

Whether or not the "New Sappho" is a whole poem has not yet been decided. The Tithonos exemplum is important for a decision (lines 9-12 of 12 lines). Does it effectively complete the poem, as some have argued (e.g. Janko, *TLS* Dec. 23 & 30 [2005] 19-20)? Or does it leave the poem incomplete, as others believe? A useful way to approach this problem is to expand the context of interpretation and to ask how N(arrated) M(ythical) E(xempla) are typically used in archaic Greek poetry. The category of NME excludes references to a god or hero which are limited to a name and epithet and/or relative clause, where a narrative may or may not be implied. On the basis of a typology of NME, one can return to the Tithonos exemplum with a new perspective and notice its peculiarities.

NME can be divided into two groups, corresponding to performance context: (1) those in solo lyric, elegy, and speeches in epic (where the "performance" is that of a character, not of the poet or rhapsode); (2) those in choral lyric (and tragic choruses), which are more complexly narrated and more complexly connected to their illustranda. This division corresponds roughly to the way NME are introduced: in the first group, καὶ γάρ, ποτε, a word formed on the base λεγ-/λογ-, or φασι (very rare in epic *in poetae persona*); in the second, relative + aorist + ποτε + aorist participle (or a subset of these), though sometimes expressions typical of the first group are found. The expressions which introduce the first group are discussed in an article forthcoming in *ZPE* 156 (2006) 23-26, which points out the peculiarity of the imperfect ἔφαντο in the "New Sappho" (9). The first group is the one which is relevant to the problem of Tithonos.

The generalizations made by Edmunds about NME in Homer (in Powell and Morris, ed., *New Companion*, Leiden, 1997, 415-41) apply *additis addendis* to the other NME in the first group: (1) The narrator finds a particular point of contact between the myth and the situation to which he or she applies it. (2) He or she uses the myth to argue for a course of action or to illustrate a relevant gnome. (3) Because of (1) and (2), he or she adapts the story, producing a version in some way new. (4) He or she concludes by reasserting the myth's relevance to the present situation. One expects the Tithonos example, then, to be, in the first place, a direct illustration of the gnome in line 8 (*pace* Janko). Further, the peculiar imperfect, which throws the exemplum back into the poet's lost youth, makes one expect (*pace* H. Bernsdorff, "Offene Gedichtschlüsse," *ZPE* 153 [2005] 1-6) that Sappho will return to the present situation with a new application of the myth, which, in the twelve-line "new Sappho," is lacking.