

## NOTES ON P. OXY. XXXIX

### 1. *P. Oxy.* 2878

THE twenty-seven fragments under this number 'were assembled in the belief that they represented lyric verses in the Aeolic dialect and might contribute something to the text of Sappho or Alcaeus' (Lobel). The only feature that is 'unequivocally Aeolic' is κῆνοι in fr. 2. 9 (]ηνκηνοι. [ : the letter following οι is γ, or possibly π; the division κῆν οιγ[ is not considered, no doubt rightly).

Is this indeed a text in the Aeolic dialect? There is very little other indication: fr. 4. 3 ὕ]μμέων[ or ἄ]μμέων[; ]χερρα in fr. 4. 5 would seem decisive if the reading were quite certain. Not much more than a dozen other words or part-words can be identified: 1. 3 ]πολιν ταν[, 2. 7 κλέος, 2. 10 ἄνδρεσ probable, 4. 4 αγλα. [, 5. 1 χαιρ[ (cf. 11. 9 χαι[ρ-?], 5. 2 παιαον, 5. 3 ]εχορ[, 11. 7 (ε)φερ[, 11. 8 εναδον[, 15. 2 ]φορα[, 15. 3 ]χορω[, 15. 4 ]φιλα[, 19. 3 φουν[, 22. 2 οδυρ[. There is no coincidence with the previously known remains of the Lesbians. Lobel notices two sequences of letters which recur in Alcaeus (fr. 3. 4 = Alc. 58. 21; fr. 6. 11 = Alc. 38. 8), but the contexts prove that the coincidences are fortuitous. He observes also that the syllables εφ, βo, and αμ in fr. 12. 1-4 recur in the same vertical relation in Alc. 81. 6-8; but as the identification would have to assume a line missing in the one place or additional in the other, it is prudent to regard this coincidence also as fortuitous.

Lobel notes the following apparently non-Lesbian features: (a) fr. 1. 1 ]καιρυν[, but we are free to divide μα]καιρ' ενν[ (e.g. εὔν[οος connected with ἐς] πόλιν τάν[δε in the next line). (b) fr. 5. 2 παιαον, where πααον is expected in Lesbian, if not the contracted form παον (Sappho 44. 31). (c) fr. 11. 8 εὔαδον or εὔαδ' ον[, from the Epic. My principal concern, however, is with fr. 27, which raises a more serious doubt whether this manuscript comes from Sappho or Alcaeus.

Lobel gives the text of fr. 27 thus:

	.   .   .
1	]ηχε[. .]αν [
2	]ορεπ[
3	]νιδοι[
	.   .   .

Now in 2 the letter π, for which γ, [ is given as an alternative, is followed not by the papyrus-edge, as the bracket would indicate, but by a blank surface three if not four letter-spaces long. In 1, αν was clearly the end of the line and in 3 it looks as though οι ends the line. The text should therefore read:

	.   .   .
1	]ηχε[. .]αν [
2	]ορε.(.) [
3	]νιδοι[
	.   .   .

And this creates a metrical problem. What followed ρε in 2 was either π or γ.

If the remains are interpreted as γ, that was not the last letter of the line: the right-hand end of the cross-bar is thickened, evidently ligatured to the top of a vertical stroke, and that letter can only have been ι, for there is no trace of writing to the right. Now ]ορεπ is not a tolerable end to a verse; ]ορεγι must be read, and that can only be ]ορε γι[γν- or ]ορ ἐγι[γν-. But there is no verse in Sappho or Alcaeus which ends ∪ ∪ -, with the solitary exceptions of Sappho 96. 7 and presumably 95. 9, where choriambic dimeters correspond to glyconics. The chances are heavily against another such anomaly, including synaphaea, appearing here.

The problem would not arise if the letter preceding ρε were a long vowel or a consonant. What is preserved is the right-hand arc of a circle, rather oddly shaped but very like the right-hand half of ο in fr. 11. 8 *ευαδον* and fr. 15. 3 *χωρω*; to the left of this is a stroke which looks nearly upright, as the left-hand side of ο looks in fr. 2. 3, 2. 7, 4. 4. There is in fact no letter except ο which could leave these remains; ω is not possible. ]ορεγγιγν- it must be, and the verse ends ∪ ∪ -, a phenomenon absent from Alcaeus and attested only twice, in circumstances in which it is anomalous, in Sappho.

2. *P. Oxy. 2879 col. i. 1-5*

] . ε κυανέας [πο]λνόμεματον  
 ποί]κιλμα νυκτ[ός]  
 ]ο δυσμογέων αἰγνές ὑπέρβιος  
 'Υπερ]ιονίδας . [ ]άτωι τε καὶ δξυτάταις  
 5 σπι]νθαρύγεcc[ι

Supplements by Lobel, who says that 'not much is missing in the upper part of col. i', and that 'the left-hand edge of the column is defined by the supplements of lines 2, 4 seq.'. I do not think that the edge can be so defined: in this more or less dactylo-epitritic metre ὑπέρβιος cannot immediately precede 'Υπεριονίδας, nor can πολνόμεματον immediately precede ποίκιλμα. The loss must be more extensive. The least that could be missing is e.g.

ἔβλεψε] τε κυανέας [πο]λνόμεματον  
 εἰς ποί]κιλμα νυκτ[ός]  
 ἔπειτα δ' ] ο δυσμογέων αἰγνές ὑπέρβιος  
 ὦρθ' 'Υπερ]ιονίδας . [ ]άτωι τε καὶ δξυτάταις  
 σὺν σπι]νθαρύγεcc[ι

It is surprisingly hard to fill the small gap in the fourth line. κ[αμ]άτωι is, as Lobel says, 'very unattractive as a decipherment', and would be 'a very strange associate of σπινθαρύγεccι'. The traces immediately after -ιδας seem to me to be of two letters. The second, on the edge of the break, is a small loop on the line open to the right; the α of καὶ in this line would leave a similar trace, and so would the first α of v. 8 below; no other letter seems possible. To the left of this is 'a sinuous upright apparently forked at the top and descending below the line with foot curling to the left'. The fork excludes all letters except κ, ν, and χ. The shape is so unlike the scribe's κ and ν that these must, I think, be quite ruled out: χ, of which there are two other examples, is only a little less unattractive; it would be an abnormally tall and narrow specimen. Nor is there any imaginable supplement for χα[.(.)]άτωι. It may be added that Buck

and Petersen have no noun ending -ατωι (or -ητωι, assuming <sup>ω</sup> [.]ατωι) which could be associated with *σπινθαρίγεςσι*. I find this problem insoluble.

In the ninth line of this text, *ολιοπλανές ἐκχέεται πέλαγος*, the only available attested word, *εκολιοπλανές*, is, as Lobel says, unsuitable; presumably therefore *δολιοπλανές*. The form is not attested, but Nonnus has *δολοπλανής*.

3. *P. Oxy. 2881 (b) 7, from a play*

The line ends *ευκερωξδευς*. Lobel corrects this to *εὔκρω δέους*, commenting 'how this is to be interpreted, I do not know'.

There is a lacuna, with space for a letter or at least part of a letter, between *δε* and *ους*, and on the edge of the break before *ους* there are traces which look compatible with *β*; read *εὔκρωξ δὲ βούς*.

4. *P. Oxy. 2883, apparently from the Messeniaka of Rhianus*

Fr. 1. 11, supply *οὐδὲ μὲν οὐδὲ καὶ αὐτός*. 2. 1 seqq., *ὥς [εἰπὼν ἃ]πέπανε μάχην, ἐπίθοντο δὲ λαοὶ | νυ[κτὶ . . .], νίκη γὰρ ἀγαλλόμενοι ποθέεσκον | καίπερ κεκμηῶτες ἀνὰ κνέφας ἀντιάσθαι*: Lobel suggests *νυ[κτὶ θοῇ]*, but you cannot say 'they agreed to go to bed at night because they wished to fight in the dark'; the *γάρ*-clause gives the reason for *unwillingness* to 'give way to night', and this unwillingness must have been expressed. *ἐπίθοντο νυκτὶ* must have been qualified by e.g. *βίηι, μόγις*.

5. *P. Oxy. 2891, the beginning of Philaenis, περὶ ἀφροδισίων*

Fr. 1 col. 1 *τάδε συνέγραψε Φιλαί<sup>2</sup>νις Ὠκυμένους Σαμία | <sup>3</sup> τοῖς βουλομένοις με<sup>4</sup>θ<sup>5</sup> .[. . . . .] <sup>6</sup> τὸν βίον διε<sup>5</sup>ξά[γειν κ]αὶ μὴ παρέρ<sup>6</sup>γως κτλ*. In 4, the letter after *θ*<sup>5</sup> is either *ι* or a damaged *η*; the letter preceding *ς* may well be *η* but is certainly not *ο* or *α*. The space between *θ* and *ς* in 4 is the same as that between *τ* and the third *ο* in 3, seven letters. The obvious supplement *ἡ[δον]ῆς* puts three letters in a gap equivalent to five. What noun of appropriate sense, beginning *ι-* or *ῆ-* and ending in the genitive *-ης*, has five letters between these components? I find nothing beginning *ι-*, and beginning *ῆ-* nothing but *ῆ[δου]ν<sup>7</sup>ης*, attested only in the form *ἀδοϋνά*, in Hesychius. If the text was not corrupt, *ῆδοϋνή* is the only available or imaginable word here; Philaenis was notable for the use of rare or invented words (Lucian, *Pseudol.* 24, quoted by Lobel).

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