

# On Sappho 1 Voigt and the Kypris Poem

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## Abstract

In this paper I review the various possible reconstructions for fr. 1. 20 Voigt and the Kypris poem and argue that there are analogies for complete structures between the two poems. Discussing the various proposed reconstructions, I survey the formal characteristics of the Lesbian verb system. Against this background, I suggest a new restoration at the end of verse 2 in the Kypris Poem in the light of a reading that has been proposed for fr. 1. 20 Voigt.

## Keywords

Sappho, Kypris Poem, Supplementation

P.Oxy. X 1231 fr. 16 = Sappho fr. 26 Voigt overlaps with P.Sapph.Obbink 2 + P.GC. inv. 105 fr. 4: together the three papyri preserve parts of the Kypris poem, the last two from the same papyrus manuscript. P.Oxy. XXI 2288 overlaps with Sappho fr. 1 Voigt as quoted in the manuscripts of Dionysius of Halicarnassus. Although the text of most of the first two verses of the Kypris poem is not in doubt, the verb at the end of verse 2 is not preserved in any of the papyri and needs to be restored. Sappho fr. 1 Voigt, where the verb at the end of verse 20 is likewise not preserved, offers a possible parallel for its reconstruction. In this paper I will review the possible reconstructions for both poems and argue that there are analogies between the two. On this basis, I will propose a new restoration at the end of verse 2 of the Kypris Poem. In addition to alerting us to the existence of motifs and language familiar from the first poem in Sappho's ancient edition, the comparison of the two poems allows me to raise broader questions of how rigidly editorial decisions ought to be influenced by considerations of parallels in diction and grammatical forms as well as by statistical and other considerations.

I will begin the discussion of the possibilities for the reconstruction of the relative clause at the end of verse 2 by drawing attention to a grammatical point: that is, the subject of the verbal form starting with φιλ-. The choice is between a second person indicative, φιλ[ησθα and a third person,

optative or indicative, φίλ[εῖν or φίλ[ησι; if we correctly assume that some form of the verb φίλ- must have stood at the end of verse 2, then all three forms proposed would be metrically acceptable. The choice of the construction also influences the choice between the particles [δ]ἢ and [μ]ἢ (noted as alternative readings in the apparatus printed under the first strophe below). I fully agree with Lardinois 2018, 2 in his view that either the second person [μ]ἢ φίλ[ησθα («whomever you do not love») or [δ]ἢ φίλ[ησθα («whomever indeed you love») «would have to be read as limiting or restrictive» for the passage to make best sense: as Lardinois explains, if we restore [μ]ἢ φίλ[ησθα or [δ]ἢ φίλ[ησθα, the person overwhelmed is not just anyone, but he or she whom Kypriis loves or does not love – which, as I show next, does not make sense in the context of Sapphic poetry.<sup>1</sup>

The optative φίλ[εῖν would be in keeping with who I think should be the subject of the verb of the clause starting with ὅτινα: anyone. However, Lidov 2016, 95 has noted with reference to Smyth 1984, 579 and Kühner-Gerth 1904 section 558.6 that such general conditional relative clauses usually take an indicative, which would therefore be preferable to the optative φίλ[εῖν. Furthermore, I would add that the expression of emotion would be to some extent subdued with φίλ[εῖν, since the optative would represent the passion envisaged as more remote than an indicative. Such a reading would be in stark contrast with the repeated onset of intense desire and physical symptoms experienced by the speaker in the preceding verse. In the case of φίλ[ησι, as Lidov 2016, 95 has convincingly argued, we would have an example of a general conditional relative clause which uses the indicative and allows for a loose relationship of thought and language between the indefinite pronouns (τίς ... ὅτινα) that would conform to the general style of the passage as conveying an abrupt burst of thought: it applies to anyone who feels overwhelmed, «whomever indeed one loves». To illustrate this, I print *exempli gratia* Lardinois 2018, 4, who has incorporated φίλ[ησι in his reconstruction of the first strophe:

Sappho, Kypriis Poem 1-4, P.Oxy. X 1231 fr. 16 + P.Sapph. Obbink poem 2 + P.GC inv. 105 fr. 4

⊗ πῶς κε δὴ τις οὐ θαμέως ἄσαιτο,  
 Κύπρι, δέσποιν', ὅτινα [δ]ἢ φίλ[ησι,  
 [κωὺ] θέλοι μάλιστα πάθαι χάλασσαι]

<sup>1</sup> Schlesier 2016, 381 finds it hard to accept a «statement saying that a loving person is NOT loved by Aphrodite», i.e. μὴ φίλησθα, which «would be in harsh contrast to all we know from Sappho's poetry about her idea of love and particularly her own relationship to the goddess», and in the absence of any parallels, therefore, highly unlikely. All the more so, Schlesier adds, «since love», even in its most excessive form, in Sappho as in Homer, as I will seek to demonstrate with a new proposed reconstruction of the verbal form φίλ[, «is not considered as something that excludes pain by definition, but quite the opposite». Schlesier 2016, 381 also raises the objection that the negation μή cannot convincingly be explained as avoidance of repetition (see West 2014, 10), as «much of Sappho's extant poetry indicates that one of its significant stylistic traits is emphatic repetition» (of the particles δὴ ... δὴ). Both these arguments relate to my choice throughout of the particle δὴ in discussing the various possible reconstructions with a third person indicative or optative.

[ταῖς] ὀνέχησθα;

«How can someone not repeatedly feel overwhelmed,  
Kypris, mistress, – whomever one indeed loves,  
and not most of all want to get respite from the sufferings  
that you sustain?» (tr. A. Lardinois)

2 [δ]ῆ φίλ[ησι] Schlesier in Obbink 2016 Lidov 2016 Lardinois 2018 : [δ]ῆ φίλ[είη] Burris in Obbink 2014 : [μ]ῆ φίλ[ησθα] West 2014 Ferrari 2014 Obbink 2020 : μῆ φίλ[ησθα] Neri 2017 : [δ]ῆ φίλ[ησθα] Benelli 2015, 2017, 2019 : ὅττινι μῆ φίλ[ηται] Tsantsanoglou 2017

I here adopt φίλ[ησι] as a possible restoration, with the translation of Lardinois to illustrate its sense, but I also intend shortly to propose an alternative restoration. A possible parallel for φίλ[ησι] would be ἀδίκησι at Sappho fr. 1. 20, accepted by some editors, including Voigt, whose text has been followed for the fragments discussed unless otherwise stated. However, some scholars reject φίλ[ησι] on the grounds that the regular third person singular indicative of the verbs of the type φίλημι was φίλει (Sappho in fact uses this form at fr. 1. 23). These scholars also point out that φίλησι here is no more than a conjectural restoration on the basis of the emendation to ἀδίκησι at fr. 1. 20 proposed by Meillet 1931, 200. For some, the form ἀδικήει transmitted in the secondary tradition ought to be accepted instead.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, this form, defended on the basis of Herodian, was printed by Lobel / Page 1955 in their edition of the text.<sup>3</sup>

A survey of the readings attested in the tradition for fr. 1. 20 demonstrates that the form ἀδικήει, which has been the main reason why scholars have rejected Meillet's conjecture ἀδίκησι, and by association φίλησι in the Kypris poem, is not well founded:

Sappho fr. 1 Voigt (18-24)

τίνα δηῦτε πείθω  
· · · σάγην εἰς σὰν φιλότατα; τίς σ', ὦ  
Ψάπφ', ἀδίκησι;  
καὶ γὰρ αἰ φεύγει, ταχέως διώξει,  
αἰ δὲ δῶρα μὴ δέκετ', ἀλλὰ δώσει,  
αἰ δὲ μὴ φίλει, ταχέως φιλήσει  
κωὺκ ἐθέλοισα.

<sup>2</sup> Forssman 1975, 22-23 (under lemma ἀδικήει).

<sup>3</sup> Herodian, Περὶ καθολικῆς προσφῶδιαις 454.20-23 (ed. Lentz 1867): «καὶ παρ' Αἰολεῦσιν ἐπὶ τῶν ὑπὲρ δύο συλλαβῶν, ἀδικήω «Ψάπφ', ἀδικήει» (Sapph. fr. 1.20), ποθήω «καὶ ποθήω καὶ μάομαι» τό τε κλήω ἐκ τοῦ κλείω γινόμενον from περὶ τῶν εἰς ὦ καὶ εἰς μὴ ῥημάτων κατὰ πᾶν πρόσωπον», βιβλίον ιζ' (430. 21-22).

«Once again who must I  
 persuade to turn back to your love?  
 Sappho, who wrongs you?  
 If now she flees, soon she'll chase.  
 If rejecting gifts, then she'll give.  
 If not loving, soon she'll love  
 even against her will.» (tr. D. J. Rayor)

20 ἀδίκησι Meillet 1931, 200 Voigt : ἀδικήει Herodian EM (AB) Lobel and Page 1955 Neri and Cinti 2017: ἀδικήη EM: ἀδική Et. Gud. : (ᾠψα δ)αδίκην EM (M) : (ψαπφ)α δίκησ· D. H. Comp. 23 (F) : (ψαπφ)α δίκη· D. H. Comp. 23 (P) : (σαπφῶ) δίκη eiusdem epit., ibidem 185 s. (DMRV et deteriores)

Arguably, the only two forms which could satisfy the metrical requirements of the line, namely ἀδικήη *Etymologicum Magnum* (s.v. καλήζω p. 485, 43) and ἀδικήη *Etymologicum Gudianum* (s.v. καλήζω p. 294, 40), would support ἀδικήει. But both forms represent Byzantine orthographical or phonetic equivalents that represent Byzantine corruptions of Herodian's reading ἀδικήει (either form would be pronounced identically in medieval Greek [adikii]). The variant reading ᾠψα δαδίκην, offered by *Etymologicum Genuinum* is corrupt beyond any hope, while the other forms attested in the massively corrupted medieval tradition of Dionysius of Halicarnassus might very well represent attempts at inserting the Attic form of δίκη into this line.

Hamm 1957, 172 is skeptical of the authenticity of the forms in -ηω attested in the secondary tradition. As Hamm has convincingly argued, it would be a precarious hypothesis that a thematic conjugation in -ηω (corresponding to the Attic contracted verbs -ᾠ for -έω) had been formed alongside the athematic conjugations in -ημι, when we know this only through the tradition of late grammarians. It is true that Herodian read ἀδικήει in fr. 1.20 and ποθήω in fr. 36; while one might suggest that he might have been tempted to emend ἀδίκησι to the metrically equally satisfactory ἀδικήει, there would be little motivation for a secondary replacement of πόθημι by ποθήω:<sup>4</sup> all papyri, which are contemporary to Herodian, attest exclusively to the athematic first person singular inflection in -ημι (corresponding to the Attic -έω verbs), which was generally considered by grammarians to be a special characteristic of the Lesbian verb system.

It may be worth comparing the corroborative evidence of a grammatical papyrus to show that the regular singular active indicative inflection of the -ᾠ for -έω verbs in the Aeolic dialect of Alcaeus (where the author refers to books 4, 5, 6, and 10 of Alcaeus in the preceding lines) was -ημι, -ης or -

<sup>4</sup> Forssman 1975, 23 contents that the verbal form ποθήω attested in the quotation by Herodian should be accepted in the text on the analogy of ἀδικήει that inflects from ἀδικήω.

ησθα, -ει: Collart 1926, 49, P.Bour. 8, *Traité grammatical*, fr. 2, col. IV 70-77, τὸ [[δ]εύτερον ἐπ[ι]θετέον τὰ μαρτύρια. | τὸ δὴ π[ο]ιῶ κλιθ[ε]ίη ἂν οὕτως κατ' Αἰολεῖς | πόημι, πόεις, πό[ει], πο...αμ... | πόησθα, καθάπερ [ἦμ]εῖς παρε[στυ]σά-|μεθα· ὅτι δὲ πόης λέγοντες τὸ δεύ-|τερον, πόει φασὶ τὸ τρίτον, εἴπομεν | ἐν ταῖς μεταλήψ[ε]σι τοῦ εἰ εἰς τὸ ἦ ). Even though it would rather seem from this testimony alone that the only third singular present active indicative ending of the -ημι verbs was only -ει and not -ησι (to which ending I will come back to shortly), one would still have to account for the occurrence of the ending -ῆει in Herodian, especially considering the fact that Herodian and the unknown author of the papyrus were contemporaries. Be that as it may, the possibility cannot be ruled out that it was Herodian, whose knowledge of the dialect may not have been first-hand, rather than the later manuscript tradition, who introduced a hyper-Aeolicism from whatever literary Sapphic document he had at hand.

I have expanded on the list of -ημι verbs – «Verbs of the type φιλέω», in the terminology of Hock 1972, 61 – in the poems of Sappho and Alcaeus in order first to demonstrate that the papyri that preserve their works also bear witness against the variant reading ἀδικήει attested by Herodian and second to show that the athematic inflection in -ημι was established in texts of the Lesbian poets by the second century A.D.<sup>5</sup> Lobel 1927, 42 proposed a rather complicated theory that postulates the co-existence in Lesbian of an -ημμι conjugation that inflects -ει in the third person singular and an -ημι conjugation, which Attic, Lesbian, and other dialects possess in common and which inflects -ησι in the third person singular. The difficulties are, however, exacerbated by the small body of material available for Sappho and Alcaeus, and Lobel is going beyond the limits of the evidence when in his work on Alcaeus he concludes that «the spheres of -ημμι and -ηω do not overlap but are mutually exclusive»: there is scarcely enough evidence to make such a claim.

To return to the Kypris poem, if the verbal form that needs to be supplemented at the end of verse 2 is a present tense – and it looks by all accounts as if it should be – support for the athematic φίλησι can be found in the emended form ἀδίκησι in Sappho fr. 1. 20, which seems to be more in agreement with some facts of the language in the literary texts and grammars than might have been given credit for until now. Meillet 1931, 200 set out an Indo-European background on how ἀδίκησι in Sappho fr. 1. 20 could have come about by adducing parallels that support ἀδίκημι and other forms in -μι as reasonably certain forms. I think that Meillet was right to accept ἀδίκησι at fr. 1.20

<sup>5</sup> So in the papyri and medieval manuscripts of the Lesbian poets συνήμι[ P.Berol. 5006 fr. 3. 11 (seventh century), where the verb stops a letter too short to clear up the point of whether the spelling was with a single -μι- or a double -μμι-; φίλημι P.Oxy. XV 1787 frs. 1+2. 24 (third century) Sappho fr. 58. 25, quotation provided by Athenaeus XV 687A that Grenfell and Hunt printed with a single -μι- in light of the fact that κάλημι is written in fr. 44; κάλημι P.Oxy. XV 1787 fr. 44. 4 (third century) = P.Halle 3 Sappho fr. 60.4; τά]ρβημι P.Oxy. XV 1788. 23 (late second century) Alcaeus fr. 119. 15; οἴκημι P.Oxy. XVIII 2165. 24 (early second century) Alcaeus fr. 130b. 16; καλ]η[μι P.Oxy. XXI 2288.16 (early second century) Sappho fr. 1. 16; ὄρημι' Sappho fr. 31. 11 Voigt (ὄρηι μη attested in the *paradosis* may be a misreading of an original ὄρημ(μ)ι); ἀσυνέτημμι Alcaeus fr. 326 (corrected to ἀσυνέτημι Ahrens).

and to use it as an explanation for the corrupted (ψαπφ)α δικης in the text of Dionysius of Halicarnassus. Furthermore, ἀδικήει is in theory a plausible corruption of ἀδίκησι, *epsilon* having mistakenly been written for *sigma*, at some stage in the tradition before Herodian.

The occurrence of τίθησι in P.Berol. 9810 (second century) Alcaeus fr. 58. 23 has generally been taken in grammars as evidence for a third singular present active indicative Aeolic inflection for the athematic verbs like φίλησι and ἀδίκησι, evidence that I am currently putting to the grammatical test. Τίθησι is well attested in this second century Berlin papyrus and considering that it occurs at the end of the line, it is extremely unlikely that it is a corruption in the manuscript tradition for an original third person singular τίθη that the grammarian Herodian has postulated for athematic verbs like τίθημι in Aeolic. It might still be objected that because of its *ny ephelkystikon* the form is suspect of being an epicism. This is difficult to disprove because the immediate context in which τίθησι occurs is quite fragmentary. On the other hand, as I will argue with respect to the new readings I propose, there is no reason to reject epicisms in Aeolic, if the context offers evidence for epic influence. That τίθησι thus turns out to be the only reliable piece of evidence in the Aeolic poets for the inflection of the third person singular present active indicative of athematic verbs in -ημι and since there is no compelling evidence for considering this form corrupt in the papyrus, the burden of proof in my opinion rests on those who claim that Meillet's ἀδίκησι is an unnecessary emendation and that his theory is too straightforward a way to account for the athematic endings in the tradition.

As the author of an exhaustive grammar of the Lesbian poets (and I am referring to her *Grammatik zu Sappho und Alkaios*), Hamm is certainly entitled to an independent opinion on dialect questions, and, as the late Martin West 1977, 161 notes in his review of her critical edition, Voigt may well have been right to adopt Meillet's ἀδίκησι for ἀδικήει in Sappho fr. 1. 20.<sup>6</sup> Voigt is not alone in suggesting through her editorial decisions that Lobel and Page were «too rigid» when they insisted on changing -ημι everywhere into -ημμι. If Lobel was right in his proposition for the co-existence of an -ημι conjugation (which inflects -ησι in the third person singular) and of an -ημμι conjugation (which inflects -ει in the third person singular), -ημι would have come to φίλησι's support, while -ημμι would not have excluded by analogy all third person singular indicatives in -ησι. This is not to deny the fact that the evidence for a third person singular active indicative ending in -ησι for the athematic verbs attested in the tradition is not substantial – a single instance in Alcaeus (fr. 58. 23) and Meillet's emendation of Sappho fr. 1. 20. On the contrary, the evidence both of the Lesbian poets Sappho and Alcaeus and of the inscriptions from a later period, together with that of the grammatical papyrus discussed above, shows that the usual ending of the third

<sup>6</sup> It may be worth bringing to the new readers' attention at this point that E.-M. Voigt had published her *Grammatik* as E.-M. Hamm.

person singular active indicative is of the type -ει transmitted predominantly in the tradition both for the athematic -ημι verbs, as in, for example, Sappho fr. 1. 23, φίλει (from φίλημι) and the thematic -εω forms, as in, for example, Sappho fr. 31.14, ἄγρει (from ἀγρέω) and Alcaeus fr. 117 b. 29, ὀμίλλει (from ὀμιλέω), which is unanimously considered third person singular present indicative in LSJ<sup>9</sup>.

Without making a decision as to which of two forms is right, I would like to reconsider the possibilities suggested for the emendations in each poem and to rank them in terms of statistical probability from the lowest to the highest. Thus, on the basis of *TLG*, the evidence of papyri and inscriptions, and Hamm's table of athematic present endings,<sup>7</sup> one must agree with Gregory Hutchinson's contention (2001, 142) that the form ἀδικήει is as unusual as the form ἀδικήσι.<sup>8</sup> On the basis of its analogy with ἀδικήσι, φίλησι cannot be categorically excluded at the end of the second verse of the Kypris poem.

Concerning fr. 1. 20 Voigt, however, instead of the present tenses reflected on the verbal forms proposed one might consider ἀδίκησε, an unaugmented aorist with a perfect function, which Hock 1972, 65 proposed in his Yale Dissertation. Unusual in the tradition though this may be (as some of the previously discussed various possible restorations also are), it is nonetheless a viable Greek construction that would satisfy the metrical requirements for the adonean in fr. 1. 20, and it would seem to fit the context. Rissman 1983, 10 notes that the question τίς σ', ὦ Ψαπφ', ἀδικήσι that Aphrodite asks seems to echo Dione's words of comfort to Aphrodite after her unsuccessful engagement in battle in *Iliad* 5.<sup>9</sup> Regardless of whether this is a Homeric allusion, Sappho's words (quoting Aphrodite) certainly sound like those of a protector trying to dispel the anguish of a beloved person; thus, they could be interpreted as follows: «You ask what I have suffered again and why do I call again and what in my wild heart do I most wish would happen: "Once again who must I persuade to turn back to your love?"» (tr. D. J. Rayor). So with the reading ἀδίκησε I would translate verse 20 as: «Sappho, who has wronged you?».

Another advantage of ἀδίκησε, the verbal form proposed, is that it would avoid the morphological inconsistency with the third person singular of the Aeolic -μι conjugation, i.e. φίλει, three lines below in the same poem. For anyone who might still think that ἀδίκησε would have to be an obsolete Homeric form and therefore inconsistent, Hock 1972, 701 notes that the lack of augment might be accounted for by the fact, pointed out by Hamm 1957, 160, that «the fourth line of the Sapphic strophe lends itself particularly often to hexametric closures» by offering such epicisms as unaugmented aorist forms, i.e. verbal forms like ἀδίκησε, that we are now looking at.

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<sup>7</sup> The list in Hamm 1957, 162 of third singular active indicatives aptly demonstrated that all the contracted verbs in Sappho have the -ει ending apart from ἀδικήει in fr. 1. 20.

<sup>8</sup> See also Hutchinson 2001, 157.

<sup>9</sup> *Iliad* 5. 373-374, «τίς νύ σε τοιάδ' ἔρεξε, φίλον τέκος, Οὐρανώων | μαυιδίως, ὡς εἴ τι κακὸν ῥέζουσιν ἐνωπῆ».

Furthermore, it would be intriguing to speculate on relation between Sappho fr. 1. 20 Voigt and Aristophanes, *Eg.* 730, τίς, ὦ Παφλαγών, ἀδικεῖ σε; (ed. Wilson) and Euripides IA 382, τίς ἀδικεῖ σε; (ed. Diggle), listed in Voigt's apparatus of literary parallels, as allusions to Sappho fr. 1. 20, which would be identical in sound in Hellenistic and Medieval greek. These phrases could very well be a misremembering of the aorist ἀδίκησε or simply an adaptation to suit the Aristophanic and Euripidean context.

I now return to the Kypris poem, where I would like to propose reading the aorist φίλησε. The fact that Aphrodite, central to both poems, is best known from the Homeric tradition, reinforces the possibility of an epicising influence in this line. In *Iliad* 3, it is Helen, not the poet, who feels frustration by her extreme vulnerability at the hands of an Aphrodite who claims that she loves Helen exceedingly.<sup>10</sup> It is this overall context that would support the contention that an unaugmented aorist with a perfect function might be supplemented at the latter half of verse 2. Such a supplement would allow the following translation: «How can someone not often feel overwhelmed, Kypris, Queen, whomever one has indeed loved?». We may, however, suggest that φίλησε need not be due to Homeric influence (though this cannot be excluded, given poems that particularly resonate with the epic tradition, e.g. Sappho fr. 17. 3 Obbink (2016) πῶησαν, fr. 94. 6 ἀμειβόμεν, and fr. 44 as a whole), but that the unaugmented aorist, φίλησε, may also be an archaic feature which was eliminated in the later phases of the Aeolic dialect.

In conclusion, the preceding discussion has established that ἀδίκησι is a viable form that could stand in its emended context at Sappho fr. 1. 20, and could serve as a parallel supporting the restoration of φίλησι at the end of verse 2 in the Kypris poem. However, its form still remains enough of a rarity to be suspect, and it is an emendation, so I have proposed instead an alternative restoration (φίλησε, an aorist) that is morphologically unproblematic, though it still remains marked by the absence of augment, whether this is indicative of the epic background in general or the words of the goddess in particular (note especially φίλησα *Iliad* 3. 415) or both. It remains to consider the implications of this proposal for the methodology concerning parallels between diction and grammatical forms of expression and how far we should be driven by statistical and other considerations. Finally, I hope that this paper will be seen as making some modest progress, given that little regarding the transmission of Sappho's poems is certain.

<sup>10</sup> *Iliad* 3. 413-417, Τὴν δὲ χολωσαμένη προσεφώνεε δῖ' Ἀφροδίτη· | «μη μ' ἔρεθε, σχετλίη, μὴ χωσαμένη σε μεθείω, | τὼς δε σ' ἀπεχθήρω ὡς νῦν ἔκπαγλα φίλησα, | μέσσω δ' ἀμφοτέρων μητίσσομαι ἔχθεα λυγρὰ, | Τρώων καὶ Δαναῶν, σὺ δέ κεν κακὸν οἶτον ὄληαι».



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