Sappho's brother Charaxus indulged his passion for a woman in Egypt, and that Sappho attacked him in verse. Despite the lack of confirmation, it remains possible that he was referring in passing to a poem that he and his audience were familiar with, a bit of common culture, even if he was totally erroneous in connecting its contents with Rhodopis. For there is in fact a witness to a poem about Doricha and Charaxus by Sappho, although Lobel-Page (followed by Voigt) chose not to include it among the testimonia for Sappho's works. It is the epigram of Posidippus that Athenaeus quotes:<sup>45</sup>

Δωρίχα, ὅστέα μὲν ἴσ' ἀπαλὰ κοιμήσατο δεσμών†  
 χαίτης ἢ τε μύρων ἔκπνοος ἀμπεχόνῃ,  
 ἣ ποτε τὸν χαρίεντα περιστέλλουσα Χάραξον  
 σύγχρους ὀρθρινῶν ἤψαο κισσυβίων.  
 Σαπφῶϊ δὲ μένουσι φίλης ἔτι καὶ μενέουσιν  
 ῥῶδης αἱ λευκαὶ φθεγγόμεναι σελίδες.  
 οὐνομα σὸν μακαριστόν, ὃ Ναύκρατις ᾧδε φυλάξει,  
 ἔσθ' ἂν ἤ Νείλου ναῦς ἐφ' ἄλός πελάγη.

Doricha, your bones . . . the bands of your hair, and the perfume-breathing shawl in which you once wrapped the handsome Charaxus, and joining him to your flesh, grasped the wine cup in the small hours. But the white ringing pages of Sappho's dear song abide and will still abide. Happy your name which Naucratis will preserve thus as long as a ship from the Nile goes upon the wide salt sea. (trans. Campbell)

Whatever the difficulties of the reading in the first couplet, the motif, or topos, is clear enough: the body is gone, but the fame will live on on the

material and problems with the interpretation of selected passages of texts, often starting from long lemmata is typical." Voigt titles it "Commentarius in Lyricos vel Vitae Lyricorum." It appears to represent the fully developed biographical tradition.

44. There are two other late testimonia cited in Lobel-Page and Voigt. Photius = *Suda* P 211 could be drawn from Strabo, or from his source: Rhodopis was a Thracian, a slave with Aesop to Iadmon of Mytilene; Charaxus the brother of Sappho ransomed her; Sappho calls her Doricha. Appendix to the Proverbs 4.51 (1.445 Leutsch-Schnw.) reports that both Sappho and Herodotus mention Rhodopis; it makes no mention of Doricha and it is probably a hasty summary of the earlier material (Wilamowitz 1913, p. 19, n. 1).

45. Text from Page 1975, lines 1650–57. A. S. Hunt mentioned this poem in his notes to *P Oxy.* 1231. Campbell includes it as part of his additional testimony from Athenaeus (T15), as does Gallavotti, as part of an even longer citation of Athenaeus in his collection of ancient sources *sulla vita e la leggenda* (1962, no. 29).

page. The “problem” here is that the epigram hardly makes sense unless the poem praised Doricha; it contradicts Athenaeus’ statement directly and Herodotus’ by implication.<sup>46</sup> We are left to ask ourselves, at this point, who would have known and been using a text of Sappho, and have read it with an understanding of it as poetry rather than as a treasury of biographical references, and who is most likely to be writing for an audience that would know a text of the original. I suggest that the Alexandrian poet not only is our only witness to an actual poem, but is also most likely to be our best source for the character of what Sappho wrote, although he too may be adapting it for his own purposes. For the night of pleasure he describes does conform to Herodotus’ report of how Charaxus was spending his free time in Naucratis. I will return to the question of why he confirms one detail and contradicts the other, but the discrepancy between the two writers does make it more likely that what Herodotus referred to and expected his audience to know was not necessarily an accurate representation of what Sappho wrote.

#### 6. DORICHA AND CHARAXUS IN THE POEMS OF SAPPHO

At this point, it will be useful to review whether we find any confirming evidence for the affair and the reproach in the fragments. We require one that could not reasonably be supplemented in any other sense, or that at least shows some unambiguous correspondence with Herodotus’ story. The name Doricha has been read in two places.

##### Fragment 7

Δωρί]χας . [ . . . . ] . [ 3  
 ]κτην κέλετ’, οὐ γαρ [   
 ]αίς   
 ]κάνην ἀγερωχίαι[   
 ]μεν’ ὅαν νέροις[   
 ] . αν φ[ι]λ[ . . . . . ] . [   
 ]μα . [

This is Voigt’s text, which, uncharacteristically, is much less conservative than that in Lobel-Page, which is restricted to a transcription of the papyrus without any word-divisions.<sup>47</sup> The chi on the first line could equally well be a kappa, and is not printed in L-P: only the center of the angle and

46. For Gow and Page the problem is φίλης in line 5: “. . . here relevant only to what she wrote about Doricha. The adj. can hardly mean *friendly*, for according to Athenaeus ([13.69]; cf Hdt. 2.135) Sappho’s references to Doricha were the reverse” (ad. loc., their emphasis). One could, of course, claim, as Wilamowitz does, that Posidippus is being ironic: “Sehr geschickt und auf wissende Leser berechnet ist es, daß es so aussieht, als hätte Sappho die Liebe ihres Bruders gefeiert, die sie gescholten hatte” (1913, p. 19, n. 1). But I do not see the grounds here (other than our own expectations based on Herodotus) for the kind of irony that would make words mean their opposite as a source of humor at the expense of the ignorant (the ones who know about Doricha but not Sappho), nor do I find it typical of Posidippus’ epigrams in G-P or of those in the preliminary version of the new Milan papyrus (Bastianini and Gallazzi 1993), which are graceful compliments, prayers, or dedications—playful but not suggesting a delight in such heavy-handed irony. I will return to this below.

47. Line 5 is particularly problematic: the third nu is written above the second, and although Hamm (Voigt) defends ὅαν = ὅαν as typical of Lesbian phonology (1958, p. 27, §55b1), this is the only example of that pronoun without the iota.

the two right-pointing legs are preserved, and the kappas and chis are not distinguished by the length of these. Dr. Obbink advised me that he found it more like the kappas with a ligature at the bottom and identical to the other  $\kappa\alpha$  combinations. The probable ἀγερωχία in line 4 is a suggestive indicator of the poem's tone, but we hardly know how it was to be construed. This fragment, in other words, probably did not name Doricha, but may have; what it said about her, if it did, is beyond recovery.

We return, then, to Sappho 15. It is the first fragment of the major Sappho papyrus, *P Oxy.* 1231. At the start of the first preserved column there are line-ends representing two stanzas (1–3 syllables from between the sixth to tenth position of each line). An additional scrap with a few letters on three lines cannot be securely located as the beginnings of any of these. The third stanza, however, is much more readable; it is presumed to be the final stanza of its poem because it is followed by the first line of Sappho 16 (Οἱ μὲν ἱππῶν . . .), although the loss of the right margin leaves no coronis visible (both V and L-P supply it; there are no significant differences in their texts).

Κύπρι καί σ' ἐ πικροτ[.]αν ἐπεύροι 9  
 μηδὲ καυχάσ[α]ιτο τόδ' ἐννε[ποισα  
 Δωρίχα τὸ δεύ[τ]ερον ὥς πόθε[-  
 -] ἔρον ἦλθε. 12

Cypris, may she also find you [. . . harsh], and may Doricha, telling of this, not boast how he (?) came the second time [to longed-for] love. (my trans.)

The gap in the supplement in line 9 is left by the editors for either  $\pi\kappa\rho\tau\acute{\alpha}\tau\alpha\nu$  or  $\pi\kappa\rho\tau\acute{\epsilon}\rho\alpha\nu$ . The verbs in line 10 could also be  $\kappa\alpha\upsilon\chi\acute{\alpha}\sigma\alpha\nu\tau\omicron$  and  $\acute{\epsilon}\nu\text{-}\nu\acute{\epsilon}\pi\omicron\nu\tau\epsilon\varsigma$  (Wilamowitz' preferred readings, reported in the *editio princeps*, along with  $\acute{\epsilon}\pi\epsilon\upsilon\rho[\omicron\nu]$  and  $\omicron\iota]$  δέ); in that case  $\Delta\omega\rho\acute{\iota}\chi\alpha$  would be the subject of the verb in line 12.

But a restoration and interpretation of these lines, independently from the story, as an invective against Doricha are not justified. The actual remains of the beginning of line 11, represented in the texts by the dotted omega, is the dot of ink at the edge of the papyrus. This dot is close to and at the height of the bottom of the loop of the following rho (which is fairly high). It cannot possibly belong to the upper portion of the right upright of an omega, since those quite consistently curve in towards the left, and it is too high to be the lower right apex: the trace is not compatible with an omega, and therefore it is not compatible with  $\Delta\omega\rho\acute{\iota}\chi\alpha$ .<sup>48</sup>

48. It is harder to say what the trace is compatible with. It could be part of a horizontal line, either the final point or part of a line extending into or through an abraded area around the point where the loop of the rho is closed. The extended center bar of an epsilon is ruled out by the meter; the cross-bar of a tau, as in  $\sigma\rho\acute{o}\tau\omicron\nu$ , two lines below (16.1), would be in the right position. But below the ink spot and just to the left of the bottom of the rho there is a smudge of dirt (this is not clear on the plate, where only a gray dot can be seen, but Williamson's photograph shows it). Within that another ink dot, directly below the first, can be detected (I am relying on Dr. Obbink's observation). This not only makes the omega even more unlikely, it also rules out tau. Perhaps eta should be considered; its right vertical consistently bows inward, while the upper right apex is directly above the lower. Since the rho of line 11 forms a straight line with the initial delta of line 10 and the epsilon of line 12, slightly to the right of the center of the pi of line 9 and slightly to the left of the center of the epsilon of 16.1 οἱ μὲν, there are at least two letters missing, and possibly three before the rho. But there is a fundamental difficulty in that words, or names, ending in  $-\rho\acute{\iota}\chi\alpha$  in

And even if this were the spot where Doricha had been found, the poem is not necessarily hostile to her or in any way relevant to Herodotus' story. The supplement of  $\pi\kappa\rho\omicron$ - in line 9 betrays the bias towards reaffirming Herodotus, for  $\pi\iota[\sigma\tau\omicron\tau\acute{\omicron}]$  would fit equally well—a prayer for constancy.<sup>49</sup> There is no reason to assume that one of the lovers in the poem is masculine; in this poem, as in many others, Sappho could be referring to events in the activity of the women she associated with. Indeed, given the rarity and limited distribution of names in  $-\iota\chi\omicron\varsigma$ , it is probably more likely that  $-\iota\chi\omicron\varsigma$  and Sappho's brother Larichus belonged to the same Lesbian milieu than that he and a Thracian woman whom their brother Charaxus met in Egypt both happened to have a name of the same infrequent linguistic type (or that Sappho, to offend, gave her a name similar to her own supposedly better behaved brother's).<sup>50</sup>

The fragments of Sappho, therefore, offer practically nothing to confirm or deny the existence of a Doricha in them, and in what little they do offer, they give no indication of the poet's attitude or of "Doricha's" role. Under these circumstances, the positive evidence of a friendly poem implied by Posidippus must be preferred to Athenaeus' possible misreading of  $\mu\iota\nu$  in Herodotus' description of a rupture between the siblings.

That rupture, moreover, also cannot be confirmed from the fragments; it is in fact put in doubt. The poem that appears most probably to involve Charaxus is fragment 5:

Κύπρι καὶ Νηρήιδες ἀβλάβην μοι  
τὸν κασίγνητον δ[ό]τε τυῖδ' ἴκεσθα[ι]  
κῶσσα ς]οι θύμῳ κε θέλῃ γενέσθαι  
πάντα τε]λέσθην, 4

ῶσσα δὲ πρ[ό]σθ' ἄμβροτε πάντα λῦσα[ι]  
καὶ φίλοις]ι ςοῖσι χάραν γένεσθαι  
--ε]χθροισι, γένοιτο δ' ἄμμι  
--μ]ηδ' εἰς; 8

τὰν κασιγ]νήταν δὲ θέλοι πόησθαι  
-- τίμας, [ὄν]ϊαν δὲ λύγραν  
-- οἱσι π[ά]ροιθ' ἀχεύων  
... 12

Greek are quite rare.  $\Delta\omega$  does fit the space, but it could only be adopted as a correction of the evidence: e.g.,  $\Delta\omega\llcorner\iota\lambda\acute{\omicron}\rho\iota\chi\alpha$ . The final long alpha could also be the genitive singular of a masculine a-stem name (construed as the genitive with  $\epsilon\rho\omicron\nu$ ).

49. This reading was originally proposed by Schubart (1948, 314), but with the usual bias; he took the verb at the end of the line to be first singular, with Sappho making a wish to her favorite deity for assistance in her campaign against Doricha. The meaning of  $\kappa\alpha\upsilon\chi\acute{\alpha}\omicron\mu\alpha\iota$  need not be pejorative; although the word has pejorative connotations in later Greek, so does archaic boasting in general. In Pind. *Isthm.* 5.51  $\kappa\alpha\upsilon\chi\eta\mu\alpha$  is the legitimate boast to martial prowess that yields to the celebration of athletic victory. According to Sa. frag. 193 (test.), Sappho boasted ( $\mu\epsilon\gamma\alpha\lambda\alpha\upsilon\chi\omicron\mu\acute{\epsilon}\nu\eta\varsigma$ ) of her poetic skill.

50. The suffix  $-\iota\chi\omicron\varsigma$  is discussed by Chantraine (1933, 402–4); it provides a number of Boeotian names, as well as, e.g., the more familiar  $\mu\epsilon\lambda\iota\chi\omicron\varsigma < \mu\epsilon\lambda\iota$ . Since doublets in  $-\omicron\varsigma$  and  $-\eta\varsigma$  do occur with other suffixes (pp. 31–32), perhaps the genitive of the name of one of Sappho's other brothers should be considered: the name Larichos occurs only in the biographical tradition, where it could represent a normalization of Larichas (Dörrie 1975, 139, notes that the Greek traditions mostly have forms of  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\alpha\chi\omicron\varsigma$  but Photius [see Sa. 254d V] has  $-\alpha\varsigma$  and the Ovid MSS. point to *Charaxes*). An alpha would fit the marks no better and no worse than an omega. But nothing is probable or even likely, only possible.

[Cypris and] the Nereides, grant to [me] that [my] brother return and that [whatever] he wishes with his heart to be, be accomplished, and that he resolve/atone [whatever] he previously did amiss, and become a joy to [his friends] and . . . to his enemies, and may we have not even one . . . and may he wish to make [for his sister?] honor(s), and . . . sorrowful pain [to/for . . .] (he) previously grieving. . . . [my trans.]

These lines are usually taken to refer to a misdeed (ἄμβροτε) by the “brother” of line 2 and to a hoped-for reconciliation. The brother is assumed to be Charaxus and the misdeed is assumed to be Rhodopis. But that interpretation is not in the text: it depends on Herodotus. Sappho’s reference to herself, a supplement in line 9, is also not necessary.<sup>51</sup> A stricter reading can only say this is a prayer that someone come back successful, having made up previous losses, without any indication of their cause or type. It is not clear that the phrase ἄμβροτε . . . λῦσαι would or could have at this period the moral significance that would be normal in later classical Greek. Williamson, noting the political and public language of the fragment, prefers an explanation based on Mytilene’s political strife (1995, 136–40). The early uses of λύειν are concrete; it could have here the financial meaning from which “atone” is derived. Ovid’s version (lines 65–66) suggests that Charaxus was at sea in order to solve financial difficulties, although Ovid, of course, accepts the cause supplied by the biographical tradition. Since the poem is a prayer for (presumably) Charaxus’ safety and success, apparently on his departure, it is in any case unlikely that it could be the poem Herodotus refers to.<sup>52</sup>

The fragments of Sappho, such as we have them, offer no support for the tradition in regard to Charaxus. Together, the Posidippus epigram and fragment 5 could lead us to expect only friendly and affectionate relations. They suggest the same conclusion about Herodotus’ story as do the implications of the problem of the double name and the absence of quotation in Athenaeus, that the story never had an unambiguous source in the songs of Sappho, even if we assume that it reflects something in them.

51. This is Voigt’s text, but she lists two alternatives: γεν[ν]ήτρων (Schubart) and αἰ[ν]ήτρων (Page). And as the journal’s reader pointed out to me, -γενήτρων in line 2 could also be the end of a man’s name, and the whole poem could have nothing to do with Charaxus at all (but I am inclined to believe that if it were a man’s name, the tradition would have incorporated him into the biographies). It is worth remembering that no fragment of a poem or lemma is extant in which the name Charaxus is even a possible supplement; it occurs only in commentary or testimonia.

52. So Page ([1955] 1965, 50), who assumes that safety from Doricha is what Sappho prays for. Others have assumed a closer relationship between frag. 5 and the Herodotus story. Lasserre (1989, 191–93, without mentioning Ovid) takes it to be a prayer that he recoup his finances in order to restore to the family the honor that they lost when he squandered his associates’ profits on Rhodopis—and so, in effect, a rebuke. The modern commentators are generally vexed over the number of Charaxus’ voyages they must postulate to coordinate the fragments with Herodotus. Cavallini (1991, 100–109) seeks instead to locate the invective (which she assumes must exist) in the extremely lacunose frag. 3, finding support in the equation 6: ἰοδήσας = *Ep. Sapph.* 117: *crescit*. But this argument depends on far too many prior assumptions to carry any weight. For the genre of the poem, *propempticon*, see Treu (1963, 184–85). The language of frag. 5 is, in fact, so conventional that it is not necessary that it refer to anything in particular; compare specifically Thgn. 691–92 W, and for the language and thought Hom. *Od.* 23.286; Thgn. 341–43 W; Solon 13.67–70 W (= Thgn. 587–90 W); Sa. 1.25–27; and Aesch. *Sept.* 166, 176. I leave aside here the inherent improbability, given our understanding of archaic society and of the politics of the aristocracy of Mytilene, that Sappho would have made public, in any form, an attack on her own brother.



## 7. SAPPHO AND RHODOPIS IN ATHENS?

"Rhodopis" appears to be a name around which stories gathered. There is no reason to privilege Herodotus' version as primary or as more likely to be true than the others. We have the woman for whom a man lost his sense and fortune, who built the pyramid, who was honored by the pyramid, who dedicated the spits at Delphi, and who lost a sandal and became a queen. Her exemplary beauty became the subject of a rueful proverb: ἅπανθ' ὅμοια καὶ Ῥοδῶπις ἢ καλῇ.<sup>53</sup> There seems to have been a confusion of her stories with those of other legendary women.<sup>54</sup> "Rhodopis" is the signifier not of a particular historical personage but of sexual excess as a typical characteristic of power and wealth (although there may once have been a glamorous demimondaine who put the name in circulation).<sup>55</sup> For Herodotus her stories served to sum up his doubts about the Egyptian cultivation of *logos* as a satisfactory source of history, despite its opposition to epic. His doubts were grounded in the Egyptians' excessive devotion to the material body, which he identified with an improper obsession with and use of feminine sexuality. He presented the Rhodopis stories in a form that suited his purpose. It would have been ineffective if the audience did not find his presentation of the story acceptable; since he gives no source for it and little argument on its behalf, it must have been in some way familiar.

Every explanation, even taking Herodotus at face value, requires that we posit some literary work of which we have no direct evidence. Since supposing that the story is a composite of different elements not only goes against the manner in which Herodotus handles the story, but has the additional disadvantage of requiring separate explanations of how Herodotus and his audience came to adopt each element, the most promising solution would be a single source or set of sources that had already drawn together Rhodopis, Naucratis, Delphi, Aesop, and Sappho and Charaxus in a context that justified his ironic treatment of them. That could only be comedy. Given what we already know of Sappho in the comic tradition, such a context is, indeed, imaginable; it only requires that we date her entry into it somewhat earlier than our explicit references provide.<sup>56</sup> And there are hints in the evidence for the story that not only point to the comedy of the third quarter of the fifth century but also suggest something about the comic themes involved.

53. The quotation from the Appendix to the Proverbs included in Sa. 202 L-P (next to last item) = 254f V belongs to one of the citations of this proverb; it shows up three times in the *Suda* (A 2897, Π 191 [πᾶντα], P 210); for further references and the meanings attributed to it, see n. 61.

54. In the fragments of Manetho, the building of the Third Pyramid of Giza is attributed to the Egyptian Nitocris (cf. Herodotus 2.100), who is described as "blond in complexion" and, in one version, "with rose-colored cheeks"; Nitocris, Rhodopis, and Cheops' daughter (with the relevant fragments of Manetho from Waddell's Loeb) are discussed by Coche-Zvie (1972). Her conclusions (which are based on accepting the existence of a Rhodopis [= Doricha] in the reign of Amasis) are that each figure represents a separate tradition, but that they did influence each other as they acquired legendary status.

55. One might compare the fabulous embellishments attached to the career of the Englishwoman Eliza Gilbert, who gained notoriety for her attractiveness and her involvements (under a different name) with both an artist and a king (see S. Bruce, *Lola Montez* [New Haven, 1996]).

56. They are collected by Campbell, T 25–26, T 26 n. 1.

To identify Rhodopis Herodotus uses the idiom Ῥοδῶπιος ἑταίρης γυναικός (134.1), in which ἑταίρης is a noun.<sup>57</sup> The term *hetaira* has a double life in the late fifth century. The older usage, to refer to a woman as a member of a group with a common interest, parallel to *hetairos*, existed side-by-side with the sexualized meaning. Earlier in the century Pindar used it for the gatherings of *parthenoi* rejected by the adulterous adventuress Coronis (*Pyth.* 3.18), and the unromantic huntress Cyrene (*Pyth.* 9.19). Later, in Aristophanes *Ecclesiazusae* 528, Praxagora certainly expects her husband to understand the adjectival use innocently in reference to a friend giving birth (γυνή . . . ἑταίρα καὶ φίλη), even though the chorus uses the sexual meaning explicitly in line 1161. Context and phrasing obviously determine the denotation (whatever double entendres Aristophanes may or may not intend). In its earlier sense the stem *hetair-* evokes especially the aristocratic world and idealized comradeship of the symposium; so Herodotus, relating how Ariston took Agetus' wife, emphasizes the depth of Ariston's betrayal of his friendship with Agetus by repeating *hetairos* several times (6.61–62). That sympotic ideal is especially represented by the poetry of Alcaeus, and Herodotus uses the masculine expression corresponding to his description of Rhodopis only once, to describe a companion to whom Alcaeus sent a poem: Μελανίππῳ ἀνδρὶ ἑταίρῳ (5.95). Although the “digression” in which Alcaeus appears (the sole mention of him) seems incidental, it immediately follows a topic dear to the hearts of Athenian symposiasts, who sang Alcaeus' poem—the evils of tyranny and the fate of Hippias. But at some point in the century the feminine form *hetaira* became “party-girl” as well as “companion in the party.” In that sense we know it from the world of comedy. Although Athenaeus cites Sappho (13.571d) to illustrate the innocent use of the term, his subsequent quotations in that passage make it clear that playing the two meanings off against each other was a feature of at least Middle and New Comedy.

Sappho was associated with the world of the symposium. In the fragments cited by Athenaeus, she uses *hetairai* to refer to the singer's companions (frag. 160), as does the *Suda* (Σ 107), and to the companionship of Leto and Niobe (frag. 142). The (late) story about Solon learning her poems (Aelian ap. Stobaeus *Flor.* 3.2.58 = Campbell T10) envisions sympotic performance; she appears as a poet and musician on fifth-century vases, and on one keeps company with Alcaeus.<sup>58</sup> But at some point Sappho also experienced the same development in “meaning.” She became a figure in comedy known for her sexual involvements rather than, or as well as, her aristocratic erotic poetry. That transformation is reflected in the obscene pun in the alleged name of her husband<sup>59</sup> and in the stories of her unrequited love

57. Cf. Smyth §986 and K-G §405 a) 1.

58. For a technical description of the vases, see Richter 1965, 1:72 and for a discussion (with plates), Snyder 1997. The most complete survey of possible representations is in Yatromanolakis 2001; he points out evidence of sympotic (or kommatic) contexts for Sappho's reception in the fifth century. Most (1996, 32) reaches the same conclusion. Note that my concerns here are not whether her own performances were actually sympotic but whether she used sympotic language and how she was received in Athens.

59. For the history of the recognition and disregard of the joke, see Parker 1996, pp. 146–47 and nn. 2–6.

for Phaon. In this new role, she must also have been connected with the new meaning of *hetaira*, for the later tradition speaks of a Lesbian Sappho who was a lyre player or *hetaira*. Scholars apparently explained her double role by generating a second Sappho (Athen. 13.596e [discussed above]; *Suda* Σ 108 = T 3 Campbell; Ael *VH* 12.19 = T4 Campbell) and then wondered if they were the same person (Sen. *Ep.* 88.37 = T22 Campbell; see Most 1996, 15–16; and Dörrie 1975, pp. 21–22 with n. 22); that connection may well explain Athenaeus' apparently arbitrary transition from the *hetairai* of Naukratis to those of Eresus, one of whom was named Sappho (above, p. 220). Most of the evidence for Sappho and Phaon in comedy is Middle Comedy or later, but one comedy named *Sappho* is attributed to Ameipsias, a contemporary of Aristophanes. While we cannot know in which decade the persona of a person famous for sex was joined to the literary figure, I find it striking that Herodotus' only uses of *hetaira*—which are also the first surviving occurrences of the word in Greek in the sense of “prostitute” or “courtesan”—occur in a passage that connects the *hetaira* in question to Sappho. I conclude that Herodotus is reflecting a contemporary development whose popular expression would be found in comedy. In either sense, Sappho appears to have become the paradigmatic *hetaira*.<sup>60</sup>

If we return to Athenaeus' version of Herodotus' story, there is evidence pointing more specifically to a comic origin. Correcting Herodotus' use of the name Rhodopis, he distinguishes the woman in Herodotus' story from the Rhodopis who made a dedication of spits at Delphi and is mentioned by Cratinus. Just as the ancient commentators generated two Sapphos to accommodate irreconcilable personae, Athenaeus is supposing two women named Rhodopis to reconcile the figure celebrated by a comic poet with the woman in Herodotus' story about Charaxus (in both cases, the ancient writers exclude the possibility that one figure might be derived from the other). But in the process he provides us with the starting point that Rhodopis figured in a comedy by Cratinus. The beginning of Cratinus' career is at least contemporary with Herodotus'. We can make no assumptions about the context in which Rhodopis and the spits appeared.<sup>61</sup> Some surviving titles

60. M. Henry notes that this is the first occurrence of *hetaira* in this sense in *OCD*<sup>3</sup>, s.v. Recent studies of this form of high-cost prostitution, have shown that it is to be associated especially with the sympotic elite (Reinsberg 1993, 80–162; Kurke 1997; Davidson 1997, 109–36). Kurke makes clear that the term seems to be much later than the practice, which was originally described by euphemistic periphrases; she suggests that the usage originates as a term of derision, applied by outsiders to mock the sympotic equality of elite and prostitute (p. 113). Such a use would not be out of keeping with Herodotus' ironic tone. Perhaps the comic representation of Sappho gave currency to the double meaning of the word. Many of the passages from Herodotus discussed here are analyzed in terms of their significance for Greek cultural history by Kurke (1999).

61. The Athenaeus passage is included among the fragments of uncertain origin, 369K-A = 331K. The trimeter proverb that I mentioned above (p. 227), ἅπανθ' ὅμοια, καὶ ῥοδόπισ ἡ καλὴ, is also included among the fragments of Attic Comedy, *incerti poetae* \*489 K-A = 579 Kock. It appears in collections (the apparatus in K-A provides a list of the sources; they consider its comic origin doubtful) with two different explanations: ταῖς τύχαις ὁμοίως ὑποπεπτόκασιν οἱ θνητοί, and τοὺς οὖν πολὺ ἀπολέσαντας ἀργύριον, τὸ διάφορον τῆς μίσεως πρὸς τὰς ἄλλας γυναῖκας συνωρῶντας, ἐπιφωνεῖν τὸ λεγόμενον (K-A prefer <ἀ>διάφορον). The first makes the proverb obviously Delphic in tone, although hard to construe; it sounds like a bowdlerization. Taken in accordance with the second (whose gist is clear, whatever the reading), the proverb's syntax is clear and, with its more specific reference and its disparagement of Rhodopis as object rather than subject of the experience, its sounds more authentic; it would be quite suitable to an Attic comedy.

indicate that Cratinus used what we might call literary-historical settings or literary figures.<sup>62</sup> But whatever the context, a comic source for Herodotus' Rhodopis seems to me to be much more likely than a source in Sappho's poems, and Athenaeus' citation makes Cratinus look like a good candidate for the author. Rhodopis, as a legendary *meretrix* would be a foil for the comic treatment of Sappho as an *hetaira*. A comedy introducing Rhodopis from Naucratis, and involving Delphi, is also a likely source for Herodotus' treatment of Rhodopis and Aesop in parallel. Such a comedy, in fact, could account for most, if not all, of the elements of Herodotus' story, as well as for its tone (a comedy could also have introduced a self-consciousness about the role of poetry).

There are no grounds for guessing whether Herodotus is using one or several contemporary comic sources (and comic poets had no exclusive rights to their own material), and whether or not he introduces some variations of his own. But just as in the case of his suppression of Stesichorus, his audience would be perfectly well aware of what he was doing, and in both cases the passages in question would discredit—one explicitly, one implicitly—the authority and prestige of Greek poetry, each naming a poet (Homer, Sappho) while accepting a dubious version of events from a poet not named but well known (Stesichorus, Cratinus?).<sup>63</sup>

## 8. THE SONGS OF SAPPHO

It is self-evident how the female poet of love could come, in the comic imagination, to be associated with a *hetaira*. The involvement of Charaxus with a courtesan, however compatible with that reinterpretation of Sappho, would need to be separately explained.<sup>64</sup>

A late shred of evidence, offering a concrete detail not in Herodotus, may point to the content of a comedy and to its background in a well-established genre of Sapphic poetry. In the entry for Aesop, the *Suda* (AI 334 = Sa. 254e V) concludes with Herodotus' information about both Aesop and Rhodopis,

62. E.g., *Archilochoi*, *Odyssees*, *Dionysalexandros*; the riddle-writing (and probably apocryphal) poet Kleoboulina was a character in a play named after her, *Kleoboulina* (test. i in K-A, from Athenaeus; Sappho had this role in a Middle Comedy by Antisthenes [Sappho T 25 Campbell]); *Cheirones* featured Solon *redivivus* (246 K-A = 228 K), but perhaps more as a political than literary hero; Cratinus also mentioned Phaon and Aphrodite in one play (frag. 370 = Sa. 211.b.ii L-P, 211.c V), but there is no necessary connection to the legend about Sappho.

63. Lateiner (1991, 99) documents Herodotus' rejection of poets as historical sources. Fehling allows an unknown poetic source for the stories of Cadmus (1989, 140). Moles points out that although the series of reciprocal kidnappings in the first chapters of Book I is "billed as 'Persian' and 'Phoenician', as if Herodotus had meticulously consulted Oriental sources, its content is solidly Greek"; he argues that the content also has serious undertones, about the nature of history and historiography, so that Herodotus is able to use it and distance himself from it simultaneously (1993, 95–96). The relationship of Herodotus to the poetic tradition is discussed extensively by Nagy (1990, esp. 215–49, 321–35), with reference to this passage among others; he emphasizes the similarity of Herodotus' work and of song, both in their aims and in their relation to epic. In emphasizing Herodotus' opposition to the poets here I take that fundamental similarity for granted; it is the basis of the competition.

Herodotus' blatant adaptation of a comic treatment is, as a literary and intellectual exercise, quite different from the later biographers' use of comedy as a reliable source, although I suspect that they would not have understood it that way.

64. Most (1996, 35) has pointed out that whatever the distortions of the comic and biographical tradition, they represent something in somebody's reading of the poems; they had to start from somewhere.

but adds that Charaxus took her as a wife and had children by her.<sup>65</sup> This could have been generated as an embellishment to the version in Herodotus (note the absence of the name Doricha), and be of no significance, although it is puzzling, in that case, why it survives under Aesop, but not under Rhodopis. But if it represents another or a fuller version of a comic presentation involving Aesop, Rhodopis, and Charaxus—and it certainly sounds like a comic episode—then Herodotus may simply have omitted it, as a distraction from his needs, when he says that she was freed and remained in Egypt, where she practiced her trade so successfully (2.135.2).<sup>66</sup> It suggests that behind the narrative of Charaxus' sexual entanglement may lie a comic travesty of a wedding, and so of the various types of wedding songs.

Within his telling of the story Herodotus may have left a more precise hint of some of what was in the comedy, in the verb he uses to describe the poem of Sappho's that the editors, taking the story too literally, have vainly sought: *Σαπφῶ πολλὰ κατεκερτόμησέ μιν*. The simple *κερτομέω*, "mock," can fit a variety of situations (without any implication about the underlying relationship between the parties), as can the Homeric *ἐπικερτομέω* (only once in Herodotus, at 8.92, when the Aeginetan commander throws a taunt back at his ally Themistocles). But Herodotus uses the compound *κατακερτομέω* elsewhere only to describe Harpagus' vengeful taunting of Astyages, after Harpagus finally brought down the king who had served him his children (1.129.2); otherwise the word is not found before late Hellenistic authors. It appears to be a very strong term, restricting *κερτομέω* to its harshest meaning in the same way that *καταγελάω* restricts *γελάω*.<sup>67</sup> Either Sappho was being quite savage in this supposed poem of rebuke, of which we have no other trace, or Herodotus himself, in choosing this unusual word, is maintaining the ironic tone of the passage. For *κερτομέω* also seems to be the *vox propria* for a specific kind of mockery, risqué teasing appropriate to sex and marriage, as illustrated by Hermes' song of his parents in the *Hymn to Hermes* (54–59):

65. *ἦν ἑταίραν γενομένην . . . Χάραξος ὁ ἀδελφὸς Σαπφοῦς ἔλαβε γυναῖκα καὶ ἐξ αὐτῆς γεννᾷ*. There may be a hint of this tradition as well in Tzetzes' summary of the story: *Χάραξος . . . τὴν Ῥοδόπιν τὴν ἑταιρίδα ἐκ Εἰάνθου ἀνήσατο, . . . καὶ ταύτῃ συνῆν* (*Proll. Com.*, [CGF p. 26 = Koster 1.1.1a.1.44–49 = Sa. 254g V]), since otherwise the *συνῆν* would be extremely otiose, but that is a possibility not to be ruled out for this author, and he seems, here and in the next paragraph, to be following Herodotus quite closely. (The fact that this is in the *Prolegomena de Comoedia* is incidental; it is merely part of a frigid conceit, that Sappho is a trope for *sapheneia*.) Campbell accepts the story: "this may account in part for S[appho]'s hostility" (n. 2 to the quotation from Herodotus in Sa. 202).

66. The comic source or sources may have been more about Aesop than Charaxus or Rhodopis. His prominence in Herodotus' narrative, the possibility that Posidippus mentioned Doricha in an *Aesopia* (above, p. 219), and the curious detail of the Suda's entry suggest his importance to the history of Charaxus' adventure.

67. Page, rejecting the meaning "reproach" (preferred by the defenders of Sappho's moral character), adds, "mock, taunt, jeer at" to LSJ's "rail violently" ([1955] 1965, p. 50, n. 2). Unlike *καταγελάω*, *κατακερτομέω* appears more often with the accusative than genitive; the absolute usage (as in 1.129.2) is most common. Two of the instances of the word (in Ps.-Philo and Σ *Od.*) claim to be reports of Aristotle. *κερτομέω* itself is normally a poetic word; it is found in tragedy but—despite the obvious suitability of its meaning—forms of neither the simple word nor its compounds are comic. Searching on *-κερτομ-* I found only two instances from comedy (otherwise unreadable), both of the simple form; one from Epicharmus (98.75 K-A, in a lemma from a commentary); the other probably from the *Kleoboulinaí* of Cratinus (\**test.* ii K-A).

θεὸς δ' ὑπὸ καλὸν αἶδεν  
 ἐξ αὐτοσχεδῆς πειρώμενος, ἥύτε κούροι  
 ἤβηται θαλίῃσι παραιβόλα κερτομέουσιν,  
 ἀμφὶ Δία Κρονίδην καὶ Μαιάδα καλλιπέδιλον  
 ἦδ' ὃν πάρος ᾠρίζεσκον† ἔταιρείῃ φιλότῃτι,  
 ἦν τ' αὐτοῦ γενεὴν ὀνομακλυτὸν ἐξονομάζων·

. . . and, as he tried it, the god sang sweet random snatches, even as youths bandy taunts at festivals. He sang of Zeus the son of Cronos and neat-shod Maia, the converse which they had before in the comradeship of love, telling all the glorious tale of his own begetting. (trans. Evelyn-White)

Here (in addition to the subject matter) παραιβόλος (“with a side meaning”; see LSJ) and ὀαρίζω (the *locus classicus* is Hom. *Il.* 22.127–28) set the context for κερτομέω.<sup>68</sup> There appear to be songs of sexual innuendo among Sappho’s wedding fragments, particularly fragments 111 (the bridegroom equal to Ares) and 110 (the bigfooted door-guard, in a poem that also made jest of the bridegroom).<sup>69</sup> Had Sappho composed the various songs for her brother’s wedding, a correct description of one of them, no doubt, could be ἐν μέλει Σαπφῶ πολλὰ ἐκερτόμησέ μιν. That comedy could make an opportunity for its own ribaldry out of wedding song is clear from the finale of Aristophanes’ *Peace*; in this case, the interpretation of it as vituperative could come from the comic source or be Herodotus’ own. For an audience who would have known both original wedding songs (including, probably, Sappho’s) and the comic travesty, the compound verb would be doubly appropriate, and the harsh interpretation of mockery directed to the groom allows Herodotus to maintain his supposed stance of rejecting the frivolity of sexual content in the poetic tradition.<sup>70</sup>

68. In 5.83.12 Herodotus uses the adjective form to describe the songs of women mocking women in a ceremony for what are obviously fertility deities. Compare ἐπικερτομέω in *Anacreonta* 37.8 and [Theoc.] 20.2.

69. On obscenity and sexual teasing in wedding songs, see Burnett 1983, pp. 218–19 and nn. 21, 22. The ribaldry of these is denied by some; for the relevant bibliography see Hague 1983, p. 141, n. 8, and the discussion in Contiades-Tsitsoni 1990, 91–95 (who notes that the motif of ritual obscenity is common in wedding songs, but doubts that this is an example). Demetr. *Eloc.* 167 (110a L-P, 110 Test. V) criticizes the style in which Sappho makes fun of the ἄγροικος νυμφίος. One can suppose that she really was making jokes at his country origins, or that Demetrius took too literally language that suggested the barnyard. R. Muth, taking Demetrius literally, is perplexed on the relation of such language to the wedding ceremony, since “Spott ist das Gegenstück des Lobs” (1954, p. 38, n. 45); but the kind of jest she was actually making was more likely (as Hague treats it) a kind of praise. But the groom can be teased without praise, from the evidence of the opening of Theocritus 18, discussed below.

70. Aloni (1997, lxvi–lxxv), who accepts the ancient story, argues that the attack on Charaxus would belong to a group of poems by Sappho that are part of the same tradition of blame poetry that we associate with “iambic” in the Ionic poets. However, the evidence for such poetry by Sappho is quite thin. The best examples (55, 57, 71 L-P, V) are apparently addressed to women and may represent rivalry in performance, but we certainly cannot rule out the possibility of political attacks in the fragments (Sa. 99 L-P [= Alc. 303A V] perhaps contains an allegation of sexual inadequacy; if so, another, alleging excess, is not unlikely). It remains possible, then, even without crediting the story, to suppose that an invective against a man, even a man named Charaxus, was reinterpreted as Sappho’s attack on her brother. This would add a number of complications. I doubt that such a genuine misinterpretation, in the style of later biographers, was likely in the fifth century, or that Herodotus disingenuously invented it as a novelty, without being clearer about the source; if it were a comic invention, it would not change the conclusions very much. In Theocritus 18 (see below), the chorus mock the groom by suggesting that he is too exhausted for the wedding night on account of his excessive drinking; other possibilities suggest themselves, suitable to the crudeness of Attic comedy.

Ribaldry would be part of comedy's involvement of Charaxus with a courtesan, but the story also seems to require expenditure. And it is unlikely that the ribaldry itself would be so significant a part of Sappho's or any other poet's wedding poetry as to inspire a full travesty. The more formal songs, to accompany the bride or serenade the newlyweds, would be the more important source for characterizing detail. Indeed, there exists one fragment, usually assumed to be from the praise of a bride, that not only conveys an atmosphere of luxuriant expenditure, but describes the bride as foreign (Sa. 44.5–6, 7–10 V):

Ἦκτωρ καὶ συνέταιρ[ο]ι ἄγοις' ἐλικώπιδα  
 Θήβας ἐξ ἱέρας . . .  
 ἄβραν Ἀνδρομάχαν ἐνὶ ναυσὶν ἐπ' ἄλμυρον  
 πόντον· πόλλα δ' [ἐλί]γματα χρύσια κᾶμματα  
 πορφύ[α] καταύτ[με]να, ποικίλ' ἄθύρματα,  
 ἀργύρεα τ' ἀνὰρ' ἱ θία ῥοπή' ῥ' ἱα' κἀλέφαις.

. . . Hector and his companions are bringing the lively-eyed, graceful Andromache from holy Thebe . . . in their ships over the salt sea; and (there are) many golden bracelets and (perfumed?) purple robes, ornate trinkets and countless silver drinking-cups and ivory. (trans. Campbell)

I do not wish to assert that the wedding of Charaxus is the context for fragment 44. Wedding songs are generic (according to frag. 105b test. Sappho compared one groom to Achilles), and this mythic paradigm for a processional need not apply to anyone in particular (and need not even be part of a wedding song); but it suits this case especially well, and illustrates an element of what I take to be the likely basis for a comic treatment: diverse wedding songs that included praise of the bride (described as coming from a distance), references to wealth (which could be deliberately misunderstood as excess expenditure), and ribald teasing of the groom.<sup>71</sup>

Doricha's name did occur somewhere in Sappho's poems.<sup>72</sup> Whatever the context, it prompted fourth-century scholars to make an association that brought Sappho, the comedy, and Herodotus into alignment as factual sources. It is their work that Posidippus reflects. His epigram, in our tradition, sounds decadent: was Charaxus being faithful (to his sister) in his fashion? But the eroticism of the epigram is different from but not opposed to the eroticism of epithalamia. If Theocritus 18 is, as generally assumed, an

71. I assume that this description could point to any number of wedding songs, involving different phases of the wedding ceremony, although ribaldry directed to someone named Charaxus would seem to be essential. Biographically inclined critics can hope that he really was her brother, and really did marry a woman named Doricha, who came from Naucratis, where, it is well established, Lesbian merchants were in residence who certainly could have had daughters. For summary and bibliography of the debate over frag. 44, see Contades-Tsitsoni 1990, 105–8 and Hague 1983, p. 141, n. 9.

72. Bergk (1878–82), in his note to Sa. 78.1 = 81.4 V, L-P (σὺ δὲ στεφάνοις, ὦ Δίκα, πέρθεσθ' ἐράτοις φόβαισιν), suggests reading Δώριχα there in place of ὦ Δίκα to supply the favorable mention implied by Posidippus. The suggestion has been mostly ignored (it is not even in Voigt's apparatus), but the existence of a Dika among the women associated with Sappho has not been confirmed by any subsequent discovery (the name is in the part of the text found only in Athenaeus; Dika is at best a possible conjecture in frag. 82A V, L-P), and it may be worth further consideration. I am grateful to André Lardinois for bringing this to my attention.

example of the Sapphic motifs of the latter (Gow 1965, 2:348–49) then the references to staying awake and not sleeping, and joining under one cloak, belong to both, even if the marriage song is somewhat more coy (cf. Sa. frag. 197, Libanius' report that Sappho prayed the night be made double). Posidippus' goals are literary.<sup>73</sup> The epigram is playful, for an audience who know their texts and are up to date with literary scholarship. Using the motifs of epithalamia and taking as its occasion the Alexandrian interest in the local celebrity of Rhodopis (and perhaps the literary precedent of epigrams for *hetairai*), it reconciles the praise that Sappho wrote with the travesty that the commentators made authoritative when they associated the two names.

\*

Reduced to selected testimonia for a poem or poems by Sappho, the story of Charaxus and Rhodopis in Herodotus has the charm of an episode from a picaresque tale or a *Bildungsroman*, with Charaxus at its center. But no extant fragment can be read to correspond with Herodotus' version of events, and the subsequent citations of it do not stand up as independent confirmations of an origin in Sappho's songs; the weight of what evidence there is, both positive and negative, makes it likely that there is no such poem as has been supposed. Read for its own sake in the *Histories*, the episode has Rhodopis at its center and proves to be woven thematically into Herodotus' presentation of Egyptian history; the parts relevant to Charaxus or Sappho are closely integrated with the parts that have nothing to do with them and the episode asks to be taken as a whole. A reading that takes account of the story's context and Herodotus' language, tone, and handling of sources, and that attends to the details of the later tradition where they take up the same subjects, suggests that he has adopted or adapted a single source that his audience would recognize, most likely a motif from a comedy or comedies that took advantage of the new, second meaning of *hetaira* to bring together incidents based on a travesty of various types of wedding songs, such as are found in Sappho, with stories about Rhodopis and her fellow slave Aesop.

This conclusion accords with our knowledge of Sappho's place in the comic tradition and with our best understanding of the ancient use of biography; it takes account not only of the differences among the sources but also of their full contexts, and it explains the absence of quotation. It includes the Posidippus fragment as part of the evidence. It understands the "digression" in Herodotus to be both purposeful and artful within his own concern to establish the character of his history. Above all, it confronts the fact that only by stretching and cutting have the fragments of Sappho been

73. Gutzwiller (1998, 157–70) discusses some of Posidippus' erotic epigrams and their reference to literary tradition. She compares 17 to Asclepiades' celebration of Archeanassa, a famous *hetaira* of earlier times, in 41 G-P = *Anth. Pal.* 7.217.



made to fit the couch of Rhodopis, and asks of her instead only poetry of the kind that there is ample evidence she wrote.<sup>74</sup>

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