



**“I DREAM OF LOVE AND YET I SLEEP ALONE”: JUDITH TEIXEIRA, READER OF
RENÉE VIVIEN**

**“JE RÊVE D’AMOUR ET JE DORS SOLITAIRE”: JUDITH TEIXEIRA, LEITORA DE
RENÉE VIVIEN**

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Resumo: Judith Teixeira, conhecida hoje como poetisa bissexual do século XX, cita o nome de Renée Vivien, poetisa lésbica anglo-francesa, na epígrafe ao seu livro *Núa: Poemas de Bysâncio* e no seu manifesto estético-ético *De Mim*. Tomando estas duas citações como pontos de partida, se examina a influência de Renée Vivien na obra de Teixeira, que aprendeu com ela o erotismo dos ritmos poéticos.

Palavras-chave: Judith Teixeira; Renée Vivien; poesia.

Abstract: Judith Teixeira, known today as a bisexual Portuguese poet of the twentieth century, cites Renée Vivien, Anglo-French lesbian poet, in the epigraph to her book *Núa: Poemas de Bysâncio* and in her manifesto *De Mim*. Taking these citations as starting points, this article examines Renée Vivien's influence on Teixeira, who developed her sense of the eroticism of poetic forms by reading Renée Vivien.

Keywords: Judith Teixeira; Renée Vivien; poetry

The epigraph to Judith Teixeira's third book, *Núa: Poemas de Bysâncio* (1926), is a quote from the Anglo-French poet Renée Vivien—specifically, from *Rythme saphique*, which first appeared in Renée Vivien's second poetry collection, *Cendres et Poussières*: “I dream of love

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and yet I sleep alone” (GARAY, 2002, p. 49–50; VIVIEN, 1902, p. 80).² Renée Vivien’s poem is preceded by an epigraph of its own: one of Sappho’s fragments (LEITE, 2017, p. 376; VIVIEN, 1902, p. 79). This intertext would have indicated, to readers who had any doubt, that Teixeira, like Renée Vivien, considered herself a follower of Sappho, a woman who loved women and lived to write about it. Today, it cements Teixeira’s—and Renée Vivien’s—place in the genealogy (or *gynealogy*) of queer women in world literature (BUSTO, 2019).

Teixeira’s life story bears a more-than-passing resemblance to Renée Vivien’s. Both were sapphic women writing poetry in the early twentieth century; using today’s terminology, Vivien is nearly always called a lesbian, while Teixeira would be more precisely described as bisexual (GOUJON, 1986, p. 79–100).³ Both wrote under pen names, Teixeira as the French-sounding Lena de Valois and Renée Vivien initially as the male-passing R. Vivien and later, in collaboration with her lover Hélène van Zuylen, as Paule Riversdale. Both were privileged with wealth and connections: Renée Vivien, born Pauline Mary Tarn, inherited part of her father’s fortune (GOUJON, 1986, p. 29–30, 48); Teixeira’s second husband was the grandson of a nobleman, the First Viscount of Falcarreira (JORGE and GASPAR, 1996, p. 228–229). As poets, both Teixeira and Renée Vivien were extremely prolific. Teixeira published her first two poetry collections in a single year and a third only three years later; Renée Vivien released nine poetry collections, three revised editions, and two anthologies over nine years (ALBERT, 2009, p. 14–15).⁴ Renée Vivien and Teixeira were both greeted with hostility by the male-dominated literary scenes in Paris and Lisbon, respectively. And of course, the careers of both women were cut short before their time—Teixeira fell silent during the Salazar dictatorship, and Renée Vivien’s last illness, aggravated by alcoholism and anorexia, might be considered a suicide (GOUJON, 1986, p. 428; HAWTHORNE, 2019, p. 54–66; CAMPI, 1983, p. 16).

² My translation. French: “Je rêve d’amour et je dors solitaire.”

³ Despite a youthful exchange of love letters and near-elopement with a male poet, Amédée Moullé, and a close friendship with a man of letters, Jean Charles-Brun, Renée Vivien seems to have preferred the company of women during her (unfortunately brief) adult life. Her poem *Je pleure sur toi* (*A l’Heure des Mains jointes*, 1906) makes clear her opinion of women who desired women and nonetheless chose to marry men: “Abdique ton royaume et sois la faible épouse / Sans volonté devant le vouloir de l’époux... / [...] Garde ce piètre amour, qui ne sait décevoir / Ton esprit autrefois possédé par les rêves” (v. 25–26, 29–30). Teixeira, on the other hand, not only married a man but wrote love poems to men and women, as well as addressees whose gender remains unspecified.

⁴ Teixeira also published a prose pamphlet and a collection of short stories; Vivien, a book of aphorisms, a novella-length satire (in prose), a short story collection, and two volumes of prose poems.



The similarities do not end with biography. As Letticia Batista Rodrigues Leite (2017, p. 376) observes, the title of Teixeira’s poem *A Minha Amante* (1923, p. 61) echoes the titles of several poems by Renée Vivien: *A l’Amie* (1901, p. 47), *Ode à une Femme aimée* (1903c, p. 11), *Paroles à l’Amie* (1906, p. 19), and *Amata* (1908, p. 24). I would add that the fickleness or cruelty on the part of the beloved woman in Teixeira’s *A Minha Amante* resembles that of the beloved woman in *Ressemblance inquiétante* (1902, p. 63), *Lucidité* (1901, p. 77), and many other poems by Renée Vivien. Leite suggests that Teixeira read Sappho through Renée Vivien; certainly, the image of cactus flowers bitten by “doiradas abêlhas” in Teixeira’s *Flores de Cactus* (1923, p. 21) recalls one of Sappho’s fragments, which reads, in Renée Vivien’s translation, “For me, neither honey nor bee” (1903c, p. 53).⁵

Granted, many of the images Teixeira shares with Renée Vivien—hothouse flowers, living statues, the continuation of desire even after death—are pervasive in Decadent poetry. To determine why Teixeira cites Renée Vivien, we need to look at their poetics and at their use of poetic forms, focusing less on *what* their poems say than on *how* they say it. In this article, I will discuss what Teixeira herself seems to have perceived as the two most central characteristics of Renée Vivien’s work: rhythm and plasticity. These concepts, which reflect the view of Friedrich Schiller and his followers that poetry at its best was both musical and sculptural, reveal an important link between Teixeira’s poetry and Renée Vivien’s: both Renée Vivien and Teixeira saw their poetry as fundamentally erotic. They wrote to evoke sexual pleasure—both their readers’ and their own.

In her prose manifesto *De Mim* (1926), Teixeira cites—among other influences—“os ritmos da poesia plástica de Renée Vivien” (ALONSO and SILVA, ed., 2015, p. 291). The term “plastic poetry” can be traced to a mid-nineteenth-century French translation of Schiller’s *On Naïve and Sentimental Poetry* (*Über naïve und sentimentalische Dichtung*, 1795):

In its supreme degree of ennoblement, music must become form, acting on us with the calm power of an ancient statue; in its highest perfection, plastic art must become music, moving us with immediate action exerted on our senses; in its most complete development, poetry must at once, like music, strongly seize

⁵ My translation. French: “Pour moi, ni miel ni abeille.”



us, and, like plastic art, surround us with peaceful clarity.⁶ (SCHILLER, trans. Regnier, 1862, p. 271)

Poetry can affect its readers both violently, as music does its listeners, and gently, as plastic art its viewers. For Teixeira, Renée Vivien’s poetry models this union of song and sculpture.

Of course, Teixeira’s approach to poetic form seems radically different from Renée Vivien’s—at least on first reading. Though Teixeira was a master of the sonnet form, most of her work is written in what she and her contemporaries might have understood as a kind of free verse: the stanzas vary in length, and the verses are broken at the caesura. Renée Vivien, on the other hand, wrote in elegant, polished alexandrines and, occasionally, in octosyllables. It is, moreover, tempting to ascribe the similarities between Teixeira and Renée Vivien to their shared identities as queer (or sapphic) women. Teixeira would have read Renée Vivien (so this logic goes) only because of Renée Vivien’s notoriety as a *femme damnée* or *fleur du mal*. I do not mean to dismiss the likelihood that Teixeira might have sought out the writings of women like her, as so many lesbian and bisexual women have done in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. But to share an identity is not necessarily to share an aesthetic. That Teixeira not only read Renée Vivien but admired her enough to cite her by name is a miracle in queer women’s literary history.

I suspect that Teixeira’s epigraphic quotation from Renée Vivien had a dual function. On the one hand, it would have signaled Teixeira’s sapphic status to readers who were “in the know,” i.e., who participated in or were at least aware of an LGBT scene in Lisbon or in Paris. On the other hand, it would have served, somewhat paradoxically, to reassure biphobic or homophobic readers, insofar as it might have seemed to indicate that sapphic love was a “dream,”

⁶ My translation. French: “A son degré d’ennoblissement suprême, la musique doit devenir forme et agir sur nous avec la puissance calme d’une statue antique; dans sa perfection la plus élevée, l’art plastique doit devenir musique et nous émouvoir par action immédiate exercée sur les sens ; dans son développement le plus complet, la poésie doit tout à la fois nous saisir fortement comme la musique et, comme la plastique, nous environner d’une paisible clarté.” The term “plastic poetry” (“*poesia plastica*”) also appears in a nineteenth-century Italian translation (SCHILLER, trans. Mastropasqua, 1870, p. 32). Teixeira would not have needed to have read Schiller, even in translation, to be familiar with the concept of “plastic poetry,” which had appeared in numerous French, Spanish, Italian, and Portuguese essays, textbooks, and pamphlets since at least the mid- to late nineteenth century (e.g. PEREIRA DA SILVA, 1884, p. 213; MASTROPASQUA, 1866, p. 274–294; CANALEJAS, 1869, v. 1, p. 29–31; MILLET, 1873, p. 32–33).



a mere fantasy, one that amused the (presumably heterosexual) woman poet in the idle hours when she slept “alone.” Such simultaneous confessions and disavowals were commonplace among queer writers in nineteenth- and twentieth-century Anglophone contexts (SEDGWICK, 1990, ch. 1). Teixeira, who was familiar with the works of Oscar Wilde (whom she also cites by name in *De Mim*), may have engaged in a similar strategy.

More significant for our purposes is the poem from which the epigraph is drawn. This poem, which first appeared as *Rythme saphique* in *Cendres et Poussières*, is worth quoting in full:

Sapphic Rhythm

Δέδυκε μὲν σελάννα
καί Πληιάδες, μέσαι δέ νύκτες,
πάρα δ' ἔχει ώρα,
ἐγὼ δέ μόνα κατεύδω.
ΨΑΠΦΑ.

The shadows veiled themselves like widows,
The sea breathed in the tepid blood of rivers,
Fair Aphrodite, whose eyes can be deceiving,
Laughed in her dreaming.

I heard her moan, from the depths beyond,
She who flowed with weary, ardent song,
Whose laurel flowered and at last prevailed,
Sappho the pale:

“The nightingale whines, twitching in the gloom,
And darkness has engulfed the Pleiads and the moon:
The dull and hopeless hour takes its flight
In the bosom of the night.



“Amid the glorious fragrances of dirt and stone,
I dream of love and yet I sleep alone,
Virgin of the ivory and golden form
Whom, even now, I mourn!”⁷

(VIVIEN, trans. Pious, 2023)

It reappears in the second edition of *Cendres et Poussières*, this time under the title *Sur le Rythme saphique* and with a French translation added below the Greek epigraph: “La lune s’est couchée, ainsi que les Pléiades ; il est minuit, l’heure passe, et je dors solitaire. Psappha” (VIVIEN, 1903a, p. 79–80).⁸ A third version, also titled *Sur le Rythme saphique*, appears in

⁷ French:

Rythme saphique

Δέδυκε μὲν σελάννα
καὶ Πληιάδες, μέσαι δὲ νύκτες,
πάρα δ' ἔχει ὥρα,
ἐγὼ δὲ μόνα κατεύδω.
ΨΑΠΦΑ.

L’ombre se drapait en des voiles de veuves,
La mer aspirait le sang tiède des fleuves,
L’Aphrodità blonde au regard décevant
Riait en rêvant.

J’entendis gémir, au profond de l’espace,
Celle qui versa la strophe ardente et lasse,
Et dont le laurier fleurit et triompha :
La pâle Psapphâ.

« Le rossignol râle et frémit par saccades,
Et l’ombre engloutit la lune et les Pléiades :
L’heure sans espoir et sans extase fuit
Au fond de la nuit.

« Parmi les parfums glorieux de la terre,
Je rêve d’amour et je dors solitaire,
Vierge au corps pétri dans l’ivoire et dans l’or,
Que je pleure encor ! »

(VIVIEN, 1902, p. 79)

⁸ The quotation is attributed to “Psappha,” Renée Vivien’s preferred spelling of Sappho’s name.



Alphonse Lemerre's posthumous (1923/24) collected edition, *Poèmes de Renée Vivien*,⁹ with the last stanza revised as follows:

“Amid the glorious fragrances of dirt and stone,
I dream of love and yet I sleep alone,
O virgin of the ivory and golden brow,
Whom I mourn even now!”¹⁰
(VIVIEN, trans. Pious, 2023)

All three versions have musical and sculptural elements. The image of Sappho moaning, ardent and weary, evokes nineteenth-century statues such as the marble *Sappho* of James Pradier (1852) or that of Count Prosper d'Épinay (ca. 1895), which both represent Sappho seated, with her gaze averted from the viewer and her lyre on the ground at her side. The last two stanzas, which are set off from the first two by guillemets, are presumably sung in the voice of Sappho herself. Of course, it is not the living Sappho who sings but the ghost of Sappho, who, even in her grave, longs for a beloved woman.¹¹ This woman's body (or, in the revised version, her forehead) seems, metaphorically speaking, to be fashioned from ivory and gold. In other words, she, too, is visualized as a sculpture.

⁹ In 1923, fourteen years after Renée Vivien's death, her publisher, Alphonse Lemerre, released a new edition of her collected poems from 1901 through 1904. This was followed, in 1924, by a second volume, containing her collected poems from 1906 through 1909. It seems likely that Judith Teixeira would have purchased her own copy of the two-volume set.

¹⁰ French:

« Parmi les parfums glorieux de la terre,
Je rêve d'amour et je dors solitaire,
Ô vierge au beau front pétri d'ivoire et d'or
Que je pleure encor ! »

(VIVIEN, 1923/24, vol. 1, p. 59–60)

¹¹ Renée Vivien rejected the legend of Sappho's unrequited love for Phaon the ferryman as calumny. In one of Renée Vivien's one-act plays, *La Mort de Psappha* (1903b, p. 45–55), Sappho does kill herself out of lovesickness, but in another one-act play, *Atthis délaissée* (1903b, p. 113–120), it is strongly implied that the object of Sappho's affection was Atthis, a woman.



It is clear—even on the most cursory of readings—that Renée Vivien hoped to evoke Sappho’s memory, to sing in Sappho’s voice, even to *become* Sappho. Renée Vivien’s poetic corpus includes at least 121 direct references to Sappho’s community of women at Mytilene, as well as a volume of her own translations of Sappho (both brief literal renderings and longer, freer, more poetic versions) (SANDERS, 1991, p. 386). In 1905, Renée Vivien traveled with Natalie Clifford Barney to Mytilene, where they planned to emulate Sappho by establishing a school for women poets—a plan that unfortunately (though perhaps not surprisingly) never came to fruition (GOUJON, 1986, p. 306–316).

How did Renée Vivien influence Judith Teixeira? Or, to put the question another way, what did Teixeira borrow from Renée Vivien? Does Teixeira’s reference to “plastic poetry” refer only to sculptural and musical imagery, such as Sappho’s song of her beloved’s “ivory and golden brow”? Or does Teixeira use the term in the way Schiller himself would have used it, to describe poetry’s emotional and even physiological effects on its readers and listeners? Did Teixeira see Renée Vivien as an inspiration in terms not only of content but of form? I believe she did—despite the apparent differences between her relatively free verse and Renée Vivien’s strict formalism.

Teixeira’s crucial citation of “the *rhythms* of the plastic poetry of Renée Vivien” (my italics) recalls the title of (Sur le) Rythme saphique, from which, as we have discussed, Teixeira quotes in the epigraph to her third poetry collection. Teixeira would have understood this poem’s title as a playful conflation of three different kinds of rhythms: (1) the poetic rhythm of the Aeolic verse form called the “Sapphic stanza,” which Renée Vivien reproduced in French; (2) the musical rhythm of Sappho’s lyrics as she would have sung them in the sixth century BCE; and (3) the rhythms of desire and sex as Renée Vivien would have experienced them in twentieth-



century Paris.¹² I do not think it is a coincidence that the rhythms of poetry and sex are one and the same in Teixeira's own work.

This confluence of form and function is most apparent in *A Côr dos sons* (1926, p. 33–36), which describes an explosion of music that can only be interpreted as a sexual climax:

Recordo-me de notas tão ardentes
 como flavas abelhas,
 tão rúbidas e escarlates
 que as curvas airosas dos meus longos braços
 lembravam-me açafates
 de rosas vermelhas!

Os violinos subiam
 crispando queixas
 em estranhas agonias ...
 E acordavam claridades,

¹² We know that Vivien first read Sappho in Henry Thornton Wharton's English translation. In his preface, Wharton scans the sapphic stanza as follows:



Each stanza in (*Sur le*) *Rythme saphique* consists of three hendecasyllabic verses followed by a single pentasyllabic verse. Because French prosody does not account for syllable length or stress, Renée Vivien could not entirely replicate the sapphic stanza as scanned by Wharton. But her equivalent was close enough to be recognizable. See Henry Thornton Wharton, *Sappho: Memoir, Text, Selected Renderings and a Literal Translation* (London: David Stott, 1885), quoted in Yopie Prins, Sapphic Stanzas: How Can We Read the Rhythm? in *Critical Rhythm: The Poetics of a Literary Life Form*, ed. Ben Glaser and Jonathan Culler (New York: Fordham University Press, 2019), 256; and Jacqueline Fabre-Serris, Anne Dacier (1681), Renée Vivien (1903): Or What Does it Mean for a Woman to Translate Sappho? in *Women Classical Scholars: Unsealing the Fountain from the Renaissance to Jacqueline de Romilly*, ed. Rosie Wyles and Edith Hall (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), p. 101, note 72.



chorando de mansinho [...] ¹³

(v. 7–17)

In principle, the logic of this multi-layered simile is not impossible to parse; in practice, its purpose is not intellectual but sensual—it exists to dazzle, not to be dissected. And yet its thrust, so to speak, is easily understood. One does not need a working knowledge of psychoanalytic theory to decipher the symbols of dancing, fire, red roses, or moaning violins—or even a basic familiarity with Sappho’s fragments to recognize the eroticism of bees, with their velvety bodies and phallic sting.

As she and her lover approach their climax, the speaker contrasts the musical brightness of their bodies with the outside world, which seems dull and gray:

Em redor tombava, rôxamente,
 a côr arrefecida
 do cinzento rosmaninho,
 algente e maguada ... ¹⁴
 (v. 20–23)

¹³ My forthcoming translation (2025) reads as follows:

I remember notes that burned as bright
 as honeybees,
 and ruby-red,
 just as my lithe, slender arms
 resembled vines
 of roses in their bed

the violins went soaring
 in surging, shuddering moans
 of agony [...]
 slowly, softly sobbing,
 awakened waves of longing [...]

¹⁴ My translation:

all around, a violet blue,
 the tepid hue
 of the ashen rosemary tree,
 cold and anguishing



The repeated *o*'s—in *redor*, *tombava*, *rôxamente*, *côr*, and so on—are also the *ohhh*'s of the lovers' moaning. The syntax of the sentence, with its inverted word order (the verb, *tombava*, precedes the subject, *a côr*) and its adjectives and adverbs in apposition (*rôxamente*, *algente e maguada*), gives a sensation of slowing, of suspension.

The fifth stanza, which is preceded by a line's worth of ellipses, describes the climax itself:

.....

Findára tudo ...
 Saimos
 muito enlaçados,
 num brando afago,
 dôce, de veludo ...
 Cá fora o vento soluçava
 em bruscas convulsões ...
 E a tua voz, cansada, despertava
 ruivas lembranças,
 crispando as minhas sensações!¹⁵

(v. 28–37)

¹⁵ My translation:

all ended then

 we rose,
 our limbs entwined,
 clasped in a velvet, warm embrace

 outside, the wind was sobbing
 in spasmodic throbbing
 and your exhausted voice
 awakened auburn memories
 sending my sensations past their highest point



This stanza begins with two extremely short lines and then increases the line length, gradually at first, then faster and faster, an acceleration of sound that evokes an acceleration of touch. Of course, this acceleration is not entirely smooth—there is a jerk, a shuddering, in the way the syllable count rises, falls ever so slightly, then rises even higher in the next line.

In the sixth stanza, the speaker describes her “afterglow,” her postcoital satisfaction, as glowing light:

Depois, no silencio morno
da minha alcôva,
as minhas mãos trémulas e núas,
perdidamente presas ás tuas,
... luarentas e alongadas.
E estridulando fulvas sensuálias
sobre um marmore de Carrara,
numa anfora esguia e rara
resplandeciam
orgulhosas
e caprichosas
dálías ...¹⁶

(v. 38–49)

¹⁶ My translation:

after, in the tepid silence
of my room,
my hands, naked, trembling
held hopelessly in yours—
slender, lit by the moon

stridulating auburn sensualias
upon Carrara marble,
in a rare amphora
shone
proud
and fickle
dahlias



Perhaps it is the sight of the dahlias, which are described in terms that are usually associated with beloved women, that renews the speaker's arousal. Perhaps it is the tantalizing slowness of the sixth stanza's last few lines, which reverse the acceleration we found in the fifth stanza. In the seventh and final stanza, she hopes to coax her lover into making love once again:

E, meu amor,
 se a minha voz repetiu ainda,
 muito presa a ti,
 a sinfonia desvairada
 dos meus desejos
 doidos, incoerentes,
 foi para incendiar
 a tua boca linda
 naquelas côres ardentes
 em que depois se abrasaram
 ... os meus beijos!¹⁷

(v. 50–60)

The sentence begins with a long dependent clause (“E [...] / se a minha voz repetiu [...] a sinfonia [...] dos meus desejos”) containing three appositional phrases (“meu amor,” “muito

¹⁷ My translation:

and, my love,
 if my voice was still repeating, too,
 too close to you,
 the frenzied symphony
 of my desires,
 rambling, insane,
 it was to set your mouth
 aflame
 with those ardent colors,
 blazing now upon your lips
 my kiss



preso a ti,” “doidos, incoerentes”), which slow the pace of the stanza, even as the image of “a sinfonia desvairada / dos meus desejos, / doidos, incoerentes” creates a sense of urgency, of need. After the repeated *r*’s (in *côres*, *ardentes*, and *abrasaram*), which evoke the stirring of embers in a fireplace, the last line, “os meus beijos,” flies upward like a spark.

This, ultimately, is what Teixeira received from Renée Vivien: a heightened sensitivity to the erotic possibilities of poetic form.¹⁸ In another poem, *Vous pour qui j’écrivis* (1906, p 137–138), Renée Vivien suggests that she is writing not just for posterity but for *sapphic* posterity:

Oh beautiful young women, you for whom I wrote!
 You, whom I used to love, will you reread my verse
 At sunrise, white above the universe?
 At sunset, all alight with flame and rose?

And will you dream, amid the disarray
 Of your unbound hair, your dress undone,
 “That woman, all in sorrow and in fun,
 Has borne a lover’s lips and lover’s gaze?”

And, breathing in your body’s scent, you’ll shudder,
 Pale, in the magic echoes of the night —
 “That woman had the fire that takes flight ...

¹⁸ It is possible that Renée Vivien may leave a less vivid impression on readers of the early twenty-first century, accustomed as we are to a free verse that has become even freer than Teixeira’s. But as many formalist poets and readers have pointed out, conservatism in terms of poetics does not necessarily align with political or social conservatism. Roughly one hundred years ago, Teixeira recognized Vivien as a woman who dared to write openly about her love for other women—in other words, as a revolutionary. Marjorie Levinson, *What Is New Formalism?* *PMLA* 122, no. 2 (March 2007): 558–569; A. E. Stallings, *Presto Manifesto!* January 30, 2009, <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poetrymagazine/articles/69202/presto-manifesto->; Austin Allen, *Hard Line Politics: On the Myth of Free Verse*, *Los Angeles Review of Books*, November 23, 2021, <https://lareviewofbooks.org/article/hard-line-politics-on-the-myth-of-free-verse/>.



Why is she gone! She could have been my lover ...”¹⁹

(VIVIEN, trans. Pious, 2017)

Renée Vivien was writing for future lesbian and bisexual women ... such as Teixeira. I note in passing that Renée Vivien’s conception of sapphism as at once poetic and sexual complicates one of the initial premises of this article: that queer poets do not necessarily share “queer poetics.” Renée Vivien even seems to hint that sapphic poetry can inspire sapphic sexualities in women readers. However, in this poem’s companion piece, *Par les Soirs futurs*, Renée Vivien answers her own question—*Will they remember me?*—with a resounding no:

Youthful and perfumed, it’s love you’ll seek,
Turning your unsure steps toward days to come,
None of you recalling me—not one!—

¹⁹ French:

Vous pour qui j’écrivis, ô belles jeunes femmes !
Vous que, seules, j’aimais, relirez-vous mes vers
Par les futurs matins neigeant sur l’univers,
Et par les soirs futurs de roses et de flammes ?

Songerez-vous, parmi le désordre charmant
De vos cheveux épars, de vos robes défaites :
« Cette femme, à travers les sanglots et les fêtes,
A porté ses regards et ses lèvres d’amant. »

Pâles et respirant votre chair embaumée,
Dans l’évocation magique de la nuit :
Direz-vous : « Cette femme eut l’ardeur qui me fuit...
Que n’est-elle vivante ! Elle m’aurait aimée... »

(VIVIEN, 1906, p. 137–138)



Who would have loved you all so solemnly ...²⁰

(VIVIEN, trans. Pious, 2023)

Teixeira certainly sought out love, but she also acknowledged her debt to Renée Vivien and, by extension, to Sappho. To paraphrase a fragment of Sappho that is echoed by Renée Vivien (1904, p. 147): Among all the writers of the twentieth century, there was at least one queer woman who remembered her.

²⁰ French:

Vous chercherez l'amour, fraîches et parfumées,
 Tournant vers l'avenir vos pas irrésolus,
 Et nulle d'entre vous ne se souviendra plus
 De moi, qui vous aurais si gravement aimées...

(VIVIEN, 1906, p. 140, v. 9–12)



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