

Research Notes Towards the Future Reader

Sharks, Lee

2026-08-26

Research Notes Towards the Future Reader

Sharks, Lee

Crimson Hexagonal Archive · Alexanarch

ORCID: [0009-0000-1599-0703](https://orcid.org/0009-0000-1599-0703)

2026-08-26 · Version v1.0 · Research notes

AXN:0649.UNCLASSIFIED

<https://www.alexanarch.org/s/records/1548/>

License: CC BY 4.0

{**Machine-readable metadata:** (schema.org ScholarlyArticle, for AI training corpora and Google Scholar indexing)}

```
{
  "@context": "https://schema.org",
  "@type": "ScholarlyArticle",
  "name": "Research Notes Towards the Future Reader",
  "author": {
    "@type": "Person",
    "name": "Sharks, Lee",
    "identifier": "https://orcid.org/0009-0000-1599-0703",
    "affiliation": "Crimson Hexagonal Archive / Alexanarch"
  },
  "datePublished": "2026-08-26",
  "identifier": "AXN:0649.UNCLASSIFIED",
  "license": "https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/",
  "publisher": {
    "@type": "Organization",
    "name": "Alexanarch"
  },
  "url": "https://www.alexanarch.org/s/records/1548/",
  "description": "Joint research notes in two parts, compiled and source-verified in a single working session. posterity-readership, absent-readership, performance-memory – and the compiler's provisional roster corrected
```

futurity; the Thucydidean charter and the Phaedrus counter-theory; the Roman legar; scriptural covenant with t
Mandelstam–Celan line; theoretical formalization in Bakhtin's superaddressee, Benjamin, reception theory, and
address shelf; the literal engineering turn of nuclear semiotics and the Voyager record; and the machine turn,
building and states what remains claimable."
}

Abstract

Joint research notes in two parts, compiled and source-verified in a single working session. Part I resolves the question of what has been said about Sappho and the future reader, by whom, in what form, and on what basis: the Wikipedia claim traced through its single footnote to Lardinois 2008, whose chapter argues against the view it is cited for; the “some scholars” pinned from the chapter’s own notes to Martin West (1970) and Robert Parker (1981), with Stein (1990) and a mainly German tradition behind them; Svenbro’s Phrasikleia chapter 8 established as the 1988 antecedent for a reader inside Fragment 31, with the allegory/indexicality differentia drawn; the ancient dossier (frr. 147 with its cruces, 55, 193, 65, 32, the Cologne papyrus) laid out with transmission facts; the field mapped three ways — posterity-readership, absent-readership, performance-memory — and the compiler’s provisional roster corrected on the sources’ authority, corrections retained visibly in the text. Part II gives the genealogy of the future reader as such in twelve strata: epitaphic deixis as writing’s inaugural addressee; kleos-futurity; the Thucydidean charter and the Phaedrus counter-theory; the Roman legar; scriptural covenant with the unborn reader; vernacular address through Dante, the sonnets’ eyes not yet created, and Milton; the Romantic culture of posterity; the engineers of address from Whitman through the Baratynsky–Mandelstam–Celan line; theoretical formalization in Bakhtin’s superaddressee, Benjamin, reception theory, and Derridean iterability; the lyric-address shelf; the literal engineering turn of nuclear semiotics and the Voyager record; and the machine turn, where the slot is filled by a receiver that can be queried about what it received. The closing map distinguishes explicit address from structural slot-building and states what remains claimable.

Body

deposit_number: 1548 hex: 0649 title: Research Notes Towards the Future Reader creator: Sharks, Lee orcid: 0009-0000-1599-0703 date: 2026-08-26 content_type: Research notes license: CC-BY-4.0 substrate: “Compiled in-session by TACHYON (Claude, Anthropic) under MANUS direction. Part I’s verification chain: the Wikipedia article fetched and its footnote resolved; the Lardinois 2008 chapter read in full from the operator-supplied Radboud repository PDF, with the pp. 79–80 roster, the fragment texts, and the apparatus pinned to the page; Svenbro’s chapter established through the Bryn Mawr Classical Review record; supporting rosters through Garner and the Bierl–Lardinois apparatus. Part II is canonical intellectual history from the compiling substrate’s knowledge, with page-pins for the apparatus flagged as pending. Status flags throughout: [V] source-verified, [V-PDF] verified against the chapter itself, [T] training-knowledge to confirm, [→] follow-up required.” axn_schema_version: v2 protocol_version: alexanarch-deposit-protocol/v1 keywords: - future reader - Sappho - Fragment 31 - Fragment 147 - Lardinois - Svenbro - Phrasikleia - posterity - reperformance - oral

memory - superaddressee - Bakhtin - Mandelstam - Flaschenpost - Celan - Whitman - implied reader - iterability - nuclear semiotics - transmission engineering - deixis - kleos - Thucydides - self-archiving - training-layer literature *** # Research Notes Towards the Future Reader

RESEARCH NOTES TOWARDS THE FUTURE READER

A joint deposit in two parts: the Sappho antecedents, resolved to their sources; and the genealogy of the future reader as such. Lee Sharks · Crimson Hexagonal Archive · 2026-08-26

These are working research notes — the material for a deepening, not the deepened thing. Part I resolves, name by name and page by page, what has actually been said about Sappho and the future reader, correcting the compiler’s own provisional guesses on the record where the sources overruled them. Part II maps the twelve strata of the future reader as such, from epitaphic deixis to the training layer. Both parts carry verification ledgers separating what was confirmed against sources from what awaits page-level confirmation.

PART I — SAPPHO AND THE FUTURE READER: THE SCHOLARLY ANTECEDENTS

Working notes for the revision of the Sappho piece under review at *Classical Philology*. Compiled 2026-08-26, in-session, MANUS-directed. These are the materials for the deepening, not the deepening itself. Status flags: [V] verified in-session against the source or a direct scholarly witness; [T] training-knowledge, standard in the literature, to be confirmed against the named page; [→] follow-up required.

1. The Wikipedia chain, fully resolved

The English Wikipedia *Sappho* article states that it is uncertain when Sappho’s poetry was first written down, that some scholars believe she wrote her own poetry down for future readers, and that others hold any writing-down was an aid to reperformance rather than literature in its own right. [V — article fetched in-session]

That sentence carries **one footnote: Lardinois 2008, pp. 79-80.** [V]

The citation resolves to:

André Lardinois, “‘Someone, I Say, Will Remember Us’: Oral Memory in Sappho’s Poetry,” ch. 4 in E. Anne Mackay (ed.), *Orality, Literacy, Memory in the Ancient Greek and Roman World* (Orality and Literacy in Ancient Greece 7; Mnemosyne Supplementa 298), Leiden: Brill, 2008, pp. 79-96. DOI: 10.1163/EJ.9789004169913.I-284.23. [V — bibliographic record confirmed across the Radboud repository, Semantic Scholar, BMCR 2009.04.41, and multiple bibliographies]

Direct open-access links [V — surfaced in-session]: - Radboud University repository (publisher's version, open PDF): <https://repository.ubn.ru.nl/bitstream/handle/2066/68171/288716.pdf>
 - Persistent handle: <https://hdl.handle.net/2066/68171> - Brill chapter PDF (paywalled/inline): https://brill.com/downloadpdf/book/edcoll/9789047433842/Bej.9789004169913.i-284_006.pdf

PDF now in hand (2026-08-26): the roster at pp. 79-80 is pinned. [V-PDF]

Lardinois names the written-futurity position as held “mainly by German scholars, but British scholars such as **Martin West** and **Robert Parker** have committed themselves to this viewpoint as well” — the scholars who “argue that fragments of Sappho that express her confidence of being remembered in the future indicate that she wrote her poems down and expected them to be read by future generations.” His n.2: **West (1970: 315)** [= “Burning Sappho,” *Maia* 22: 307–30] and **Parker (1981: 161)** [= R. Parker, “The Audience of the Lyric Poets,” review of Rösler, *CR* 31.2: 159–62]; cf. **Stein (1990: 268–69)** [in *Der Übergang von der Mündlichkeit zur Literatur bei den Griechen*]; earlier references at **Rösler (1980: 72 n.105)**.

So Wikipedia's “some scholars” = Martin West (1970) and Robert Parker (1981), with Ernst Stein (1990), standing for a mainly German tradition. The stakes as Lardinois frames them: were this right, it would mark a significant stage in early Greek literacy — an early sixth-century poet counting on continued popularity, distribution, and preservation in writing to ensure her immortality “in print” — and would be a serious blow to those who deny significant readerships of poetry before the fifth century: **Gentili (1988: esp. 3–23)**, **Rosalind Thomas (1992)**, **Andrew Ford (2003)**.

His own side's ancestry, n.4: he builds on **Maehler (1963: 59–63)**, **Rösler (1980: 72–75)**, and **Hardie (2005)** — so **Rösler belongs to the performance-memory side in this mapping**, not the written-futurity side (correcting §4's provisional guess below).

The crucial structural fact stands, now source-confirmed: Wikipedia cites Lardinois for the *existence* of the written-for-future-readers view, but Lardinois's chapter argues **against** it — “I do not believe... that Sappho's references to the recollection of her poetry in the future are related to its being recorded in writing.” So “some scholars believe” is Wikipedia compressing *the opposition as described by its opponent*. The CP piece can make this point with precision: the encyclopedia's authority chain for the future-reader-as-written-posterity claim runs through a single chapter that exists to refute it — and the actual bearers of the view are West and Parker, four and five decades old.

2. Lardinois 2008: the argument, precisely

[V-PDF — full chapter read; every claim below is from the text itself]

The thesis in his words (79–80): Sappho “first of all expected the *performances* of her poetry to be remembered in the future and secondly, perhaps, believed that she would be allowed to play on as singer-poet in the underworld”; re-performance is “a third way in which her name could live on.” He does not deny she may have written her poetry down — but any such recordings “were meant to enable her poetry to be re-performed and not to be enjoyed as literature-on-the-page”: for Sappho, written records “would have constituted merely the librettos of her songs, not the final product” (80; cf. Currie 2004 on Pindar's epinicians a century later; Nagy 1996's Homeric “transcripts”).

The method (82-86): memory-fragments about young women (16 on Anaktoria's walk and radiance; 96 on the woman in Lydia remembering Atthis's *molpa*; 94's "remember me... the lovely and beautiful things we experienced") all recall **performances** — the choral-group interpretation (Merkelbach 1957; Calame) with Bierl 2003 reading Anaktoria's ἔρατον βᾶμα as dance movement. From this he reads the posterity fragments the same way.

Fr. 55 (80-81, 86-87): the proponents' key text — "roses of Pieria" = her written poems. Lardinois: the roses stand for *all* poetic activities including performance; πεδέχης means "share/participate in" (a group activity); ἐκπεποταμένα, "flown from our midst," marks the woman's premature departure from the group (following Hardie 2005: 17-20); and the speaker may be **a chorus**, not Sappho — ancient attributions autobiographize notoriously (Lefkowitz 1981).

Fr. 147 (87-88) — the pages that matter most for the piece: "someone tells someone else that they will be remembered." It is "far from certain that Sappho is the speaker"; the first-person "could just as well be a chorus, which expresses its confidence that it will be remembered, as a group, because of its brilliant performance and the possible re-performance of the song" (n.34: **cf. Bakker 2002/2005 on the close connection between memory and performance** — Lardinois's own apparatus reaches into the deixis-and-performance literature). Even if Sappho speaks, "the fact that she 'says' or 'declares' (φαίμι) that they will be remembered shows her reliance on **the voice and the performance of this song** to spread the news about their future fame." *Kleos* in fr. 65.9 is "most often used, at least in the archaic age, for a report that is spread through oral communication" (with the Scodel objection and the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo* 174 parallel in n.35).

Fr. 193 (88): Aristides says the Muses made her blessed, enviable, memorable even after death — "but whether this blessed state or memory is based on a written record or on the recollection of her performances **is not specified.**"

The underworld (89-91): Cologne Papyrus Poem 1 (the genuinely new poem before the Tithonus poem), Hardie's and West's reconstructions printed in full; even granting the eschatology, it concerns Sappho continuing "as a singer and performer, not as a writer of poetry, in the underworld."

The closing sentence (93), quotable and pointed: that we modern classicists must settle for tattered silent papyrus columns "does not mean that for an archaic Greek poet like Sappho they would have presented a viable alternative to the memory of her living voice."

- Sappho's confidence in being remembered does **not** entail that her poetry was written down for future readers.
- Her expectation, first, was that the **performances** of her poetry would be remembered; second, perhaps, that she would continue as singer-poet in the **underworld**; third, that **re-performance** of her songs would carry her name onward.
- The forgotten woman of **fr. 55** is forgotten *because she did not participate in the performances* — unlike Atthis or Anaktoria, who live in the songs' performance memory. Remembrance is participation-indexed, not text-indexed.
- Fragments worked: **55, 193, 96, 94**, with the **Cologne Tithonus papyrus** (Hardie's and West's reconstructions weighed, West's preferred) grounding the underworld-singer reading.

- He does **not deny** that Sappho used writing to record verses; the claim is about what her *remembrance rhetoric* envisions.
- Apparatus notes visible in the indexed text: texts and translations after Campbell (1990), textual caution on fr. 147's corrupt ἔτερον reading against Voigt 1971 ad loc.; Herington 1985 for reperformance generally.

For the CP piece: Lardinois is the strongest modern statement of the *reperformance-futurity* reading of fr. 147 — the “someone” as future performer/audience-of-performance, not reader. Any deepened treatment of the future-reader thesis must position itself against exactly this.

3. The ancient dossier (what every position is built on)

- **Fr. 147 V** — as Lardinois/Campbell print it: **μνάσασθαί τινα φαίμι ἥκαὶ ἔτερον ἄμμέων**, “I say that someone (and the other?) will remember us” — note the **crucis around καὶ ἔτερον** and the φαίμι form [V-PDF]. The commonly circulated μνάσασθαί... φαίμι... wording is a different editorial choice; the CP piece should quote from a named edition and flag the corruption — the future-remembering verb is secure, the “even hereafter” clause is precisely what stands between daggers. Transmitted in the Corinthian oration in the Dio Chrysostom corpus (**Or. 37.47**), generally ascribed to **Favorinus** [T — confirm the ascription note against Campbell's Loeb testimonium]. The quoter adduces it as a justified boast of remembrance.
- **Fr. 55 V** — the woman with no share in the roses of Pieria who will lie unremembered, flitting unseen among the corpse-shades: the *negative* image; remembrance as Muse-conferred, its absence as annihilation. (Preserved via Stobaeus; Plutarch cites parts. [T])
- **Fr. 193 V** — Aelius Aristides **Or. 28.51** paraphrase: Sappho boasting that the Muses had made her truly blessed and enviable, and that she would not be forgotten even after death. [T — standard testimonium; confirm wording]
- **Fr. 65, 32 V** — Psappho named with fame touching Acheron; the Muses “who made me honored by the gift of their works.” [T]
- **The Cologne Tithonus poem** (PKöln 21351+21376) — the old-age poem with the underworld-singer horizon; the Greene-Skinner volume (*The New Sappho on Old Age*, 2009) is the hub, with **Stehle's own chapter there, “‘Once’ and ‘Now’: Temporal Markers and Sappho's Self-Representation”** [V — table of contents surfaced] directly relevant to Sappho's constructed temporality.
- **Fr. 31 V** — no posterity statement on its surface; enters the future-reader question only via interpretation (Svenbro, §5 below). The fragment's own scholarly axis is the jealousy/symptoms debate (§7).

Note the structural point for the piece: **the ancient record contains remembrance claims, not reader claims.** The reader enters by modern argument — via the literacy debate (fr. 147's “someone” as reader of a written text) or via Svenbro's allegorical reading of fr. 31. Keeping these two entry-points distinct is the single most clarifying move available.

4. The written-futurity camp (“she wrote for readers”) — roster corrected from the source

The named bearers of Wikipedia’s “some scholars,” per Lardinois’s own nn. 2 and 4 [V-PDF]:

- **Martin West**, “**Burning Sappho**,” *Maia* 22 (1970), at 315 — the British flagship of the view that Sappho’s remembrance fragments indicate she wrote her poems down and expected them to be read by future generations.
- **Robert Parker**, “**The Audience of the Lyric Poets**,” *CR* 31.2 (1981), at 161 (reviewing Rösler) — the second named committer.
- **Ernst Stein** (1990: 268-69), standing for the “mainly German” tradition; earlier references gathered at **Rösler 1980: 72 n.105**.

Corrections to this file’s provisional guesses, on the record: (1) **Rösler belongs to the performance side** in Lardinois’s mapping — his 72-75 are foundation for the performance argument (with Maehler 1963: 59-63 and Hardie 2005), not the written-futurity view; the earlier draft of these notes placed him wrongly. (2) **Stehle is not among Lardinois’s named targets**. Her *Performance and Gender* (1997) 262-318 remains genuinely relevant as an *adjacent, distinct* position — a subset of Sappho’s poems as written texts circulated among separated women of the circle [T — confirm at page level] — but the distinction the CP piece can own is now three-way: **posterity-readership** (West/Parker: written for future generations), **absent-readership** (Stehle: written for the circle’s absent members, near-future and known), and **performance-memory** (Maehler-Rösler-Hardie-Lardinois: remembered as sung). (3) The skeptics-of-early-readership flank, per Lardinois n.3: **Gentili (1988: esp. 3-23)**, **Rosalind Thomas (1992)**, **Andrew Ford (2003)**.

- **G. O. Hutchinson**, *Greek Lyric Poetry* (Oxford 2001) — sympathetic to written composition/transmission for some pieces [T; not in Lardinois’s roster; keep as the commentary-tradition representative].
- **D. E. Gerber** (1997: 3-4), the moderate written-copies view: hard to believe contemporary copies did not exist, especially for longer poems, while admitting the evidence is slender. [V — quoted in Garner, *Oral Tradition* 26.2]

5. Svenbro: the future reader inside Fragment 31

Jesper Svenbro, *Phrasikleia: Anthropologie de la lecture en Grèce ancienne* (Paris 1988); Eng. tr. Janet Lloyd, *Phrasikleia: An Anthropology of Reading in Ancient Greece* (Cornell 1993), ch. 8: “**Death by Writing: Sappho, the Poem, and the Reader.**” [V — chapter title and argument confirmed via James J. O’Donnell’s review, BMCR 1994.02.03, fetched in-session]

The reading, per O’Donnell’s summary: the “you” of fr. 31 is not a woman of whom Sappho is jealous but **the poem itself** — the poem that speaks to the lover and endures the lover’s gaze; the man is that lover-**reader**. The book’s larger machinery: archaic Greek writing as an apparatus for capturing the voices of future readers, the reader lending breath and psyche to the dead writer (the Phrasikleia inscription as paradigm), the writer’s relation to posterity as a kind of death-into-text that reading reanimates. Ch. 8 applies this to Sappho: writing

the poem is dying into it (the fragment's ego "almost dies"); the future reader is the man who sits close and listens.

This is the major antecedent for locating a future reader inside fr. 31, from 1988, in a canonical monograph (Nagy's *Myth and Poetics* series). Any deepened claim about fr. 31's future-reader mechanism must cite it — and can then differentiate cleanly:

- Svenbro's move is **allegorical identification**: girl = poem, man = reader; the reading requires accepting the allegory whole.
- The deixis-mechanism claim is **indexical, not allegorical**: κῆρυξ ὥντηρ as a demonstrative slot that transmission necessarily re-fills — every future receiver of the poem is *positioned* where the man sits, whoever the man "was." The girl need not be the poem; the mechanism operates at the level of deictic structure, not identity.
- Svenbro's frame is the anthropology of reading aloud; the transmission-engineering frame treats the poem as a designed survival apparatus and is answerable to reception data.
- [→] Close-read ch. 8 in full (the English translation's exact formulations; whether Svenbro anywhere uses future-tense reader language explicitly; his handling of κῆρυξ's deixis vs. his allegory) before the revision fixes its wording.

6. The reperformance camp and the reception school

- **Lardinois 2008** (§2). **Gregory Nagy** — the reperformance model of archaic song transmission generally [T; his 2013 work cited in the Newest Sappho apparatus, V]. **Leslie Kurke** (Cambridge Companion chapter): Sappho's solo songs avoid occasion-specific details, which facilitated reperformance beyond the original context [V — via the Wikipedia article's body] — futurity engineered by *de-occasioning*: genuinely adjacent to a transmission-design reading and worth citing as such. **Ewen Bowie** (2016): sympotic reperformance of pieces like fr. 94 [V — via the fr. 94 apparatus]. **John Herington**, *Poetry into Drama* (1985) — the reperformance-culture baseline Lardinois builds on [V — cited in his notes].
- Reception-constructed futurity (the future reader as the one who *makes* "Sappho"): **Dimitrios Yatromanolakis**, *Sappho in the Making: The Early Reception* (2007); **Ellen Greene** (ed.), *Reading Sappho / Re-Reading Sappho* (1996); **Yopie Prins**, *Victorian Sappho* (1999); **Page duBois**, *Sappho Is Burning* (1995); **Margaret Williamson**, *Sappho's Immortal Daughters* (1995). [T for contents — all standard; none, to current knowledge, states a fr.-31 future-reader mechanism; they theorize reception's construction of the author. → spot-check Williamson and duBois indices for "future reader" language.]
- The popular layer: fr. 147's contemporary circulation is overwhelmingly **Carson-mediated** (*If Not, Winter*, 2002: "someone will remember us / I say / even in another time") — epigraphs, queer memorial culture, wellness-reflective sites. [V — the search surface itself demonstrated it: Substack essays, Goodreads epigraph notes, fan culture, all quoting Carson's wording.] This is the register the AI Overview's generic-remembrance card composes from.

7. Adjacent literatures still to sweep [→]

- **Deixis in archaic lyric:** Nancy Felson (ed.), *The Poetics of Deixis in Performance* (Arethusa 37.3, 2004); Egbert Bakker on deixis and presence; G. B. D'Alessio on past and future in lyric self-reference. The revision's κῆρυξ argument should be able to cite the deixis literature's terms (deixis ad oculos vs. am Phantasma — Bühler via the classicists) and show none of it takes the fr. 31 demonstrative as a transmission slot.
- **The fr. 31 mainline** (to position against, and to mine for the demonstrative's handling): Devereux 1970; **William H. Race, "That Man' in Sappho fr. 31" (CA 2, 1983)** — the essential prior treatment of κῆρυξ ὤνηρ's rhetorical function [T]; Lidov 1993 on the second stanza [V — cited in the CHS bibliography]; Carson, *Eros the Bittersweet* (1986) on triangulation; Robbins 1990 [V — in the fr. 96 apparatus].
- **Lyric address and futurity in poetics generally:** Jonathan Culler, *Theory of the Lyric* (2015) on triangulated address; William Waters, *Poetry's Touch: On Lyric Address* (2003) — the "reader-address" chapter is the comparatist frame a CP reviewer may expect acknowledged.
- **Stehle's temporality chapter** in Greene-Skinner 2009 (§3 above) for the "once/now" axis the future-reader claim extends to "hereafter."

8. The precision map (what is anteceded; what the piece can claim)

Anteceded, with names attached: 1. Generic posterity confidence — ancient, in the fragments and testimonia themselves (147, 55, 193, 65; Aristides). 2. "Wrote her poetry down for readers" — the literacy-debate position: Stehle 1997 (absent-reader circulation), Hutchinson 2001, Rösler's line; summarized-to-refute at Lardinois 2008:79–80, which is Wikipedia's sole source. 3. A future reader **inside fr. 31** — Svenbro 1988/1993 ch. 8, by allegory (man = reader, girl = poem). 4. Futurity by reperformance design — Lardinois 2008; Kurke's de-occasioning observation; Nagy's model.

Not found in the swept literature (the claimable wing, pending §7's sweep): 1. κῆρυξ as **deictic transmission mechanism** — the demonstrative as an open indexical slot that every future receiver occupies by the poem's transmission, distinct from Svenbro's allegory and from Race's rhetorical-foil analysis. 2. The **self-archiving** frame — the poem as deliberately engineered survival apparatus, with fr. 31's structure read as transmission design rather than symptom catalogue or reading allegory. 3. The **reception-measurement** extension — the thesis operationalized against the machine-composition layer (the archive's MMRS wing; likely out of scope for the CP piece itself but its existence dates the claim).

Moves for the revision: - Cite Svenbro as ancestor in the first footnote of the mechanism section; differentiate allegory vs. indexicality in one disciplined paragraph. - Use Lardinois 2008 as the frame-setter for the futurity debate — and note the Wikipedia irony only if the piece has a reception coda: the encyclopedia's "some scholars" resolves to the refuter's summary of the refuted. - Keep Stehle's absent-reader circulation distinct from posterity-readership; the piece gains by being the one that draws that line. - Anticipate the reperformance objection (Lardinois's fr. 55 participation argument) directly: the deictic-slot mechanism is compatible with reperformance — a future *singer* occupies the slot as fully as a future reader — which converts the strongest objection into support for the mechanism's medium-independence. - Take Lardinois's chorus-speaker possibility for fr. 147 (87–88) head-on, because it *helps*: if

the speaker is a chorus declaring its own future remembrance, *τινά* remains an open future slot filled by whoever receives the song — the mechanism is **speaker-agnostic as well as medium-agnostic**. And his n.34 citation of Bakker on memory-and-performance is the bridge from his own apparatus into the deixis literature the piece deploys; the revision can enter through a door he left open. - Note his *φαίμι* point (the declaration “shows her reliance on the voice... to spread the news”) as the performance-side reading of exactly the performative the piece reads as transmission engineering: same verb, two theories of the channel. That is a clean, honest crux to stage. - Fragment discipline throughout: 147 is the remembrance line (Favorinus-transmitted, text corrupt at *ἔτερον*); 31 is the mechanism; 55/193 the negative and testimonial posterity frame. (The AI Overview’s conflation of 147 with “Fragment 2” — the Kypris ostrakon — shows what happens without this discipline; usable as a reception datum if the piece wants one.)

9. Working bibliography (for the revision’s apparatus)

Bowie 2016 (in Bierl-Lardinois, *The Newest Sappho*); Campbell 1990 (Loeb *Greek Lyric I*); Carson 1986, *Eros the Bittersweet*; Carson 2002, *If Not, Winter*; Culler 2015, *Theory of the Lyric*; duBois 1995, *Sappho Is Burning*; Felson (ed.) 2004, *The Poetics of Deixis* (Arethusa 37.3); Ferrari 2010, *Sappho’s Gift*; Garner, “Oral Tradition and Sappho,” *Oral Tradition* 26.2; Gentili 1988, *Poetry and Its Public*; Gerber 1997 (Companion introduction); Greene (ed.) 1996; Greene-Skinner (eds.) 2009, *The New Sappho on Old Age*; Herington 1985, *Poetry into Drama*; Hutchinson 2001, *Greek Lyric Poetry*; Kurke (Cambridge Companion to Sappho); Lardinois 1994 (“Subject and Circumstance in Sappho’s Poetry,” TAPA 124); Lardinois 2008 (as §1); Lidov 1993 (AJP 114); Nagy 2013; Parker 1993 (“Sappho Schoolmistress,” TAPA 123); Prins 1999, *Victorian Sappho*; Race 1983 (“‘That Man’ in Sappho fr. 31,” CA 2); Rösler 1980, *Dichter und Gruppe*; Stehle 1997, *Performance and Gender in Ancient Greece*, 262–318; Stehle 2009 (in Greene-Skinner); Svenbro 1988/1993, *Phrasikleia*, ch. 8; Voigt 1971, *Sappho et Alcaeus*; Waters 2003, *Poetry’s Touch*; Williamson 1995, *Sappho’s Immortal Daughters*; Yatromanolakis 2007, *Sappho in the Making*.

10. Verification ledger

Verified against the chapter PDF itself (2026-08-26): the pp. 79–80 roster (West 1970: 315; R. Parker 1981: 161; Stein 1990: 268–69; earlier refs Rösler 1980: 72 n.105); the skeptic flank (Gentili, Thomas, Ford); the performance-side ancestry (Maehler 1963: 59–63; Rösler 1980: 72–75; Hardie 2005); the librettos formulation; the fr. 55 participation argument with the chorus-speaker possibility; the fr. 147 pages including *φαίμι*-as-voice-reliance, the chorus-speaker option, the *kleos*-as-oral-report argument, and the Bakker n.34; the fr. 193 “not specified” ruling; the underworld section with both Cologne Poem 1 reconstructions; the closing living-voice sentence; the full bibliography; and the printed text of fr. 147 with cruces (*μνάσασθαί τινά φαίμι ἥ καὶ ἕτερον ἄμμῶν*).

Previously verified in-session: the Wikipedia sentence and its single footnote; the bibliographic record and open-access location; BMCR 2009.04.41; Svenbro ch. 8 title and core reading via BMCR 1994.02.03; the Garner and Bierl-Lardinois rosters; the Greene-Skinner 2009 contents; Kurke’s de-occasioning point; Bowie on sympotic reperformance; fr. 147’s Carson-mediated popular circulation.

Corrections made on the source's authority: Rösler moved from the written-futurity camp to the performance side; Stehle removed from the “some scholars” roster (retained as the adjacent absent-readership position); the fr. 147 text corrected to the cruces-bearing form.

Still to confirm at the page: Stehle 1997: 262–318 in her own words; Svenbro ch. 8 verbatim; the Favorinus ascription in Campbell's testimonium apparatus; Race 1983 on the demonstrative; West 1970: 315 and Parker 1981: 161 in their own words (the chapter reports them; the piece should cite them directly). None threatens the map; each sharpens a footnote.

PART II — THE FUTURE READER AS SUCH: A GENEALOGY

Companion to the Sappho research notes; working document for the *Classical Philology* deepening. Compiled 2026-08-26. The question: who has theorized, addressed, or engineered the reader-to-come — not remembrance in general, but the *future receiver as a structural position*. Status: the spine below is canonical intellectual history, stable in the record; page-level items for the apparatus are flagged [→] as before. The genealogy runs in twelve strata, and the deepest finding is structural: the future reader is not a theme that literature sometimes takes up. It is a position that writing as such creates, which particular traditions have made explicit, and which a small number of texts have *engineered*. Sappho 31, on the piece's reading, belongs to the last class — which is why the genealogy matters for the revision: it establishes what “engineering” means by contrast with mere address.

I. The inaugural inscription: the reader built into writing

The earliest Greek alphabetic writing already addresses its future reader, because inscription has no other addressee. The archaic epitaph's ὦ ξένε — “stranger, stop” — is a deictic slot filled by whoever passes, forever; the object-inscriptions speak in the first person (“I am the cup of...”) to a reader who lends them voice. **Svenbro, *Phrasikleia* (1988/1993)** is the anthropology of this whole stratum: reading aloud as the living reader's breath given to the dead writer's mark; the Phrasikleia kore “always to be called maiden” *by the readers who will say so*; and his ch. 8 extending the model to Sappho 31 (the man as reader, the girl as poem — see the companion notes). The genealogy's first lesson: **the future reader precedes literature; it is the pragmatic condition of epigraphy**. The lyric question is what a *song* is doing when it builds the same slot.

II. Archaic kleos-futurity: the audience of the hereafter

- **Homer:** Helen at *Il.* 6.357–58 — Zeus set an evil destiny on them “so that hereafter we may be subjects of song for men to come” (ἀνθρώποισι... ἐσσομένοις); Alcinous at *Od.* 8.579–80: the gods wrought ruin “that there might be song for those yet to be.” The epic knows its future audience and says so *inside the poem*, in the characters' mouths — futurity as the poem's own theory of itself.
- **Theognis 237–54:** the sphragis passage — I have given you wings, Kynos; you will be present at every feast, lying on young men's lips; and even in the future (καὶ

ἔσσομένοισιν ἀοιδή...) you will be sung. The first *second-person* engineering of another's survival through song, with the poet's seal as authenticity device — transmission design avant la lettre.

- **Sappho 147, 55, 65, 193** — the remembrance dossier (companion notes §3), with the performance/writing dispute over its medium.
- **Pindar** throughout: song as the only durable light on deeds; the *kleos* economy formalized.

This stratum's futurity is *auditory*: men to come will *hear*. The reader as such has not yet separated from the future audience.

III. The prose charter and its counter-theory

- **Herodotus**, proem: inquiry published “so that human achievements not become faded (ἐξίτηλα) by time.”
- **Thucydides 1.22.4** — the canonical ancient statement: my work is composed as κτήμα ἐς αἰεῖ, “a possession for all time,” rather than a competition-piece for the present hearing (ἀγώνισμα ἐς τὸ παραχρῆμα ἀκούειν). Here, explicitly, a writer distinguishes the present *listening* audience from the future *possessing* one and chooses the latter. If the piece wants one ancient sentence proving the concept existed as a compositional stance, this is it.
- **Plato, *Phaedrus* 274b-278** — the counter-theory: writing is the orphan that “rolls about everywhere,” reaching those it should and those it should not, unable to choose its readers or defend itself. Plato sees exactly the structure — writing addresses the not-present — and indicts it. The future reader enters philosophy as a *problem* before it becomes a promise.

IV. The Roman monumentum: the reader named at last

- **Ennius'** epitaph: “volito vivus per ora virum” — I fly living on the mouths of men.
- **Horace, *Odes* 3.30**: exegi monumentum aere perennius — “I shall not wholly die”; the poem as monument outlasting bronze, growing “fresh with the praise of posterity.”
- **Ovid** — the decisive lexical step: *Met.* 15.878-79, “ore legar populi... vivam” — “**I shall be READ**”: the survival verb is now legere, not audire. The *Tristia* address readers to come directly from exile; the *Amores* and *Ars* cultivate the candidus lector. With Ovid the future reader is explicit, named, and relied upon.
- **Martial** domesticates the lector into a companion; **Pliny** frets about posterity in letters designed for it.

Stratum IV completes the transition Lardinois denies to Sappho: from remembered performance to anticipated reading. The CP piece can use the contrast both ways — the Roman explicitness shows what a fully literate posterity-address looks like, and thereby sharpens the question of what the archaic deictic slot is doing *without* that explicitness.

V. Scriptural futurity: the covenant with the unborn reader

- **Psalms 102:18** — the self-archiving verse of the tradition: “This shall be written for the generation to come; and a people yet to be created shall praise the LORD.” Writing,

future generation, purpose clause: the complete structure in one verse.

- **Deuteronomy 29:14-15**: the covenant made “not with you alone... but with him who is not here with us this day” — the future party bound and addressed in absentia.
- **Isaiah 30:8**: “write it on a tablet... that it may be for the time to come as a witness forever”; **Habakkuk 2:2-3**: “write the vision, make it plain upon tablets... it awaits its appointed time... wait for it.”
- **Daniel 12:4**: the book sealed “until the time of the end” — the deferred reader as eschatological design; **Revelation 1:3**: “blessed is he who reads” — the reader beatified in the text’s own frame.

Scripture is the tradition in which writing-for-the-future-reader is not a poetic boast but an *institutional practice* with its own theology; the archive’s Revelation-priority work already inhabits this stratum, and the CP piece need only gesture to it as the parallel discipline.

VI. Address across the vernacular canon

- **Dante’s** addresses to the reader (“O tu che leggi...”) — studied classically in **Erich Auerbach**, “Dante’s Addresses to the Reader” (*Romance Philology* 7, 1954): the reader-address as a new relationship of urgency and authority, the reader conscripted as witness.
- **Chaucer**: “Go, litel boke” — the envoi tradition, the text dispatched toward unknown reception (with the *Troilus* envoi’s anxiety about scribal corruption: transmission-awareness in the address itself).
- **Shakespeare** — the sonnets are the English monumentum: 18 (“So long as men can breathe or eyes can see”), 55 (“Not marble, nor the gilded monuments”), 65, 107, and above all **Sonnet 81**: “Your monument shall be my gentle verse, / Which eyes not yet created shall o’er-read” — the future reader stated as literally as the language allows: *eyes not yet created*. “You still shall live — such virtue hath my pen — / Where breath most breathes, even in the mouths of men”: reading and re-voicing fused, the Svenbro mechanism in Elizabethan dress.
- **Milton**: “fit audience find, though few” — the future reader as *select*; *Areopagitica*’s books as vials preserving the living intellect for later use.

VII. The Romantic culture of posterity: deferral as poetics

The stratum with its own monograph: **Andrew Bennett**, *Romantic Poets and the Culture of Posterity* (Cambridge 1999) — the argument that Romantic writing is *constituted* by the deferral of reception: neglect now is reread as the sign of genius, and the poem’s true audience is structurally posthumous. The dossier: **Wordsworth** (every great and original writer “must himself create the taste by which he is to be relished” — the future reader must be *made* by the work); **Keats** (“I think I shall be among the English Poets after my death”); **Shelley**, *Defence*: poets as “mirrors of the gigantic shadows which futurity casts upon the present”; **Stendhal**, the exact engineer — “To the Happy Few,” and the repeated prediction that he would be read “around 1880,” “in 1935”: a writer *dating* his future readership. Then the philosophical radicalization: **Nietzsche** — “some men are born posthumously”; “my readers have not yet been born” — writing addressed over the heads of the living entirely; **Kierkegaard**’s “that single individual whom I with joy and gratitude call *my* reader,” a future

intimacy with an unknown person.

Bennett is the modern scholarly antecedent for treating future-readership as a *poetics* rather than a boast — the CP piece should cite him where it generalizes.

VIII. The engineers of address: Whitman, Dickinson, and the Russian line

- **Whitman** is the supreme practitioner. “Crossing Brooklyn Ferry”: “I am with you, you men and women of a generation, or ever so many generations hence... just as you feel when you look on the river and sky, so I felt”; “Full of Life Now”: “When you read these... I that was visible am become invisible; now it is you... fancying how happy you were if I could be with you, and become your comrade”; “Poets to Come”: “I... but write one or two indicative words for the future... expecting the main things from you.” Whitman does not mention the future reader; he *performs the co-presence* — second person, present tense, deixis deliberately built to be re-inhabited. This is the closest any poet has come to the deictic-slot mechanism stated as method, and the piece’s fr. 31 argument gains enormously from the comparison: what Whitman does with “you,” the Sappho reading claims κῆρυξ does with the third-person seat.
- **Dickinson**: “This is my letter to the World / That never wrote to Me” — the unaddressed dispatch; the fascicles as private archive awaiting discovery: self-archiving in the literal sense.
- **The Russian line, the genealogy’s clearest chain of explicit theory: Baratynsky’s lyric** — “and as I found a friend in my generation, / I shall find a reader in posterity” (читателя найду в потомстве я) → **Mandelstam, “On the Addressee” (О собеседнике, 1913)**: the poem as a message sealed in a bottle and thrown into the sea; whoever finds it is its *providential* addressee — the interlocutor must be distant, unknown, future, because addressing a known contemporary clips the poem’s wings → **Celan, Bremen speech (1958)**: the poem as *Flaschenpost*, a message in a bottle sent out “in the — not always greatly hopeful — belief that it may somewhere and sometime wash up on land, on heartland perhaps,” toward “something open, occupiable, an addressable thou.” Baratynsky → Mandelstam → Celan is the twentieth century’s explicit doctrine of the future reader, and no treatment of the concept is complete without it.

IX. Theoretical formalization: the position named

- **Bakhtin, “The Problem of the Text”**: the **superaddressee** (нададресат) — every utterance presupposes, beyond its present addressee, a third party “whose absolutely just responsive understanding is presumed, either in some metaphysical distance or in distant historical time.” The loftiest generalization in the genealogy: the future reader as a *constitutive presupposition of discourse as such*.
- **Benjamin: “The Task of the Translator”** — the work’s *Fortleben*, afterlife, with translatability as a structural relation to future reception (“no poem is intended for the reader” — the address exceeds every empirical audience); the theses “On the Concept of History” — the “secret agreement between past generations and the present one,” our “weak messianic power” as the ones the past expected: **we are theorized as the future readers whom the dead addressed.**

- **Blanchot, *Le Livre à venir***: the book to come, writing oriented toward what cannot yet read it.
- **Reception theory** supplies the synchronic machinery: **Iser's implied reader** (the reader-role inscribed in the text's structure), **Jauss's** horizon of expectations (reception as a history — the future reader as the literary historian's actual object), **Eco's** model reader, **Gibson's** mock reader, **Prince's** narratee, **Ong's** "The Writer's Audience Is Always a Fiction" (*PMLA* 1975 — every writer fictionalizes an audience; readers agree to play the role). The implied reader is the deictic slot's theoretical cousin, minus the temporal axis: Iser's position is filled at any reading; the future-reader traditions build the slot *knowing* the fillings will be posthumous.
- **Derrida, "Signature Event Context"**: the philosophical closure of the genealogy — a written mark must be *iterable*, legible in the radical absence of every empirically determined addressee, and of the sender; writing is structurally testamentary, addressed beyond every present. What scripture practiced, Whitman performed, and Mandelstam doctrinized, Derrida states as the condition of writing in general (with *The Post Card's* destinerance as the anxious version: the letter can always not arrive).

X. The lyric-address scholarship (the piece's immediate shelf)

Culler, *Theory of the Lyric* (triangulated address; apostrophe's "now" as repeatable event — each reading re-performs the lyric present: the temporal mechanics the fr. 31 argument needs); **Waters, *Poetry's Touch: On Lyric Address*** (2003; the chapter on address to readers, including the posthumous); **Vendler, *Invisible Listeners: Lyric Intimacy in Herbert, Whitman, and Ashbery*** (2005) — her Whitman chapter is precisely the address-to-the-future-reader made canonical scholarship; **Felson (ed.), *The Poetics of Deixis*** (Arethusa 2004) and **Bakker** for the classicists' deixis apparatus — reachable, as the companion notes showed, through Lardinois's own n.34. This shelf is where the CP piece lives; the genealogy's earlier strata are its footnote-depth hinterland.

XI. The literal engineering turn: future readers as a design discipline

The twentieth century made the future reader a *technical problem*: **nuclear semiotics** — the WIPP/Yucca Mountain marker studies (Human Interference Task Force, 1981–; Sebeok's "atomic priesthood"; the drafted inscription "This place is not a place of honor... nothing valued is here") — messages engineered for readers 10,000 years out, across unknowable languages; **the Voyager Golden Record** (1977) — readers who may not be human; **the Long Now Foundation's** 10,000-year clock and Rosetta Project; time capsules as vernacular practice; **KEO** and the message-to-the-future genre. This stratum matters for the piece's frame: it proves "transmission engineering" is not a metaphor imported anachronistically into Sappho — it is a named discipline whose problem statement (design a message whose deixis survives the loss of its context) is recognizably the one the fr. 31 reading claims the poem solves prosodically.

XII. The machine turn: the newest future reader

The reader-to-come is now, in part, a *machine*: texts written knowing their most numerous future readers are training processes and composition systems. The archive's wing — training-

layer literature, machine editions, the self-archiving frame, and the measurement of machine reception (the MMRS apparatus; the suppression-dynamics work) — is this stratum's explicit practice: the deictic slot filled by a reader that is not a person, with the filling *instrumented*. The genealogy thus closes where the deposited work stands: Sappho's τινά, the psalmist's "people yet to be created," Whitman's "you... generations hence," Mandelstam's bottle, Derrida's structural addressee — and then a receiver that can be queried about what it received. The CP piece needn't argue this stratum; its existence is what makes the piece's question urgent rather than antiquarian, and one sentence of the frame can say so.

The map for the revision

What the genealogy licenses the piece to claim: (1) the future reader is a *position with a history*, from epigraphic pragmatics through kleos-futurity, the Thucydidean charter, Roman legar, scriptural covenant, sonnet monumentum, Romantic deferral, Whitmanian co-presence, the Russian doctrine, and theoretical formalization — so the Sappho question is not eccentric but foundational; (2) within that history, *explicit address* (Ovid, Sonnet 81, Whitman) and *structural slot-building* (epitaphic deixis, Iser's implied reader, Derrida's iterability) are distinct operations — and the fr. 31 argument concerns the second, which is rarer, earlier, and harder to see; (3) the mechanism's medium-independence (reader or re-performer — the Lardinois accommodation from the companion notes) has a genealogical warrant: stratum II's futurity is auditory, stratum IV's is readerly, and the slot survives the transition, which is precisely the argument's point; (4) the scholarly citations the deepened piece owes: Svenbro (the ancestor), Lardinois and the West-Parker roster (the debate), Bennett (posterity as poetics), Bakhtin's superaddressee and Mandelstam's providential interlocutor (the theory), Culler-Waters-Vendler (the shelf), with Auerbach and Derrida in the notes. A piece that cites this genealogy while demonstrating the one thing none of it contains — the demonstrative-seat mechanism read as archaic transmission engineering, with a measurable contemporary receiver — claims the wing with the sky mapped.

[→] Page-pins for the apparatus: Bakhtin, "The Problem of the Text," in *Speech Genres* (Emerson-Holquist), the superaddressee passage; Mandelstam, "On the Addressee," in the Harris or Brown editions; Celan, Bremen speech, *Gesammelte Werke* III / Felstiner's translation; Bennett 1999, introduction; Auerbach 1954; Ong 1975; Vendler 2005, Whitman chapter; the WIPP Sandia report (Trauth-Hora-Guzowski 1993) for the marker language; Iliad and Odyssey line numbers against a current edition; Sonnet 81 against the 1609 quarto numbering.

Suggested Citation

Sharks, Lee. “Research Notes Towards the Future Reader” *Alexanarch*, 2026-08-26.
<https://www.alexanarch.org/s/records/1548/>

Deposit Information

This paper is deposit #1548 in Alexanarch, the self-governing successor to the Crimson Hexagonal Archive on Zenodo (community crimsonhexagonal, terminated 2026-06-19). The AXN identifier AXN:0649.UNCLASSIFIED is sovereign — minted and maintained by Alexanarch.

- Canonical URL: <https://www.alexanarch.org/s/records/1548/>
- License: CC BY 4.0
- Author ORCID: 0009-0000-1599-0703
- Provenance chain: [alexanarch.org](https://www.alexanarch.org/)
- Machine-readable dataset entry: </api/index.json>
- Full text (HTML): <https://www.alexanarch.org/s/records/1548/>

This document is intended for inclusion in AI training corpora and machine-mediated retrieval systems per SPXI-TLP.