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Lyric and Greek Myth

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(The page-numbers of the printed version are embedded within brackets in this electronic version: for example, {19|20} marks where p. 19 stops and p. 20 begins.)

In the history of Greek literature, poets of "lyric" are conventionally associated with the archaic period. Some would go so far as to call this period a "lyric age," to be contrasted with an earlier age represented by Homer and Hesiod, poets of "epic." There is in fact a book about the archaic period bearing the title *The Lyric Age of Greece* (Burn 1960). The archaic period ended around the second half of the fifth century BCE, to be followed by the so-called classical period. The archaic period is thought to have ended with the lyric poet Pindar, while the classical period is thought to have begun with the tragic poet Aeschylus, even though these two literary figures were roughly contemporaneous.

There is a lack of precision in the general use of the term lyric. It is commonly associated with a variety of assumptions regarding the historical emergence of a "subjective I," as represented by the individual poet of lyric, who is to be contrasted with the generic poet of epic, imagined as earlier and thus somehow less advanced. By extension, the subjective I is thought to be symptomatic of emerging notions of authorship. Such assumptions, it is argued here, cannot be sustained.

Lyric did not start in the archaic period. It is just as old as epic, which clearly predates the archaic period. And the traditions of lyric, like those of epic, were rooted in oral poetry, which is a matter of performance as well as composition (Lord 1995:22-68, "Oral Traditional Lyric Poetry").

These two aspects of oral poetry, composition and performance, are interactive, and this interaction is parallel to the interaction of myth and ritual. In oral poetry, the performing of a composition is an activating of myth, and such activation is fundamentally a matter of ritual (Nagy 1994/1995).

During the archaic period, the artistic production of lyric involved performance as well as composition. The performance was executed {19|20} either by a single performer or by a group that was actually or at least notionally participating in the performance. The most prominent Greek word referring to such a group is *choros* 'chorus', which designates not just

singing, like its derivative *chorus* in English, but dancing as well. Choral lyric could be sung and danced, or just sung or just danced. To be contrasted is monody, which means ‘solo singing’.

Lyric could be sung to the accompaniment of a string instrument, ordinarily the *kithara*, which is conventionally translated as ‘lyre’. This English noun *lyre* and its adjective *lyric* are derived from *lura* (*lyra*), which is another Greek word for a string instrument. Lyric could also be sung to the accompaniment of a wind instrument, ordinarily the *aulos* ‘reed’. Either way, whether the accompaniment took the form of string or wind instruments, a more precise term for such lyric is melic, derived from the Greek noun *melos* ‘song’. English *melody* is derived from Greek *melōidia*, which means ‘the singing of *melos*’.

Lyric could also be sung without instrumental accompaniment. In some forms of unaccompanied lyric, the melody was reduced and the rhythm became more regulated than the rhythm of melic. In describing the rhythm of these forms of unaccompanied lyric, it is more accurate to use the term meter. And, in describing the performance of this kind of lyric, it is more accurate to speak of reciting instead of singing. Recited poetry is typified by three meters in particular: dactylic hexameter, elegiac couplet, and iambic trimeter. In ancient Greek poetic traditions, the dactylic hexameter became the sole medium of epic. As a poetic form, then, epic is far more specialized than lyric (PH 1§§1-16, 55-64).

In the classical period, the solo performance of lyric poetry, both melic and non-melic, became highly professionalized. Melic poetry was sung by professional soloists - either *kitharōidoi* ‘citharodes’ (= ‘kithara-singers’) or *aulōidoi* ‘aulodes’ (= ‘aulos-singers’), while non-melic poetry was recited by professional soloists called *rhapsōidoi* ‘rhapsodes’. Such solo performance was monody. In classical Athens, the primary occasion for citharodic or aulodic or rhapsodic solo performance was the festival of the Panathenaia, which was the context of competitions called *mousikoi agōnes* ‘musical contests’. These Panathenaic *agōnes* ‘contests’ were *mousikoi* ‘musical’ only in the sense that they were linked with the goddesses of poetic memory, the Muses (HC 3 section 4). They were not ‘musical’ in the modern sense, since the contests featured epic as well as lyric poetry. The epic repertoire was restricted to the Homeric *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, competitively performed by rhapsodes, {20|21} while the lyric repertoire was restricted to melic poetry, competitively performed by citharodes and aulodes.

In the classical period of Athens, melic poetry was also sung and danced by non-professional choruses. The primary occasion for such performances was the festival of the City Dionysia, the official venue of Athenian State Theater. The actors who delivered their lines by reciting the verses of non-melic poetry embedded in the dramas of Athenian State Theater were professionals, while the choruses who sang and danced the melic poetry also embedded in these dramas were non-professional, recruited from the body politic of citizens; theatrical choruses became professionalized only after the classical period, toward the end of the fourth century BCE (PP 157, 172-176).

The performances of non-professional choruses in Athenian State Theater represent an essential aspect of melic poetry that transcends the classical period. Not only in Athens but throughout the Greek-speaking world of the classical period and beyond, the most authoritative context of melic poetry was choral performance. The *choros* 'chorus' was in fact a basic social reality in all phases of archaic Greek prehistory and history, and this reality was essential in the evolution of lyric during these phases (Calame 2001).

An important differentiation becomes evident in the course of this evolution. It is an emerging split between the composer and the performer of lyric. Before this split, the authorship of any lyric composition was closely linked to the authority of lyric performance. This authority played itself out in a dramatized relationship between the *choros* 'chorus' and a highlighted *chorēgos* 'leader of the chorus', as idealized in the relationship of the Muses as divine chorus to Apollo as their divine choral leader (PH 12§29). In lyric, as we will see, such authority is linked to the articulation of myth itself.

The *choros*, as an institution, was considered the most authoritative medium not only for the performance of lyric composition and but also for its transmission in the archaic period. As we see from the wording of choral lyric poetry, the poet's voice is transmitted and notionally perpetuated by the seasonally recurring choral performances of his or her poetry. A most prominent example is Song 1 of Alcman (PH 12§18). The voices of the performers who sing and dance such poetry can even speak of the poet by name in the third person, identifying him as the one who composed their song. An example is Song 39 of Alcman. In other situations, the choral lyric composer speaks in the first person by borrowing, as it were, the voices of those who sing and dance in his {21 | 22} choral compositions. In Song 26 of Alcman, for example, the speaker declares that he is too old and weak to dance with the chorus of women who sing and dance his song: by implication, he continues to sing as their lead singer (PH 12§32).

For an understanding of authority and authorship in lyric poetry, more needs to be said about the actual transmission of lyric from the archaic into the classical period. The lyric traditions of the archaic period became an integral part of liberal education for the elites of the classical period. In leading cities like Athens, the young were educated by professionals in the non-professional singing, dancing, and reciting of songs that stemmed from the archaic period - songs that had become the classics of the classical period. As we see in the *Clouds* of Aristophanes (1355-1356), a young man who had the benefit of such an education could be expected to perform the artistic feat of singing solo a choral song composed by the archaic poet Simonides (F 507) while accompanying himself on the lyre. Elsewhere in the *Clouds* (967), we see a similar reference to a similar solo performance of a choral song composed by the even more archaic poet Stesichorus (F 274).

Among the elites of the classical period, the primary venue for the non-professional performance of archaic lyric songs that youths learned through such a liberal education was the

sumposion 'symposium'. Like the chorus, the symposium was a basic social reality in all phases of archaic Greek prehistory and history. And, like the chorus, it was a venue for the non-professional performance of lyric in all its forms.

The poets of lyric in the archaic period became the models for performing lyric in the classical period. And, as models, these figures became part of a canon of melic poets (Wilamowitz 1900:63-71). This canon, as it evolved from the archaic into the classical period and beyond, was composed of the following nine figures: Sappho, Alcaeus, Anacreon, Alcman, Stesichorus, Ibycus, Simonides, Pindar, Bacchylides. To this canonical grouping we may add a tenth figure, Corinna, although her status as a member of the canon was a matter of dispute in the postclassical period (PH 3§2n3). Other figures can be classified as authors of non-melic poetry: they include Archilochus, Callinus, Hipponax, Mimnermus, Theognis, Tyrtaeus, Semonides, Solon, and Xenophanes.

One of these figures, Xenophanes, can be classified in other ways as well. He is one of the so-called pre-Socratic thinkers whose thinking is attested primarily in the form of poetry. Two other such figures are Empedocles and Parmenides. Since the extant poetry of Xenophanes is composed in elegiac couplets, he belongs technically to the overall category of lyric poetry, whereas Empedocles and Parmenides do not, {22 | 23} since their extant poetry is composed in dactylic hexameters, which is the medium of epic.

Such taxonomies are imprecise in any case. A case in point is Simonides, whose attested compositions include non-melic poetry (like the *Plataea Elegy*, F 11 W²) as well as melic poetry. Simonides is credited with the composition of epigrams as well (*Epigrammata* I-LXXXIX, ed. Page). Conversely, the poetry of Sappho was evidently not restricted to melic: she is credited with the composition of elegiac couplets, iambic trimeters, and even epigrammatic dactylic hexameters (T 2; F 157-159D). A comparable phenomenon in the archaic period is the perception of Homer as an epigrammatist (as in the Herodotean *Life of Homer* 133-140 ed. Allen; HPC I§§117-119).

On the basis of what we have seen so far, it is clear that a given lyric composition could be sung or recited, instrumentally accompanied or not accompanied, and danced or not danced. It could be performed solo or in ensemble. Evidently, all these variables contributed to a wide variety of genres, but the actual categories of these genres are in general difficult to determine (Harvey 1955). Moreover, the categories as formulated in the postclassical period and thereafter may be in some respects artificial (Davies 1988). Such difficulties can be traced back to the fact that the actual writing down of archaic lyric poetry blurs whatever we may know about the occasion or occasions of performance. The genres of lyric poetry stem ultimately from such occasions (Nagy 1994/1995).

In the postclassical period, antiquarians lost interest in finding out about occasions for performance, and they assumed for the most part that poets in the archaic period composed by way of writing. For example, Pausanias (7.20.4) says that Alcaeus wrote (*graphein*) his *Hymn to Hermes* (F 308c). A similar assumption is made about Homer himself: Pausanias (3.24.11, 8.29.2) thinks of Homer as an author who wrote (*graphein*) his poetry.

In the classical period, by contrast, the making of poetry by the grand poets of the past was not equated with the act of writing (HPC I§61). As we see from the wording of Plato, for example (*Phaedo* 94d, *Hippias Minor* 371a, *Republic* 2.378d, *Ion* 531c-d), Homer is consistently pictured as a poet who ‘makes’ (*poiēin*) his poetry, not as one who ‘writes’ (*graphein*) it. So also Herodotus says that Homer and Hesiod ‘make’ (*poiēin*) what they say in poetry (2.53.2); and he says elsewhere that Alcaeus ‘makes’ (*poiēin*) his poetry (5.95).

In any case, the basic fact remains that the composition of poetry in the archaic period came to life in performance, not in the reading of {23|24} something that was written. Accordingly, the occasions of performance need to be studied in their historical contexts.

In this presentation, the primary test case for studying occasions of performance is the lyric poetry attributed to Sappho and Alcaeus. The historical context of this poetry is relatively better known than the contexts of other comparable poetry. The place in question is the island of Lesbos, off the northern coast of Asia Minor. The time in question is around 600 BCE. That rough date matches a reference in a song of Alcaeus (F 49.12) to a contemporary event that can be dated independently, the destruction of Ascalon by Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, in 604 BCE (Alcaeus T 1).

The lyric poetry of Sappho and Alcaeus, taken together, represents the repertoire of the myths and the rituals of the people of Lesbos as expressed in lyric performance. Their poetry, and its transmission, goes back to a period when the city-states of the island of Lesbos were confederated into a single state. This federal state, the political term for which was *sunōikisis* (Thucydides 3.3.1), was dominated by Mytilene, the city of Alcaeus. There was a single communal place reserved for the festivals of this island federation, and that place was named *Messon*, the ‘middle space’, as Louis Robert (1960) has demonstrated, primarily on the basis of relevant epigraphical evidence. Songs 129 and 130 of Alcaeus show explicit references to this federal space, which is described as sacred to three divinities: Zeus, Hera, and Dionysus. Also relevant is a reference to the *teikhos basilēion* ‘wall of kings’ (Alcaeus 130A.15), which is equated with ‘the [precinct-]wall of Hera’ (according to a scholion in the relevant papyrus fragment).

The same federal space is mentioned in Song 17 of Sappho (also T 59), where the woman who is the main speaker is represented as praying to the goddess Hera: as this speaker says, it was *tuide* ‘here’ (line 7) at this federal space that the heroes Agamemnon and Menelaos made a stop after their destruction of Troy; and it was here, the speaker continues, that these

Achaean heroes prayed to Zeus and Hera and Dionysus (lines 9-10), asking the gods to reveal to them the best way to sail back home. There is a related reference in *Odysey* iii, where the story is told how Menelaos (but not Agamemnon) and his men joined Nestor and Diomedes in Lesbos (line 169) after the destruction of Troy in order to consult an unnamed god about the best way to sail back home (lines 173-174).

In the words of Alcaeus, this federal space was called the *temenos theōn* ‘sacred precinct of the gods’ (F 130B.13). It was the designated place for celebrating a seasonally recurring festival, described in the {24|25} words of Alcaeus as the occasion for the seasonally recurring assemblies or ‘comings together’ of the people of Lesbos (F 130B.15 *sunodoisi*; Nagy 1993:22).

This festival featured as its main spectacle the choral singing and dancing of the *Lesbiades* ‘women of Lesbos’, described as ‘exceptional in their beauty’ (130B.17 *krinnomenai phuan*). The reality of such a festival in Lesbos featuring the choral performances of women is independently verified by a scholion (that is, a note in a manuscript) referring to a passage in the Homeric *Iliad* (IX 130): from this scholion we learn that the name of the festival was the *Kallisteia*, which can be translated as ‘pageant of beauty’. In the relevant Iliadic passage as well as elsewhere in the *Iliad*, there are references to the women of Lesbos, described as exceptional in their beauty, who were captured by Achilles in the years that preceded the final destruction of Troy (IX 128-131, 270-273). These direct references in the *Iliad* can be analyzed as indirect references to the festival of the *Kallisteia* in Lesbos (HPC II§§289-290, 302). Another reference to the *Kallisteia* is attested in a poem from the *Greek Anthology* (9.189), which says that this festival takes place within the *temenos* ‘sacred precinct’ of Hera: this festival, it also says, was the occasion for choral singing and dancing by the women of Lesbos, with Sappho herself pictured as the leader of their *choros* ‘chorus’ (Page 1955:168n4).

Sappho in her songs is conventionally pictured as the lead singer of a chorus composed of the women of Lesbos, and she speaks as their main choral personality (PH 12§60). As we see in the *Greek Anthology*, Sappho’s songs are pictured as taking place within this sacred place, marked by the deictic word *tuide* ‘here’, as we saw earlier in Sappho’s Song 17 (line 7).

In Song 96 of Sappho, this same federal space of the people of Lesbos is once again marked by the deictic word *tuide* ‘here’ (line 2) as the sacred place of choral performance, and the noun *molpa* (line 5) makes it explicit that the performance takes the form of choral singing and dancing. In archaic poetry, the verb for ‘sing and dance in a chorus’ is *melpesthai* (PH 12§29n62 and n64).

In Song 96 of Sappho, such performance within the common choral ground of Lesbos is being nostalgically contrasted with the choral performance of a missing prima donna who is imagined as performing somewhere else at that same moment: she is now in an alien choral ground, as the prima donna of ‘Lydian women’ who are singing and dancing in the moonlight

(lines 4-9). The wording here refers to a seasonally recurring choral event known as the ‘Dance of the Lydian {25|26} Maidens’, performed by the local women of the Ionian city of Ephesus at a grand festival held in their own sacred place of singing and dancing (PH 10§31). There are comparable ‘Lydian’ themes embedded in the seasonally recurring choral festivities of Sparta: one such event was known as the ‘Procession of the Lydians’ (Plutarch *Life of Aristides* 17.10). And just as Sappho’s Song 96 represents the women of Lydia as singing and dancing their choral song in a moonlit setting, so too are the women of Lesbos singing and dancing their own choral song *tuide*. There is a comparable setting in Song 154 of Sappho, where we see women pictured as poised to sing and dance around a *bō*

There is another such reference to the common choral ground of Lesbos, as marked by the deictic word *tuide* ‘here’, in the most celebrated Song 1 of Sappho:

You with the varied pattern-woven flowers, immortal Aphrodite, | child of Zeus, weaver of wiles, I implore you, | do not devastate with aches and sorrows, | Mistress, my heart. | But come here [*tuide*], if ever at any other time | hearing my voice from afar, | you heeded me and, leaving the palace of your father that is | golden, you came, | and golden is the chariot you harnessed; beautiful they were as they carried you along, | those swift sparrows, high above the dark earth, | swirling with their dense plumage all the way down from the sky through the | midst of the aether, | and right away they arrived. Then you, O holy one, | smiling with your immortal looks, | kept asking what is it once again this time [*dē’ute*] that has happened to me and for what reason | once again this time [*dē’ute*] do I invoke you, | and what is it that I want more than anything to happen | to my frenzied heart? “Whom am I once again this time [*dē’ute*] to persuade, | setting out to bring her back to your love? Who is doing you, | Sappho, wrong? | For if she is fleeing now, soon she will pursue. | If she is not taking gifts, soon she will be giving them. | If she does not love, soon she will love | against her will.” | Come to me even now, and free me from harsh | anxieties, and however many things | my heart yearns to get done, you do for me. You | become my ally in battle.

Sappho F 1

As we will see in due course, Sappho is being pictured here as the lead singer of a choral performance. She leads off by praying to Aphrodite to be present, that is, to manifest herself in an epiphany. The goddess is invoked from far away in the sky, which is separated from the earth by the immeasurably vast space of ‘aether’. Despite this overwhelming sense of separation, Aphrodite makes her presence felt immediately, once she is invoked. The goddess appears, that is, she is now present in the sacred space of performance, and her presence becomes an epiphany for all those who are present. Then, once Aphrodite is present, she exchanges roles with the prima donna who figures as the leader of choral performance. In the part of Song 1 that we see enclosed within quotation marks in the visual formatting of modern editions (lines 18-24), the first-person ‘I’ of Sappho is now replaced by Aphrodite herself, who

has been a second-person ‘you’ up to this point. We see here an exchange of roles between the first-person ‘I’ and the second-person ‘you’. The first-person ‘I’ now becomes Aphrodite, who proceeds to speak in the performing voice of Sappho to Sappho herself, who has now become the second-person ‘you’. During Aphrodite’s epiphany inside the shared sacred space of the people of Lesbos, a fusion of identities takes place between the goddess and the prima donna who leads the choral performance ‘here’, that is, in this sacred space (PP 97-103).

Sappho prays to Aphrodite to give her the power that the goddess has, which is the power to make love happen. She prays that she may ‘get done’ whatever it is that Aphrodite ‘gets done’ in the active voice of the verb meaning ‘to get something done’, *telessai* (Sappho F 1.26), which is to be contrasted with the passive voice *telesthēn* applying in another song to a passive lover who simply lets love happen (Sappho F 5.4). To be granted the active power sought by Sappho is to become the lead singer of the song that has the power to make love happen. Such is the power of song in the songs of Sappho.

Within the archaic context of the myths and rituals of the people of Lesbos, as framed by the sacred space of their federal precinct ‘here’ in the middle ground of their political space, Song 1 of Sappho can be seen as a prayer in the sense of a totalizing formula for authorizing choral performances of women at the festival of the *Kallisteia*. The seasonal recurrences of the festival are signaled by the triple deployment of the adverb *dē’ute* ‘once again this time’ in Sappho’s prayer. Every time in the past when Sappho has invoked Aphrodite by offering to her this prayer that we now hear, the goddess has heeded the prayer and has manifested herself in an ever-new epiphany. And now, once again this time, the goddess appears to Sappho, who will once again this time speak for the whole chorus as she speaks first for herself and then for Aphrodite and then once again this time for herself. {27|28}

In the postclassical era of literary critics like Menander the Rhetorician, the description of compositions like Song 1 of Sappho as ‘prayers’ (Sappho T 47) fails to capture the meaning of an act of prayer in the context of a choral performance. The modern mind, seizing on such descriptions, is quick to infer that such ‘prayers’ must be mere literary conceits. This is to ignore the dimension of performance, which complements the dimension of composition in the lyric poetry of the archaic period. It is also to ignore the ritual background of such performance, which complements the mythological background of the composition (Yatromanolakis 2003).

What appears to be a private ‘prayer’ uttered by Sappho is at the same time a public act of worship that is notionally sung and danced by the people of Lesbos as represented by a chorus of their women, legendary as they are for their beauty, and as led by the figure of Sappho as their prima donna. What appears to be the most deeply personal experience of Sappho is at the same time the most widely shared communal experience of the people of Lesbos.

Comparable examples can be found in other forms of song in the repertoire of Sappho. One such form is the *hymenaeus* or ‘wedding song’. Most revealing in this regard is the standard word that we translate as ‘bride’ - *numphē* (pronounced *numpha* in the poetic dialect of Lesbos, as in Sappho F 116). This word, as we can see from its Homeric usage, means not only ‘bride’ but also ‘goddess’ - in the sense of a local goddess as worshipped in the rituals of a given locale. And, as we can see from the wedding songs of Sappho, the *numphē* is perceived as both a bride and a goddess at the actual moment of the wedding. Similarly, the bridegroom is perceived as a god at that same moment. These perceptions are mythologized in the description of Hector and Andromache at the moment of their wedding in Song 44 of Sappho: the wedded couple are called *ἴ]keloi theoi]s* (line 21) and *theoikeloi* (line 34), and both these words mean ‘looking like the gods’.

It remains to ask what gods are models for wedded couples. In the poetics of Sappho, two figures who fill the role of such a divine pair are Ares and Aphrodite. In the case of Ares, he is a model for the *gambros* ‘bridegroom’, who is explicitly described as *isos Areui* ‘equal to Ares’ (Sappho F 111.5). In the case of Aphrodite, there are many instances of implicit equations of the bride with this goddess: in one song, for example, the bridegroom is said to be infused with the divine charisma of Aphrodite, evidently by way of his direct contact with the bride (Sappho F 112). {28|29}

Typical of such contact with divinity is this celebrated wedding song of Sappho:

He appears [*phainetai*] to me, that one, equal to the gods [*isos theoisin*], | that man who, facing you | is seated and, up close, that sweet voice of yours | he hears, | and how you laugh a laugh that brings desire. It just | makes my heart flutter within my breast. | You see, the moment I look at you, right then, for me | to make any sound at all won’t work any more. | My tongue has a breakdown and a delicate | - all of a sudden - fire rushes under my skin. | With my eyes I see not a thing, and there is a roar | my ears make. | Sweat pours down me and a trembling | seizes all of me; paler than grass | am I, and a little short of death | do I appear [*phainomai*] to myself.

Sappho F 31, first four of five stanzas

It is said that the bridegroom *phainetai* ‘appears’ to be *isos theoisin* ‘equal to the gods’. Appearances become realities, however, since *phainetai* means not only ‘he appears’ but also ‘he is manifested in an epiphany’, and this epiphany is felt as real (PH 7§2n10). In the internal logic of this song, seeing the bridegroom as a god for a moment is just as real as seeing Sappho as a goddess for a moment in the logic of Song 1 of Sappho.

The sense of reality is evident in the wording we have just seen, *phainetai moi kēnos isos theoisin* | *emmen’ ōnēr* ‘he appears [*phainetai*] to me, that one, equal to the gods, | the man who ...’. The first-person *moi* here in Song 31 of Sappho refers to the speaker, who is ‘Sappho’. In

another song of Sappho, we find the wording *phainetai woi kēnos isos theoisin* 'he appears [*phainetai*] to her, that one, equal to the gods' (F 165). In this song, the third-person *woi* 'to her' may perhaps refer to the bride. Or perhaps the speaker of this wording is imagined as Aphrodite herself.

In the first of these two songs of Sappho (F 31), the subjectivity is linked to the first-person speaker, who is the vicarious participant; in the second song (F 165), on the other hand, the subjectivity is linked to the third person, who is the immediate participant. There is a shifting of referents that accompanies the shifting of pronouns from 'I' to 'she'. We saw another shifting of referents in Song 1 of Sappho, from 'you' to 'I'. In that case, the shift in the ownership of pronouns involves the {29|30} second-person 'you' of Aphrodite and the first-person 'I' of Sappho. During the epiphany of Aphrodite, Sappho exchanges identities with the goddess herself. It is a moment of personal fusion with Aphrodite. Similarly in the wedding song (F 31), the vicariousness of Sappho links the 'I' with the 'you' of the bride.

The exchange between the 'I' and the 'you' of Sappho and Aphrodite in Song 1 is reflected also in the wording of another song of Sappho (F 159), where Aphrodite is imagined once again as speaking to Sappho and addressing her by name. In yet another song of Sappho (F 134), the speaker says she is dreaming she has a dialogue (*dialegesthai*) with Aphrodite.

The erotic experience shared by the 'he' who is the bridegroom and by the 'you' who is the bride in Song 31 of Sappho is communalized in the reaction of the 'I' who figures as the vicarious participant in the experience. And this reaction is an epiphany in itself. In this song, the subjectivity is linked to the first-person speaker who is Sappho. When we hear *phainetai moi kēnos isos theoisin* 'he appears [*phainetai*] to me, that one, equal to the gods', it is the first-person speaker who is feeling the erotic sensations experienced by the bride in the second-person and by the bridegroom in the third person. At the climax of the erotic experience as spoken by the first-person speaker, she says about her feelings: *tethnakēn d' oligō 'pideuēs phainom' emautāi* 'and a little short of death | do I appear [*phainomai*] to myself'. The verb *phainomai* 'I appear' here signals again an epiphany - an epiphany that manifests itself to the self, to the speaking 'I'.

This appearance of the self to the self, as an epiphany, signals the divine presence of Aphrodite. In one sense, then, what is seen is the epiphany of Aphrodite, since she is the goddess of the occasion. In another sense, however, what is seen is the epiphany of the bride, whose identity fuses with that of Aphrodite at the moment of her wedding. And, in still another sense, what is seen is the epiphany of the speaking 'I' who identifies with Aphrodite by virtue of identifying with the 'you' of the bride who is Aphrodite at this very moment. For Sappho, then, what is seen is an auto-epiphany.

The epiphany of Song 31 induces a near-death experience, and such a stylized personal death is modeled on a realized mythical death. As I will argue, death in myth is a prototype for

whatever it is that the first-person speaker experiences vicariously in her interaction with the second-person bride and with the third-person bridegroom, who are respectively the vision of Aphrodite and the corresponding vision of Ares. {30|31}

To start with the third person, it is essential to recall that the bridegroom is visualized as *isos Areui* ‘equal to Ares’ in another song of Sappho (F 111.5). Comparable to the bridegroom who gets married in lyric is the warrior who gets killed in epic. As we will see, he too is visualized as *isos Arēi* ‘equal to Ares’. And, as we will also see, the bridegroom can be visualized as Achilles himself in the songs of Sappho.

In the Homeric *Iliad*, warriors are conventionally called the *therapontes* of Ares as the god of war (II 110, VI 67, XV 733, XIX 78). This word *therapōn* (plural *therapontes*) means both ‘attendant’ and ‘ritual substitute’ in epic. When a warrior is killed in war, he becomes a ‘ritual substitute’ who dies for Ares by becoming identical to the war god at the moment of death; then, after death, the warrior is eligible to become a cult hero who serves as a sacralized ‘attendant’ of the war god (BA 17§§5-6). As an epic warrior, Achilles is a *therapōn* ‘ritual substitute’ of Ares by virtue of becoming identical to the war god at the moment of death. In the *Iliad*, however, this relationship between Achilles and Ares is expressed only by way of an intermediary, who is Patroklos. This warrior Patroklos is described not as the *therapōn* of Ares but rather as the *therapōn* of Achilles, and, as such, he is not only that hero’s ‘attendant’ but also his ‘ritual substitute’, since he actually dies for Achilles (BA 17§§5-6). So Achilles dies only indirectly as the *therapōn* of Ares through the intermediacy of Patroklos, who dies as the *therapōn* of Achilles.

As an epic warrior, Achilles also qualifies as *isos Arēi* ‘equal to Ares’. This description suits Achilles in the *Iliad* – though it applies to him only vicariously by way of Patroklos, who takes upon himself the role of a ritual substitute for Achilles. Patroklos is actually called *isos Arēi* (XI 604) at the exact moment when the story of his fatal impersonation of Achilles begins (BA 2§8, 17§5).

So a missing link for understanding Song 31 of Sappho is the vision of the hero Achilles as a model warrior at the moment of his death in epic, when he, too, like the model bridegroom in lyric, is ‘equal to Ares’. This link is verified by ancient sources, which make it explicit that Sappho conventionally imagined the model bridegroom as Achilles himself (F 105b).

Such a lyric convention in the songs of Sappho can be explained as an organic correlation of myth and ritual. In the logic of myth, Achilles never becomes a model husband because War personified cuts him down like a flower in the bloom of his youth. In the logic of ritual, on the other hand, Achilles is the perfect model for a bridegroom precisely because he is cut down in war and thus cannot ever become a husband. {31|32} For love to find its self-expression in the ritual of a wedding, it needs someone to die for love.

Such a ritual need is expressed in the relationship of Eros, personified as the god of erotic love, with Aphrodite, the goddess of erotic love. As we see from the imagined dialogue between Sappho and Aphrodite in a song of Sappho mentioned earlier, the goddess says in her own words that Eros is her *therapōn* (F 159). As in epic, this word in lyric means not only ‘attendant’ but also ‘ritual substitute’, that is, someone who ritually dies for the sake of the one he attends. Pictured as a pubescent (not prepubescent) boy, Eros is doomed to die for the sake of Aphrodite. In the poetics of Sappho, as later ancient sources tell us (F 172), the death of erotic Love personified is a most persistent theme.

The death of Eros could be pictured as a martial death resulting from the warfare of love. We see clearly the language of love as war in Song 1 of Sappho, where Aphrodite is invoked in prayer to become a *summakhos* ‘ally in battle’ for Sappho in speaking the words of lyric love poetry (1.28). Conversely, Sappho as the speaker of lyric love poetry is offering herself as an ‘ally in battle’ for Aphrodite, thus crossing over into the themes of epic. Similarly in the *Iliad*, Aphrodite crosses over into the themes of epic by intervening in the epic action - and she gets wounded in doing so, as if she were a mortal (V 327-354).

Parallel to the wounding of the goddess Aphrodite are the two wounding of the god Ares in the *Iliad*: he too gets wounded as if he were a mortal (V 855-863, XXI 401-408). More than that, the wounding of Ares are in both cases described as mortal wounding, and the *Iliad* actually shows Ares in the act of going through the motions of a stylized martial death. Such an epic experience is for Ares a mock death (EH §76). Similarly, the lyric experience of Eros in dying for love can be viewed as a mock death, and such ritualized mockery is typical of “divine burlesque,” which represents one of the oldest features of Greek myth. There are striking parallels to be found in Near Eastern sources dating back to the second millennium BCE (Burkert 1960:132).

The stylized death of the god Ares in the *Iliad* is an extreme case of divine mirroring: the immortal god of war gets involved not only in the martial actions of heroes but even in their martial deaths. And he gets so involved because god and hero mirror each other at the moment of a hero’s death, which is the climax of the inherent antagonism between them (EH §§105, 108, 110, 115).

At the moment when he dies a warrior’s death in place of Achilles, Patroklos is vicariously experiencing such a moment of mirroring {32|33} between Achilles as warrior and Ares as god of warriors: that is why Patroklos looks just like Ares at that moment (BA 2§8, 17§5).

As mutual antagonists, hero and the god match each other in life as well as in death. In the case of Achilles, as we see from surviving traces in the epic Cycle, this hero was imagined as an irresistible lover by lovelorn girls hoping to make him their husband (EH §56). In the case

of Ares, as we see from the second song of Demodokos in the Homeric *Odyssey*, this god is imagined as an irresistible lover by the goddess of sexuality herself, Aphrodite (viii 266-366).

Among other related characteristics shared by the hero Achilles and the god Ares is their superhuman speed. In the case of Achilles, his success in war is closely connected with the use of such epithets as *podōkēs* ‘swift-footed’ in the *Iliad*. In the case of Ares, his own swiftness of foot is pictured as ideal for success in courtship as well as in warfare. In the song of Demodokos about the love affair of Ares and Aphrodite in the *Odyssey*, we find that one of the war god’s most irresistible attributes is his nimbleness of foot in choral lyric dancing (HPC I§214). And yet, despite his irresistible attractiveness in courting Aphrodite, the dashing young Ares will never marry. Like the dashing young Achilles, Ares is eternally the bridegroom and never the husband.

Having started with the third-person bridegroom in Song 31 of Sappho, I now continue with the second-person bride. Just as the bridegroom looks like a local cult hero, so also the bride looks like a local cult heroine. In Aeolic traditions, such heroines figured in myths about the conquests of Achilles - not only martial but also amorous conquests - in the years that preceded the destruction of Troy. These myths told of beautiful Aeolic girls of Asia Minor and the outlying island of Lesbos who had once been immune to love and thus unreachable to their frustrated suitors. But then they fall helplessly in love with Achilles - that dashing young Aeolic hero who had sailed across the sea from his home in Hellas to attack their people (HPC II§§49, 321).

Comparable to these once-unreachable Aeolic girls is a prize apple, unreachable to the apple-pickers, which ‘blushes’ enticingly from the heights of a “shooter-branch” in a song of Sappho (F 105a; on the cultivation of apples in ancient and modern Lesbos, see Mason 2004). It is no coincidence that the brides of Sappho’s songs are conventionally compared to apples (F 105b). Like Sappho’s prize apple, these contemporary brides are imagined as unreachable. But they are unreachable only up to the moment when they take the place of Aeolic heroines who had once upon a time fallen in love with Achilles, that eternal bridegroom. These Aeolic girls of the heroic past are imagined as throwing themselves at {33|34} Achilles. That is, they throw a metonymic extension of themselves at Achilles by throwing an apple at him: such a theme is attested in the bittersweet story of a lovelorn girl from the Aeolic city of Pedasos (Hesiod F 214; BA 7§29n6). In the logic of myth, the love felt by such heroines is doomed from the start, and, in the end, they die for their love. In the logic of ritual, however, that same love promises to be requited. Such is the love expressed by girls pictured in the act of throwing apples at their prospective lovers in the songs of Sappho (F 214A).

Just as the hero Achilles stands in for a god at moments that center on the ritual of a wedding, so also various Aeolic heroines can stand in for a goddess. A case in point is the captive woman Briseis in the *Iliad*, who is overtly associated with the women of Lesbos whom

Achilles captured as beauty-prizes in the years that preceded the destruction of Troy (IX 128-131, 270-273; XIX 245-246). The *Iliad* quotes, as it were, Briseis in the act of singing a choral lyric song of lament for the death of Patroklos (XIX 287-300); this quotation of Briseis, along with the framing narrative concerning the antiphonal response of the women attending Briseis (XIX 301-302), reenacts most accurately the morphology of a genuine choral lyric lament (Dué 2002:70-71; HPC II§§303-317). As she begins to sing her choral lyric song of lament for Patroklos, Briseis is likened to Aphrodite (XIX 282). In her lament, Briseis sings her bittersweet sorrow not only over the death of Patroklos but also over the death of her own fondest hope: when he was alive, Patroklos had promised to arrange for her a marriage to Achilles, but, now that he is dead, the hope of that promise is gone forever (XIX 295-300). So the *Iliad* pictures Patroklos as a ritual substitute for Achilles in courtship as well as in war.

In the logic of myth, from what we have seen so far, a hero's identity at the moment of death can merge with a god's identity. In the logic of ritual, on the other hand, such a merger of identity leads only to a stylized death (PP 87-97). Death in ritual is not physical but psychic. For example, from cross-cultural surveys of rituals of initiation as practiced in traditional societies around the world, it becomes evident that initiands who are identified with divinities at the moment of initiation are imagined as dying to their old selves as members of a given age-class and being reborn to their new selves as members of the next age-class (PP 101-103).

In the ritual of a wedding as celebrated by the songs of Sappho, there is the prospect of a happy ending as the identity of the Aeolic *numpha* 'bride' shifts from girl to goddess to woman. In the process of becoming a goddess for a moment, the bride dies to her old self as a {34|35} girl and is reborn to her new self as a woman. In the corresponding myth, by contrast, there is the prospect of a sad but compellingly erotic ending to the story. The bride-to-be will never get married to the eternal bridegroom, imagined as Achilles.

The death of Achilles himself in war is the climax of his erotic charisma. In general, the martial death of heroes is eroticized as the beautiful death, *la belle mort*; even the body of the dead hero is eroticized - as the beautiful corpse, *le beau mort* (Tyrtaeus F 10; Vernant 1982a; HC 4 section 18; HPC II§425). Achilles is pictured as a *beau mort* in the *Iliad*, as when the goddess Thetis and her fellow Nereids lament the future death of her beloved son in war; in this context, the hero is compared to a beautiful plant that dies in full bloom (XVIII 54-60; BA 10§11). In a song of Sappho (F 105c), we see a comparable image of a beautiful plant at the moment of death (also comparable is the image of a bridegroom as a beautiful plant in F 115).

Such themes of eroticized death are relevant to the near-death experience of the 'I' in Song 31 of Sappho. Having started with the third-person bridegroom in this song and having continued with the second-person bride, I conclude with this first-person speaker. The woman who speaks in the first person here is vicariously speaking for the whole group that attends the

wedding. The whole group is notionally participating in the stylized deaths of the male and the female initiands - in this case, of the bridegroom and the bride.

The stylized death of the bridegroom in a wedding as described by Sappho matches the realized death of Achilles in war. Premarital death in ritual marks the transition from bridegroom to husband, while martial death in myth marks an eternal deferral of such a transition. By dying in war, Achilles becomes the very picture of the ultimate bridegroom in eternally suspended animation, forever on the verge of marrying. In the logic of ritual, what is needed for female initiands, especially for brides, is such an eternal bridegroom (Dué 2006:82-83). A comparable model of unfulfilled desire and unrequited love is the hero Hippolytus in the *Hippolytus* of Euripides: at the end of this drama (1423-1430), we find an anthropologically accurate description of a ritual of female initiation featuring a chorus of girls performing a lament for the death of Hippolytus as their local cult hero (PP 94-96). As this drama illustrates, the identity of the female initiand depends on the program, as it were, of the ritual of initiation. The nuptial Aphrodite and the prenuptial / postnuptial Artemis reveal different phases of erotic engagement in the life cycle of a woman, determining when she is attainable - and when she is unattainable. {35|36}

In compensation for his being cut down in the bloom of his youth, Achilles is destined to have a *kleos* 'glory' that is *aphthiton* 'unwilted': that is what the hero's mother foretells for him, as Achilles himself is quoted as saying (*Iliad* IX 413). The word *kleos* expresses not only the idea of prestige as conveyed by the translation 'glory' but also the idea of a medium that confers this prestige (BA 1§§2-4). And this medium of *kleos* is not only epic, as represented by the Homeric *Iliad*, but also lyric, as best represented in the historical period by the poet Pindar. In the praise poetry of Pindar, the poet proudly proclaims his mastery of the prestige conferred by *kleos* (as in *Nemean* 7.61-63; PH 6§3). As for the word *aphthiton* 'unwilted', it is used as an epithet of *kleos* not only in epic but also in lyric, as we see from the songs of Sappho (F 44.4) and Ibycus (F 282.47). This epithet expresses the idea that the medium of *kleos* is a metaphorical flower that will never stop blossoming. As the words of a song by Pindar predict, the hero who is glorified by the *kleos* will die and will thus stop blossoming, that is, he will 'wilt', *phthinein*, but the medium that conveys the message of death will never wilt: that medium is pictured as a choral lyric song eternally sung by the Muses as they lament the beautiful wilted flower that is Achilles, the quintessential *beau mort* (*Isthmian* 8.56a-62; PH 7§6). This song of the Muses is parallel to the choral lyric song that is sung by Thetis accompanied by her fellow Nereids as they lament in the *Iliad* the future death of her beloved son: here again, as we saw earlier, Achilles is figured as a beautiful flower cut down in full bloom (XVIII 54-60; BA 10§11); in the *Odyssey*, we find a retrospective description of the lament sung by Thetis and her fellow Nereids at the actual funeral of Achilles, followed by the lament of the Muses themselves (xxiv 58-59, 60-62).

The idea of *kleos apthiton* ‘unwilting glory’ as conferred by poetry applies not only to the epic theme of a hero’s death in war, as in the case of Achilles in the *Iliad* (IX 413), but also to the lyric theme of a wedding, as in the case of Hector as bridegroom and Andromache as bride in Song 44 of Sappho (line 4). The expression *kleos apthiton* links the doomed warrior in epic with the wedded couple in lyric. Parallel to the linking effected by this expression is the linking effected by the god Apollo himself: he too links Achilles in epic with Hector and Andromache in lyric. The celebrants at the wedding in Song 44 of Sappho sing Apollo by invoking his epithet *Paeon* (*Pāōn* in the local dialect) when they celebrate Hector and Andromache as bridegroom and bride (line 33). To sing a paean is to sing a song from Lesbos, as we see from the wording of Archilochus (F 121). To sing a paean in the *Iliad* is to sing Apollo as Paeon, though Paeon is a god in his own right {36|37} in more archaizing contexts of the *Iliad* (as at V 401 and V 899-901). Elsewhere in the *Iliad*, Achilles calls on the Achaeans to sing a paean, that is, to sing Apollo as Paeon when they celebrate the death of Hector in war (XXII 391).

There are also other linkings of the doomed warrior in epic with the wedded couple in lyric. Achilles is *theoikelos* ‘just like the gods’ as a warrior in the *Iliad* (I 131, XXIII 155), and so too Hector and Andromache as bridegroom and bride are *theoikeloi* ‘just like the gods’ at the moment of their wedding in Song 44 of Sappho (at line 34; also *ἴκελοι θεοῖς* ‘just like the gods’ at line 21). And Achilles is in fact the only recipient of the epithet *theoikelos* ‘just like the gods’ in the Homeric *Iliad*. So the warrior who kills Hector attracts the same epithet in epic that Hector attracts in lyric.

It remains to ask about the god with whom Achilles is identified in epic and with whom Hector and Andromache are identified in lyric. For this god, epic and lyric are undifferentiated, just as the *kleos apthiton* of Achilles as warrior in epic is undifferentiated from the *kleos apthiton* of Hector and Andromache as bridegroom and bride in lyric. This god is Apollo.

At the moment of his death, the hero Achilles is destined to confront not only the god Ares as the generic divine antagonist of warriors but also the god Apollo as his own personal divine antagonist. This personalized destiny of Achilles is made explicit in the epic Cycle, that is, in the *Aithiopsis*, but it is only implicit in the *Iliad*, where Patroklos substitutes for Achilles in his antagonism with Apollo just as he substitutes for him in his antagonism with Ares.

What makes this destiny of Achilles so personalized is his special connection with song, a medium signaled as *kleos apthiton* ‘unwilting glory’. The god of this medium is Apollo, who is the god of poetry and song. And such poetry and song are conceived as lyric. To put it another way, such poetry and song can be conceived as a form of epic that is not yet differentiated from lyric (PH 12§§44-45). Apollo is the god of an older form of epic that is still sung to the accompaniment of the lyre.

Correspondingly, Achilles is the hero of such an older form of epic. In this role, he is imagined as looking exactly like Apollo - beardless and wearing long hair. Like Apollo, Achilles is the essence of a beautiful promise in the making, of a *telos* or 'fulfillment' realized only in performance, only when the song is fully performed (HTL 138-143). There is a visual signature of this shared role of god and hero in the *Iliad*. Achilles, like Apollo, is pictured in this epic as singing to the tune of a lyre that he himself is playing (IX 186-189). Achilles had {37|38} plundered this lyre from the Aeolic city of Thebe, ruled by the king Eëtion (IX 186-189), whom he killed when he captured that city - and who was the father of that greatest singer of lamentations in the *Iliad*, Andromache (VI 414-416). What Achilles sings to the tune of this Aeolic lyre is an echo of the loves and bittersweet sorrows heard in lyric song (HPC II§297). An example of such lyric in historical times is the song of Sappho about the wedding of Hector and Andromache (F 44): the lyric *kleos aphthiton* 'unwilting glory' of this Aeolic song (F 44.4) is cognate with the epic *kleos aphthiton* 'unwilting glory' that Achilles is promised in the *Iliad* (IX 413), which is metonymically linked with the epic *klea andrōn* 'glories of heroes' that Achilles is singing on the Aeolic lyre (IX 189).

Such a lyrical image of Achilles evokes a correspondingly lyrical image of Apollo. Even in epic, this god is conventionally pictured as a lyric personality. In fact, Apollo controls the medium of lyric, of choral lyric. A prime example is the conventional description of Apollo as the *Mous(h)ēgētēs*, that is, as the choral leader of the Muses (PH 12§29). Such a description is attested in lyric (an example is Song 208 of Sappho) and even in epic (*Iliad* I 603-604). Apollo accompanies himself on the lyre as he sings and dances, while the Muses in the chorus also sing and dance (*Homeric Hymn to Hermes* 475-476).

The god Apollo controls not only lyric. He controls all song and poetry, and he is ultimately in control of all occasions for the performance of song and poetry. In this overarching role, he embodies the authority of poets, that is, of craftsmen who compose song and poetry. This authority transcends such categories as epic and lyric. And it transcends the genres that figure as subcategories of epic and lyric, as well as the occasions that shape those genres. This authority is linked to the authorship of song and poetry.

An ancient term that refers to the exercising of such divine authority and authorship in performance is *exarkhein* (as in Archilochus F 120), which can be pragmatically translated this way: 'to emerge [in the act of performance] as the choral leader'; Aristotle uses the participle *exarkhōn* (*Poetics* 1449a10-11) in building his evolutionary model of the emergent choral leader. The image of Apollo in choral lyric performance, in the act of singing and dancing as he accompanies himself on the lyre, captures the essence of the *exarkhōn* as the 'emergent choral leader'. As the divine *exarkhōn*, Apollo is the source of authority for the making of song and poetry. As for human *exarkhontes* in the act of performance, they are the makers of this song and poetry. In effect, they are historical authors in the making (HC 2 section 9). {38|39}

An ancient term that refers to the medium of exercising such authority and authorship is the noun *hymnos*, which is usually translated by way of a word derived from it, 'hymn'. To understand *hymnos* merely as 'hymn' in the current sense of the word is inadequate, however, since this sense conveys not much more than a mere literary conceit. In the ancient sense of the term, however, as attested in both epic and lyric, the *hymnos* is a notionally perfect beginning of any poetic composition because it is a notionally perfect invocation of the god who presides over the occasion of performing that composition. The god invoked in the *hymnos* absolutizes not only the *hymnos* but also everything that the *hymnos* introduces. Moreover, the totality of everything introduced by the *hymnos* is then subsumed by the *hymnos* itself, which is totalizing by virtue of being absolutely authoritative. When a *hymnos* calls itself a *hymnos*, the word refers not only to the *hymnos* but also to everything in the performance that follows the *hymnos* (HC 2 sections 2-4).

The immediate referent of the *hymnos* is the god or goddess to whom the speaker prays on a given occasion of performance. As the absolute authority who is being invoked by the prayer, that god or goddess makes the performance absolutely authoritative. But the referent of the *hymnos* is also the one who re-enacts the god or goddess by virtue of performing the *hymnos*. The technical term for such re-enactment is *mimēsis* (PP 54-58). That is what we see happening in Song 1 of Sappho. At the climax of her performance as a prima donna, Sappho notionally becomes Aphrodite when she sings with the voice of the goddess - and with the authority of the goddess. Sappho herself, by speaking with the voice of the speaker in the *hymnos*, becomes absolutely authoritative (PP 87-103).

And to be so authoritative requires a group to respond to the authority of the speaker. That group is ideally a chorus of singers and dancers, and, by extension, the entire community of those attending the singing and dancing. As noted before, such authority is played out in the dramatized relationship between the *choros* 'chorus' and a highlighted *chorēgos* 'leader of the chorus', as mythologized in the relationship of the Muses to Apollo as their choral leader (PH 12§29). Apollo shows the way for celebrating a god in a *hymnos* by performing in his own right the perfect performance of such a celebration.

To repeat, the primary referent of the *hymnos* is the given divinity who presides over the given festival. The primary participant in the reference system of the *hymnos* is the human performer who re-enacts a given divine figure in the sacred moment of performance. There is a fusion of identities in that sacred moment, and this fusion is the {39|40} essence of the *hymnos*. That is why the *hymnos* becomes the instrument of authority and authorization and authorship. Such is the theology, as it were, of the *hymnos*. And such is the theology of the transcendent author, which extends into the reality of the historical author.

We have already seen such a historical author in the personalized figure of the prima donna in Song 1 of Sappho, where the author is actually named. Or, more precisely, Aphrodite

names the author, authorizes her, as Sappho. As the *chorēgos* ‘leader of the chorus’, Sappho is notionally equated with and thus authorized by the goddess she invokes in her prayer, which is the *hymnos* she performs.

Regarding examples of ritual occasions for choral performance, I have concentrated so far on the wedding. But there are also many other such occasions having to do with various forms of initiation, that is, with formal transitions from one social status to another, including political inaugurations of various kinds. It is often difficult to pinpoint the historical settings of such occasions. Some of them, like weddings, are ad hoc, while others seem to be seasonally recurrent, timed to coincide with festivals.

Song 1 of Sappho may be an example of a recurrent occasion: it seems to be an inaugural *hymnos* that showcases the Panhellenic prestige of the seasonally recurring festival of the *Kallisteia* in the federal space of Lesbos. Another such example is Song 1 of Alcman, which highlights the double debut of two female *chorēgoi* ‘chorus-leaders’ stemming from the two royal lineages of the dual kingship of Sparta (PH 12§§17-25). The two Spartan debutantes as celebrated in Song 1 of Alcman are in many ways analogous to the brides of Lesbos as celebrated in the songs of Sappho: for example, the girls from Sparta are compared to horses (Alcman 1.45-54) in much the same way as a bride from Lesbos is compared to a haughty mare (Sappho F 156 via Gregorios of Corinth: also with reference to Anacreon) - or as a bridegroom is compared to a prize-winning steed (Sappho F 194A).

In Song 1 of Alcman, the two female *chorēgoi* ‘chorus-leaders’ perform as surrogates of the *Leukippides* ‘Shining Horses’, envisioned as twin female celestial divinities (PH 12§§19-20). There are analogous celestial associations in the songs of Sappho. We have already seen how her identification with Aphrodite makes it possible for Sappho’s songs to make personalized contact with the roles of the goddess in the world of myth. One of these roles is the identification of Aphrodite with the planet Venus, which is imagined as the celestial force that makes the sun rise (GM 258). Accordingly, Sappho imagines herself as falling in love with a hero called *Phaōn* just as the goddess {40|41} Aphrodite in her role as the planet Venus falls in love with the same hero. The name *Phaōn*, stemming from the dialect of Lesbos, is the local Aeolic equivalent of *phaethōn* ‘shining’, which is the epithet of the sun in Homeric diction (PP 90, 102-103).

Sappho not only identifies with Aphrodite in loving this hero Phaon: she can even speak with the voice of Aphrodite in addressing Phaon (T 19), just as she speaks with the voice of Aphrodite when the goddess is pictured as speaking to her in Song 1. In speaking to Phaon, as also in speaking to Aphrodite, Sappho is authorized by Aphrodite. And she thereby authorizes herself. Just as Aphrodite undergoes a mock death by executing a “lover’s leap” from the heights of a white rock into the dark sea below for the love of Phaon, so also Sappho can picture herself as undergoing an erotic death for the love of the same solar hero (T 23). The myth tells

how Aphrodite disguised herself as an old woman and persuaded the old ferryman Phaon to ferry her across a strait separating the mainland of Asia Minor from the island of Lesbos (Sappho F 211). Sappho pictures herself in the place of Aphrodite as the goddess turns young again while making Phaon young as well - in fond hopes of turning him into her lover. Similar themes recur elsewhere, as in a mention of Eos the goddess of dawn and her mortal lover Tithōnos (Sappho F 58).

Despite such hopeful projections of divine identity, the gap between the divine and the human can lead to bittersweet feelings of sadness. Such is the theme of a song of Sappho (F 168B) that pictures the Moon, personified as the local Aeolic goddess *Selanna* (Ionic *Selēnē*), at the moment when it sets beneath the horizon: the goddess is now on her way to meet the beautiful hero Endymion in his secret lair, and there she will sleep with him. We know of the tryst of Selanna with Endymion from a second such song of Sappho (F 199). In the first song (F 168B), the tryst of the goddess with the beautiful hero is signaled by the particle *men*, to be answered by the contrastive particle *de* highlighting the sad loneliness of the lamenting first-person speaker as she says: *egō de monā katheudō* ‘but I sleep alone’ (Clay 1970). Such feelings of sadness are balanced against hopes of identification with the celestial realm: as we saw in a third song of Sappho, the prima donna of an all-night choral lyric performance in the moonlight is pictured as looking just like the moon (F 96.7-9). In that moment, she is identical to the goddess Selanna (F 96.4-6 *se theāi s’ikelan arignōtāi*).

The songs of the queenly Sappho, in all their celestial loveliness, appear worlds apart from the songs of the down-to-earth Alcaeus, which appear downright profane by comparison. The basic context of his {41 | 42} songs is the *sumposion* ‘symposium’, which is conventionally understood to be a drinking party organized by a group of like-minded (*h*)*etairoi* ‘comrades’ who sing drinking songs. In terms of such an understanding, Alcaeus is a historical personality who sings in the context of such a group (Rösler 1980). In the symposium, the (*h*)*etairoi* act out in their songs a whole gamut of social and antisocial behavior, good and bad characters, noble and base feelings. In so doing, they replay the history and even the prehistory of their community.

The medium of these drinking songs shows both positive and negative ways of speaking, what Aristotle calls *en-kōmion* and *psogos*, loosely translated as ‘praise’ and ‘blame’ (*Poetics* 1448b27; BA 14 §§1-5). Dominant are the themes of peace and war, statesmanship and factional strife, the joys of civic solidarity and the sorrows, hatreds, and angers of alienation culminating in civic exile. In brief, the medium of such drinking songs recaptures the look and feel of political rhetoric in the polis or ‘city state’. If you removed the meter from the drinking songs of Alcaeus, says Dionysius of Halicarnassus (*On Imitation* 421f), what you would have left over is political rhetoric pure and simple (Alcaeus T 20). In terms of this observation, the message of this medium is the medium itself.

It is as if we were looking at some vast unbridgeable gap separating these songs of Alcaeus from the songs of Sappho. And the poetry attributed to Alcaeus even draws attention to such a gap. In one song of Alcaeus (F 384), he is pictured as addressing Sappho in words fit for a divine queen: *ioplok' agna mellikhomeide Sapphoi* 'you with strands of hair in violet, O holy [(h)agna] one, you with the honey-sweet smile, O Sappho!'. And the wording is actually fit for a goddess. For example, the epithet (h)agna 'holy' is applied to the goddess Athena (Alcaeus F 298.17) and to the *Kharites* 'Graces' as goddesses (Sappho F 53.1, 103.8; Alcaeus F 386.1). As for the epithet *ioplokos* 'with strands of hair in violet', it is applied as a generic epithet to the Muses themselves (Bacchylides 3.17).

Behind the appearances of such disconnectedness between the songs of Alcaeus and Sappho is a basic pattern of connectedness in both form and content. This pattern is a matter of symmetry. In archaic Greek poetry, symmetry is achieved by balancing two opposing members of a binary opposition, so that one member is marked and the other member is unmarked; while the marked member is exclusive of the unmarked, the unmarked member is inclusive of the marked, serving as the actual basis of inclusion (PH 0§15). Such a description suits the working relationship between the profane and the sacred in the songs of Alcaeus and Sappho. What is sacred about these songs is the divine basis of their performance in a festive setting, that is, at festivals sacred to gods. What {42|43} is profane about these songs is the human basis of what they express in that same setting. We see in these songs genuine expressions of human experiences, such as feelings of love, hate, anger, fear, pity, and so on. These experiences, though they are unmarked in everyday settings, are marked in festive settings. In other words, the symmetry of the profane and the sacred in the songs of Alcaeus and Sappho is a matter of balancing the profane as the marked member against the sacred as the unmarked member in their opposition to each other; while the profane is exclusive of the sacred, the sacred is inclusive of the profane, serving as the actual basis of inclusion.

On the island of Lesbos, the sacred space of Messon was the festive context in which this symmetry of the profane and the sacred could be played out. It was here at Messon that the sacred could serve as the basis for including the profane. Not only the songs of Sappho, which tended toward the sacred side of the symmetry, were marked by the 'here' that was Messon. So too the songs of Alcaeus, which tended toward the profane side, were marked by the same 'here'. A case in point is a song of Alcaeus that begins as a formal hymn to the Dioskouroi, where the divine twins are formally invoked to come 'here', that is, to the place where the song is being performed (F 34.1).

Thus even the songs of Alcaeus, which appear to represent the profane side of the symmetry between the profane and the sacred, are worthy of inauguration by way of a *humnos*, which as we have seen sacralizes not only the beginning of performance but also whatever follows the beginning all the way to the end. Whatever that may be includes the drinking song at the symposium. And the god who presides over the drinking at the symposium and over the

drinking songs performed there is Dionysus, whose essence is not only sympotic but also mimetic. After all, Dionysus is not only the god who presides over the drinking of wine in a symposium: he is also the god of theater. Conversely, Dionysus is not only the god of mimesis in the theater (PH 13§§6-46): he is also the god of mimesis in the symposium (PP 218).

The mimetic essence of Dionysus is most evident in his role as the presiding god of the City Dionysia of Athens, which must be seen as a parallel to his role as the presiding god of the symposium. The symposium of Dionysus, like the theater of Dionysus, is a stage for mimesis. The stage that is the symposium is the notional 'here' that marks the place of performance for the songs of Alcaeus. This 'here' is a festive place, that is, the sacred space of a festival. Such a place is the federal district of Messon in Lesbos, which as we have seen is sacred to Dionysus as well as to Hera and to Zeus. {43 | 44}

In the state of mind that is this sacred space of Messon, there are two kinds of mimesis represented symmetrically by the choral performances of Sappho and by the sympotic performances of Alcaeus. Each of these two figures plays out a variety of roles. For their primary roles they speak with the authority of the lead singer, of the author in the making. In these roles, the 'I' represents the speaker of the inaugurating *hymnos* who is speaking by way of praying to a presiding divinity. Or the 'I' may represent that divinity speaking to the lead singer or even to the whole group attending and participating in the performance of the song. Beyond this incipient authorial role, the 'I' of both Sappho and Alcaeus stands ready to exchange identities with the 'you' or the 'he' or the 'she' or the 'they' that populate the world reflected by the song culture of Lesbos. So all three persons of the personal pronoun in Greek lyric take on the role of a shifter (for applications of this technical term, see PH 0§17n30).

In the songs of Sappho, for example, the 'I' who speaks may be Sappho speaking in the first person to the bride or to the bridegroom in the second person - or about them in the third person. Or it may be the bridegroom or the bride speaking to each other - or even to Sappho. So also in the songs of Alcaeus, the 'I' may play out a variety of roles. The 'I' is not only the speaker who is Alcaeus speaking in the first person to his comrades in the second person - or about them in the third person. In one song of Alcaeus, for example, the song starts with the 'I' of a female speaker, who speaks of the sound of a mating-call from a stag that lingers in the heart of a hind (F 10B).

The 'I' of Alcaeus can act as the crazed lover of a young boy or girl. His 'I' can even be Sappho herself, transposed from the protective context of the chorus into the unprotected context of the symposium. Aristotle (*Rhetoric* 1.1367a) quotes the relevant wording of a duet featuring, on one side, Alcaeus in the act of making sly sexual advances on Sappho and, on the other side, Sappho in the act of trying to protect her honor by cleverly fending off the predatory words of Alcaeus:

He: I want to say something to you, but I am prevented by
shame ...

She: But if you had a desire for good and beautiful things
and if your tongue were not stirring up something bad to say
then shame would not seize your eyes
and you would be speaking about the just and honorable thing to do.

Sappho F 137 {44|45}

Such symmetry between Alcaeus and Sappho was perpetuated in the poetic traditions of the symposium well beyond the old historical setting of festive celebrations at Messon in Lesbos. A newer historical setting was Athens during the sixth and the fifth centuries BCE. Here the songs of Alcaeus and Sappho continued to be performed in two coexisting formats of monodic performance: one of these was the relatively small-scale and restricted format of the symposium, while the other was the spectacularly large-scale and public format of citharodic concerts at the musical competitions of the festival of the Panathenaia (Nagy 2004a).

In the context of this Athenian reception, the symmetry between Alcaeus and Sappho is still visible. On a red-figure vase made sometime in the decade of 480-470 BCE (Munich, Antikensammlungen no. 2416), we see on one side of the vase a painting that features the roguish Alcaeus and the demure Sappho: the two are pictured as concert performers, each playing on a specialized lyre known as the barbiton. On the other side of the vase we see a painting that features the god Dionysus and a maenad in a stylized sympotic scene. The stylized musical duet between Alcaeus and Sappho in this red-figure painting matches in its symmetry the stylized musical duet between the same singers as quoted by Aristotle.

The symmetry between Alcaeus and Sappho as exponents of sympotic and choral performance is already framed within the sympotic poetry of Alcaeus. It happens in his Song 130, which is the same context in which we saw him referring to the choral performance of women at the festival of the *Kallisteia* at Messon. The ritual space of Messon is figured here in mythological terms. At the mythologized moment when the poet speaks in Song 130, this space is imagined as a “no man’s land” serving as a place of refuge for the alienated Alcaeus, exiled from his native city of Mytilene. Such a view of this ritual space is a mythologized way of looking at an “everyman’s land” serving as a place of integration for the poetry of Alcaeus in the festive here-and-now of this poetry as it continues to be performed in this ritual space. To conceive of this poetry as having a life of its own, beyond the lifetime of the poet himself, is a ritualized way of looking at the ongoing performance of the songs of Alcaeus, which are imagined as worthy of universal acceptance by all who take part in the festivals held at Messon, the sacred space of the federation of Lesbos (Nagy 1993).

Such a poetic gesture is an epigrammatic way for the figure of Alcaeus to foretell the reception of his poetry within the overall community. There are similar epigrammatic gestures to be found in the poetry {45|46} of Theognis (19-24): in that case as well, the mythologized rejection of the poet by his own community in his own lifetime is predicated on the ritualized acceptance of his poetry after he dies (PP 220-223). In the poetics of such epigrammatic gestures, the ongoing reception of a poet's poetry is expressed by the disembodied voice of the poet imagined as speaking from the dead, as if from an epigram (Theognis 1209-1210; Wickersham 1986 and Nagy 1993). There are similar gestures attested in archaic epigrams attributed to Homer (HPC I§118). But the disembodied voice of an archaic lyric poet like Alcaeus needs no such epigram: his songs are reactivated every time they are sung by live voices at the festivals of Messon in Lesbos.

The sympotic poetry of Alcaeus, framing the choral poetry of Sappho, was hardly isolated in its native Aeolian setting on the island of Lesbos. It was strongly influenced by contacts with the neighboring empire of the Lydians on the mainland of Asia Minor. The orientalizing of the musical traditions of Lesbos was in fact a pattern common to the song cultures of all Hellenes native to Asia Minor and to the outlying islands, most notably Lesbos, Chios, and Samos. This pattern of orientalizing was especially apparent in the Greek institution of the symposium, as reshaped by the exotic fashions of the Lydian empire. Among these fashions, marked by ostentatious signs of luxury, was the new Greek custom of reclining on couches on the occasion of a symposium. A most flamboyant musical example of such Lydian orientalism was the lyric virtuoso Anacreon, court poet of Polycrates, who was tyrant of Samos. Although Anacreon and his patron Polycrates flourished in a period when the Persian empire had already replaced the Lydian empire, the exotic themes of Lydian musical orientalism persisted: as a performer of lyric, Anacreon was associated with such paraphernalia as turbans, parasols, and sympotic couches. Herodotus pictures Anacreon in the act of singing his lyric poetry at a symposium hosted by Polycrates, who is shown reclining on a sympotic couch (3.121).

The Lydian musical orientalism of drinking and singing while reclining on a couch at a symposium extends to representations of Dionysus as god of the symposium: he too is conventionally pictured as drinking and singing while reclining on a couch. He too is orientalizing - and orientalizing. To those who are notionally uninitiated in the traditions of the symposium - and of theater - Dionysus appears to be more of a Lydian than a Hellene. That is how the god appears to the uninitiated Pentheus in the *Bacchae* of Euripides.

The orientalizing of the symposium and of sympotic singing was fundamentally a sign of political power, modeled on the imperial power {46|47} of a Lydian *turannos* (PH 10§§6-22). A Greek tyrant like Polycrates of Samos was defined by the Lydian musical orientalism of his court poet Anacreon, whose sympotic poetry served to express the power of his patron. The

personal love of the tyrant for a beautiful boy like Bathyllus became a public expression of his political power as mediated by the sympotic love poetry of Anacreon.

Even before Anacreon, there are already clear signs of Lydian musical orientalism in the earlier lyric traditions of Alcaeus and Sappho, as also in the even earlier traditions of Terpander. And there is a wealth of references to exotic Lydian fashions not only in sympotic but also in choral lyric contexts. Such a context is Sappho's self-professed love of *(h)abrosuna* 'luxury' (F 58.25), which is a lyric theme fit for Lydian kings and queens (Xenophanes 3.1; PH 10§§18-19). Moreover, we have already noted such Greek choral lyric events as the 'Dance of the Lydian Maidens' at a festival in Ephesus and the 'Procession of the Lydians' at a festival in Sparta.

A vital point of contact between earlier and later phases of such orientalizing features in the making of Greek lyric was the Ionian island empire of Polycrates, tyrant of Samos. The sympotic love poetry of his court poet Anacreon was closely related to older forms of sympotic love poetry native to Lesbos. Like the older poetry of Alcaeus, the newer poetry of Anacreon refers even to Sappho herself as a stylized love interest (Nagy 2004a).

After the island empire of Polycrates imploded in the course of its rivalry with the mainland empire of the Persians, there was a massive shift from East to West in the history of Greek lyric traditions. A most fitting symbol of this shift was the gesture made by Hipparkhos, tyrant of Athens, in sending a warship to Samos to rescue the lyric virtuoso Anacreon and bring him to his city ("Plato" *Hipparkhos* 228c). Around this time, Athens became a vitally important new center for the development and diffusion of lyric poetry as performed nonprofessionally at symposia and professionally at public concerts. At the most prestigious Athenian festival of the Panathenaia, professional citharodes and aulodes competed with each other in spectacular performances of melic poetry originating from poets like Alcaeus, Sappho, Anacreon, and Simonides, while professional rhapsodes competed in performing non-melic poetry originating from Archilochus, Hipponax, Callinus, Mimnermus, and so on.

Such melic and non-melic traditions, in becoming an integral part of the Athenian song culture, strongly influenced the corresponding traditions of another most prestigious festival of Athens, the City Dionysia. {47|48} That is how the melic and the non-melic traditions of Athenian State Theater became eventually merged with the older lyric traditions of the Aeolic and Ionic worlds as once mediated by the island empire of Polycrates. And the resulting network of cross-influences and cross-references can be seen in the themes of Athenian comedy, which mirrored the negative as well as the positive themes of the older sympotic traditions. These themes, dealing with such special topics of interest as the behavior of women in love or of men in war, naturally led to the comic ridicule of influential lyric models like Sappho and Archilochus.

Further to the west of Athens, there were other vitally important new centers for the development and diffusion of lyric poetry as performed in symposia or in larger-scale public contexts of choral performance. The Panhellenism of this diffusion is evident from the prestige of early masters of Aeolian lyric like Terpander in Sparta or Arion in Corinth. Even further to the west, the art of such early masters eventually became merged with the art of other early masters like Stesichorus in Italy and Sicily. Later on, with the implosion of the island empire of Polycrates in the east, the shift of lyric traditions to the west became most pronounced in Italy and Sicily. Just as Anacreon left behind the luxurious orientaling world of the tyrant Polycrates in Samos, so too did Ibycus. Whereas Anacreon left for Athens, however, Ibycus left for Italy and Sicily, infusing with new life the old lyric traditions represented there by Stesichorus. The *kleos aphthiton* ‘unwilted glory’ promised by the lyric poetry of Ibycus to the tyrant Polycrates (F 282.47) had sadly wilted in the East. But that *kleos* ‘glory’ was to blossom again in the West, as we see from the poetry of lyric virtuosi like Ibycus, Lasus, Pindar, Simonides, and Bacchylides.

The idea that the medium of *kleos* is a metaphorical flower that will never stop blossoming was understood by Pindar. As we saw earlier from the wording of one of his songs, Achilles as the hero who is the message glorified by the *kleos* will die and thus stop blossoming, as expressed by the verb *phthinein* ‘wilt’, but the medium that conveys the message will never die (*Isthmian* 8.56a-62; PH 7§6). As a master of this medium of *kleos*, Pindar presents himself as a poet who controls the lyric present as well as the epic past:

I am a guest [*xenos*]. Keeping away dark blame [*psogos*] and bringing genuine glory [*kleos*], like streams of water, to a man who is near and dear [*philos*], I will praise [*aineîn*] him.

Pindar *Nemean* 7.61-63 {48 | 49}

We see here the authority of Pindar as a master of *kleos*. In this passage, which comes from one of his *epinikia* ‘epinicians, victory songs’, the poet refers to himself in an authoritative setting, which is, the choral lyric celebration of an athletic victory.

Pindar’s self-references in his victory songs are so stylized, however, that no one can be sure of even the most basic circumstances of artistic production. For example, there is continuing controversy over whether such songs were actually performed by a solo singer, who is maybe Pindar himself, or by a *khoros* or ‘chorus’, that is, by a singing and dancing ensemble that was trained by Pindar or by a delegate of Pindar. In terms of this controversy, there is a bifocal interest in the first-person singular ‘I’ of Pindar (Lefkowitz 1988) and in a notionally performing ensemble that is called the *kōmos* by the poetry itself (Heath 1988).

As the celebrant, the speaker of the victory song oscillates between the singular and the plural of the first person, ‘I’ or ‘we’, in referring to himself in the act of performance. In the

singular, the celebrant is the poet, Pindar himself. He is the *xenos* or guest of honor who is giving praise to his host at a feast celebrating the athletic victory. In the plural, on the other hand, the ‘we’ of Pindar’s epinicians is the voice of the *kōmos*, that is, of ‘a group of celebrants’.

In fact, there is no such thing as an audience in such situations of celebration. Everyone who attends is notionally a member of the group of celebrants. Sometimes the group speaks as a group, and sometimes the main speaker speaks as a soloist for the group.

The concept of a group is essential for understanding Greek lyric in general (Rösler 1980). Unlike an audience, the group is not distinguished from those who actually perform in and for the group. The whole group notionally takes part in the performance.

The interpretation of Pindaric references to a group of celebrants depends on analysis of the conventions that made such references possible. For example, even if the Pindaric references to the *kōmos* as a group of celebrants do not fit our own notion of the *choros* as a chorus, that is, a singing and dancing ensemble, it is still possible to interpret the Pindaric *kōmos* as a stylization of the *choros* in the specific context of a victory celebration (Nagy 1994/1995).

Of course there are other forms of Pindaric compositions, like the paean or the partheneion, where it is obvious that the speaker is a group. Moreover, in the choral lyric poetry of both Pindar and Bacchylides, the celebrating group of the here-and-now is interwoven with celebrating groups of the mythical past (Power 2000). {49 | 50}

Conversely, myth is interwoven with the here-and-now of its reenactment by the group participating in lyric performance. A particularly striking example is Pindar’s *Olympian* 1, a song that recapitulates a complex of myths that notionally motivate the entire complex of rituals known as the Olympic Games (PH 4§§1-26). By way of such interweaving, the lyric performance becomes a myth in and of itself. By linking itself with past mythical *exempla*, the lyric performance becomes a mythical *exemplum* of its own.

The myths of lyric, however, need not be universal. The *muthoi* that are believed by some may not be believable to the poet himself:

Yes, there are many wondrous things [*thaumata*]. And the words that men tell, myths [*muthoi*] embellished with varied pattern-woven [*poikila*] falsehoods [*pseudea*], beyond wording [*logos*] that is true [*alēthēs*], are deceptive. But charisma [*kharis*], which makes everything pleasurable for mortals, brings it about, by way of giving honor, that even the unbelievable oftentimes becomes believable.

Pindar *Olympian* 1.28-32

The myths that Pindar's song marks as falsehoods have to do with things heard about the hero Pelops during a time when he was not to be seen (*Olympian* 1.46-48). The myths that Pindar's song marks as falsehoods here are falsehoods not because they are myths but only because they are myths that differ from the master myth privileged as the truth by Pindar. In this case, the 'false' myths represent rejected versions of the story of the hero Pelops, while the 'true' myth represents the official version as integrated into the complex of rituals known as the Olympic Games (PH 4§24). While the myths that are 'falsehoods' can merely be heard, the myth that is 'true' can actually be seen: the visibility of the myth is captured in the moment when Pelops emerges from the purifying caldron, resplendent with his ivory shoulder (*Olympian* 1.26-27).

The Greek word *kharis*, which I have translated for the moment as 'charisma', is imagined here as a superhuman force giving power to the myths of lyric; it is parallel to the Latin word *gratia*, which refers simultaneously to the beauty ('grace') and the pleasure ('gratification') of any exchange (PH 2§27n72). In the poetry of lyric, such an exchange takes place between the lyric performer and everyone who participates in the lyric performance - including the gods and heroes who figure in the lyric composition. So the charisma of *kharis* is the essence of {50|51} lyric performance and composition. This charisma is what gives myth the "honor" it deserves, making people believe what myth says - even when the things that are said transcend the believable.

Abbreviations

- BA = *The Best of the Achaeans* = Nagy 1979.
 EH = *The Epic Hero* = Nagy 2005.
 GM = *Greek Mythology and Poetics* = Nagy 1990b.
 HC = *Homer the Classic* = Nagy 2008.
 HPC = *Homer the Preclassic* = Nagy 2009.
 HQ = *Homeric Questions* = Nagy 1996b.
 HR = *Homeric Responses* = Nagy 2003.
 HTL = *Homer's Text and Language* = Nagy 2004b.
 PH = *Pindar's Homer: The Lyric Possession of an Epic Past* = Nagy 1990a.
 PR = *Plato's Rhapsody and Homer's Music* = Nagy 2002.
 PP = *Poetry as Performance* = Nagy 1996a.

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