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A NOTE ON *TABULA DEFIXIONIS* 22(A).5–7 ZIEBARTH: WHEN A MUSICAL PERFORMANCE ENACTS LOVE*

According to the resultative value normally conveyed by deverbative formations in *-μα*, the word *κιθάρισμα* usually means 'a piece of music played on the *κιθάρα*'.[1] Among its rare epigraphic occurrences,[2] the instance of *κιθάρισμα* on an opisthographic lead tablet of uncertain date [= 22(a) Ziebarth] deserves further evaluation.[3] This is the text on the recto as printed by Ziebarth:[4]

παρατίθομαι Zo-
ίδα τὴν Ἐρετρικὴν
τὴν Καβείρα γυναῖκα
- [*τ*]*ῇ Γῇ καὶ τῶ Ἑρμῆ, τὰ βρώ-*
ματα αὐτῆς, τὸν ποτᾶ, τὸν ὕ-
πνον αὐτῆς, τὸν γέλωτα,
τὴν συνουσίην, τὸ κιθ{*φε*}*άρισ*[*μα*]
αὐτῆς κὴ τὴν πάροδον αὐ-
[*τῆς*], *τὴν ἥδον*<*ὴν*>, *τὸ πυγίον,*
[*τὸ*] (*φρό*)*νημα,* {*ν*} *ὀφθα*[*λμοὺς*]
--ααπηρη(?) *τῇ Γῇ.*

7 *κιθ*{*φε*}*άρισ*[*μα*] legit F. Hiller von Gärtringen 8 *τὴν πάροδον* legit Wünsch

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[1] See e.g. LSJ s.v. *κιθάρισμα*. The several literary occurrences of this word, together with the kindred term *κιθαρισμός*, have recently been investigated by C. Chandezon, 'La base de Satyros à Delphes: le théâtre classique et son public à l'époque hellénistique', *CGITA* 11 (1998), 36–40.

[2] Chandezon's statement that 'l'inscription de Satyros [i.e. *SIG*[3] 648B lines 7–9 *ἆισμα μετὰ χοροῦ*| *Διόνυσον καὶ κιθάρισμα ἐκ Βακχῶν*| *Εὐριπίδου*] fournit, à notre connaissance, la seule occurrence épigraphique de ce mot' (Chandezon [n. 1], 36) needs to be corrected. A search of the PHI 7 database reveals at least one other certain epigraphic occurrence: the *tabula defixionis* 22(a) lines 7–8 Ziebarth we are presently concerned with. As for *ICypr* 104 (an inscription from Kourion assigned to A.D. 130/131), the word *κιθάρισμα* is almost entirely the result of a conjectural supplement, cf. l.5 *χαρι*]*σθεὶς* ? *ὑπὸ αὐτ*[*οῦ*] | [*τοῦτο τὸ κιθάρι*]*σμα* ? *ἀνέθηκεν*.

[3] The lead tablet, which was found in Boeotia in 1877, is now preserved in the Archaeological Museum of Athens (no. inv. 9363): no precise date can be assigned, cf. J. G. Gager, *Curse Tablets and Binding Spells from the Ancient World* (New York and Oxford, 1992), 85; A. Audollent, *Defixionum tabellae quotquot innotuerunt tam in Graecis Orientis quam in totius occidentis partibus praeter Atticas in corpore Inscriptionum Atticarum editas* (Lutetiae Parisiorum, 1904), 556 believed that the tablet might be dated prior to the common era. Most recently C. A. Faraone, 'The agonistic context of early Greek binding spells', in C. A. Faraone and D. Obbink (edd.), *Magika Hiera. Ancient Greek Magic and Religion* (New York and Oxford 1991), 3–32, at 14 with n. 61, referring to E. G. Kagarow, *Griechische Fluchtafeln* (Leopoli, 1929), 51, points to the fourth century B.C. as the possible date of the tablet: yet Kagarow himself (ibid. 70) seems to share Audollent's scepticism when he asserts that our *tabula defixionis* is to be traced back to an uncertain date *vor Christus*.

[4] E. Ziebarth, 'Neue Verfluchungstafeln aus Attika, Boiotien und Euboia', *SBAW* (1934), 1022–50, at 1040, no. 22(a) = Audollent (n. 3), no. 86A.

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At first sight the content of this spell does not seem to be problematic: the Eretrian Zois, Kabeiras' wife,[5] is committed (line 1 *παρατίθομαι*) to the chthonian deities Earth and Hermes according to a well-established formula in the *tabulae defixionum* which consists of a detailed enumeration of the different organs and basic functions necessary for assuring the physical survival and the general wellbeing of the person to be cursed.[6] In our case the metabolic functions listed at lines 4–7 are, in order of mention, eating (*τὰ βρώματα αὐτῆς*), drinking (*τὸν ποτᾶ*), sleeping (*τὸν ὕπνον αὐτῆς*), laughing (*τὸν γέλωτα*) and sexual intercourse (*τὴν συνουσίην*).[7] It is just at this point (lines 7–9), still within the frame of the asyndetic co-ordination of the various functions separately listed, that we find the syntagm *τὸ κιθάρισ[μα] αὐτῆς κὴ τὴν πάροδον αὐ[τῆς]*, followed in its turn (lines 9–10) by the enumeration, again *singulatim* and in asyndeton, of other faculties and body parts, respectively pleasure (*τὴν ἡδον<ήν>*), buttocks (*τὸ πυγίον*), thinking (*[τὸ] (φρό)νημα*) and sight (*ὀφθα[λμούς]*).

Although the fragmentary state of the inscription does not allow us to reconstruct with absolute certainty the broader context to which this curse should belong,[8] there are nevertheless some clues suggesting a more precise erotic motivation, most likely jealousy on the part of the 'other woman' for a happier rival.[9] First of all the mention of *ἡ συνουσία* at line 7. The reference to the sexual domain as one of the main organic functions, both as an invariant biological trait and as a criterion indicating a broader psycho-physical wealth, can from time to time be detected also elsewhere in curses intended to strike the physical integrity of the victim,[10] but in those cases the erotic nuance remains just a single element among many others without any particular emphasis. In comparison, the insistent attention paid to the erotic element in 22(a) Ziebarth is all the more striking: at line 9 we find terms like *τὴν ἡδον<ήν>* and *τὸ πυγίον*, expressions to which it is very difficult, especially in the light of the contiguous *τὴν συνουσίην*, not to ascribe some allusion to sexual activity.[11] This unusual emphasis on the erotic data finds a precise counterpart, also in terms of formulaic language, in another literary *sous-genre* akin to the *tabulae defixionum*, namely the erotic charms.

Especially interesting, inasmuch as they allow us to contextualize the occurrences of *συνουσία*, *ἡδονή*, and *πυγίον* within a coherent frame, are two erotic charms in which

[5] This is the reading printed by Ziebarth; the female name had previously been read as *ΖΟΙΛΑ* (= i.e. *Ζωίλη*), see Audollent (n. 3), 138, no. 86A at lines 1–2; as to the rare *Widmungsname Καβείρας*, cf. F. Bechtel and A. Fick, *Die griechischen Personennamen* (Göttingen, 1894[2]), 301 and R. Wünsch, 'Neue Fluchtafeln', *RhM* 55 (1900), 71.

[6] See e.g. Audollent (n. 3), no. 42B lines 2–9, 74 lines 12–17, 75B lines 1–3; cf. especially Henderson's comparison with 'the iambist's exposures of an enemy's private parts' (J. Henderson, *The Maculate Muse. Obscene Language in Attic Comedy* [New Haven and London, 1975], 19, n. 70).

[7] For *συνουσία* as 'the common *vox propria* for sexual congress' (Henderson [n. 6], 159), see LSJ s.v. *συνουσία* 4.

[8] Audollent (n. 3), 473 placed the tablet 22(a) Ziebarth under the heading *causa defixionis obscura*.

[9] In this direction see already Kagarow (n. 3), 50–1; cf. also Faraone (n. 3), 14 ('the amatory *defixio* might also list the charms of the rival') and Gager (n. 3), 85.

[10] Cf. e.g. Audollent (n. 3), no. 42B line 5 *αἰδοῖον*, 74 line 17 *τύλ[ον]*, no. 85A line 3 *βαίν[ϵ]μϵν*.

[11] For *πυγή/πυγίδιον* as a part of the human body often associated with the sexual sphere, besides being exploited in scatological metaphors, cf. Henderson (n. 6), 201–2; for *ἡδονή* as *vox propria* for sexual pleasure, see its several occurrences in the erotic charms, R. W. Daniel and F. Maltomini, *Supplementum Magicum* I (Opladen, 1990), 113–213 (= SupplMag I, 37–51). In contrast, Gager (n. 3), 86, n. 4 sees in *τὸ πυγίον* a reference to 'certain kinds of dancing', but for the difficulties raised by a mere musical interpretation of 22(a) Ziebarth lines 7–8 see below.

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are displayed throughout the different variants a sexual performance may enact (in both documents the person addressed as subject of the erotic strictures is a woman). The first charm is SupplMag I.38 lines 3–6 (= T.Genav. inv. 269, A.D. II, according to the date suggested by Daniel and Maltomini [n. 11], 118): the purpose of this spell is evidently to bend Theodotis' behaviour in sexual matters according to her frustrated lover's desire *ἵνα μὴ δυ|νηθῆις ἑτέρωι ἀνδρὶ συνμιγῆναι πώποτε μήτε βινηθῆναι μήτε πυγι|σθῆναι μήτε ληκάζειν μηδὲ καθ' ἡδονὴν <ποιήσηις> μεθ' ἑταίρω ἀνθρώπω| εἰ μὴ μόνος ἐγώ*.[12] The second one is SupplMag I.46 lines 9–10 (= T.Cairo Mus. JdE 48217, A.D. II–III): this time the subject of the erotic constraint is a girl named *Ἡρονοῦς*, Ptolemais' daughter, *ὅπως μὴ βεινηθῆι, μὴ πυγισθῆι, μὴ λεικάσηι, μηδὲν πρὸς| ἡδονὴν ποιήσηι ἄλλωι ἀνδρὶ εἰ μὴ ἐμοὶ μόνωι Ποσιδωνίωι*. Furthermore, another element the erotic charms share with the lead tablet 22(a) Ziebarth is the almost standard link established between sexual activity and basic metabolic functions such as eating, drinking, sleeping, and so on, as a result of the automatic association according to which the prohibition of the first sphere entails at the same time a suspension of the other domains: cf. especially SupplMag I.43 lines 8–11 (= P.Köln inv. 5514, A.D. IV) *καὶ μὴ ἐάσηις αὐτὴν φαγῖν| μήτε πῖν μήτε ὕπνου τυχῖν| ἕως δὰν ἔλθηι πρὸς ἐμὲ Διόσ|κ[ο]υρον*, 45 lines 45–46 (= P.Köln inv. 3323, A.D. V) *καὶ μὴ ἐάσητε αὐτὴν φαγῖν, μὴ πῖν μηδὲ ὕπνου| τυχῖν μηδὲ πῆξε μηδὲ γελάσαι κτλ.*, 46 lines 20–1 *καὶ κατάσχες αὐτῆς| τὸν βροτὸν καὶ τὸν ποτόν· μὴ ἐάσηις Ἡρωνοῦν ἄλλου ἀνδρὸς πεῖραν λαβεῖν κτλ.*, 47 lines 8–11 (= T.Louvre inv. E 27145, A.D. II–III) *ὅπως μὴ βινηθῆι, μὴ πυγισθῆι, μη|δὲν πρὸς ἡδονὴν ποιήσηι ἑταίρωι ἀνδρὶ εἰ μὴ ἐμοὶ μόνωι* [. . .] | *καὶ μὴ ἀφῆις αὐτὴν φαγεῖν, μὴ πεῖν, μὴ στέγειν μήτε ἐξελθεῖν μήτε| ὕπνου τυχεῖν ἐκτὸς ἐμοῦ κτλ.* and 48 lines 8–10 (= P.Mich. inv. 6925, A.D. II–III) *ὅπως μὴ βινηθῆι, μεδὲ πυγισθῆι, μήτε ἡδονὴν ποιήσηι ἑτέρωι νεανίσκωι ἢ ἄλλωι ἀνδρὶ* | *εἰ μὴ μόνωι Αἰλουρίωνι* [. . .] *ἀλλὰ μητὲ δυνηθῆι μήτε φαγῖν μήτε πῖν μήτε ὕπνου τυχῖν διὰ παν|τὸς μήτε εὐσταθῖν ἢ ἰσυχάζιν τῆι ψυχῆι ἢ τῆς φρεσί κτλ.*

How are we to understand, then, lines 7–9 *τὸ κιθάρισ*[*μα*] *αὐτῆς κὴ τὴν πάροδον αὐ*[*τῆς*] if inserted within the framework of the erotic innuendo here sketched (that is, immediately after *τὴν συνουσίην* and before *τὴν ἡδον*<*ήν*> and *τὸ πυγίον*)? A first starting point is to recognize the close syntactic relation existing between *τὸ κιθάρισ*[*μα*] *αὐτῆς* and *τὴν πάροδον αὐ*[*τῆς*]: they are in fact the only two words linked by the connective *κή* within a broader list of single expressions otherwise co-ordinated by means of asyndeton.[13] Therefore whatever explanation one may choose for the first member of the syntagm *τὸ κιθάρισ*[*μα*] *αὐτῆς κὴ τὴν πάροδον αὐ*[*τῆς*], this choice must allow a coherent contextualization of the second member too. As for *τὸ κιθάρισ*[*μα*] *αὐτῆς*, the usual interpretation is the one offered by LSJ Rev. Suppl. entry s.v. *κιθάρισμα*, according to which *κιθάρισμα* in this particular case would exceptionally be a synonymic variant of *κιθάρισις*:[14] in 22(a) line 7 Ziebarth the word *κιθάρισ*[*μα*] would not mean the result of *κιθαρίζειν* (that is, a piece of

[12] Daniel and Maltomini (n. 11), 119 translate 'so that you cannot have intercourse with another man nor be fucked nor be buggered nor fellate and not do anything for pleasure with another man, if not me alone'; for the semantic equivalence *λαικάζειν* ~ *fellare* and *πυγίζειν* ~*pedicare*, cf. respectively J. N. Adams, *The Latin Sexual Vocabulary* (London, 1982), 123–5 and Henderson (n. 6), 202.

[13] This aspect has often been neglected by scholars, cf. e.g. Faraone's translation (Faraone [n. 3], 14) which omits the particle *κή*.

[14] In this sense also Faraone (n. 3), 14 'her cithara playing' and Gager (n. 3), 85–6 'her playing of the kithara'.

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instrumental music), the only sense well attested by both epigraphic and literary evidence, but would express the act itself of playing the kithara (*hapax*). Yet this solution involves some difficulty. The nominal suffixes usually conveying the semantic notion of action itself are -(ισ)μός and -σις[15] and in the few occurrences where the original resultative meaning of the deverbatives in -μα has been weakened to the point of equivalence with noun-formations in -σις (expressing then not the result of an action but the action itself),[16] it is because noun-formations in - (ισ)μός belonging to the same stem are not yet present in the linguistic system, according to language's natural tendency toward economy.[17] This is not the case with κιθάρισμα: to suppose such an identity between the nominal suffixes -μα/-σις in our particular case would be all the more difficult inasmuch as we find the alternative formations κιθαρισμός/κιθάρισις already attested as action nouns. Secondly, even if we accept such an unattested meaning for κιθάρισμα ('playing the kithara'), the problem still remains of understanding the following κὴ τὴν πάροδον αὖ[τῆς]: what kind of relation exists between 'her entrance' and κιθαρίζειν?[18] And how do we explain the insertion of these two terms (κιθάρισμα and πάροδος) in the enumeration of what are otherwise main metabolic functions and bodily organs?

Given the erotic context, a more productive way of tackling the problem may be to go beyond the mere denotative sense of κιθάρισμα ('an instrumental piece on the kithara': the only meaning certainly attested as we have seen) and to explore the several metaphorical possibilities that the domain of music can activate:[19] now, from this perspective, an interesting feature is the semantic overlap existing between musical performance and sexual activity.

Old Attic comedy, permeated as it was by a strong criticism, ethical as well as aesthetic, against the degeneration of the musical taste imposed by the New Dithyramb, seems to take a peculiar advantage of this cross-fertilization. An instructive example of the metaphorical possibilities that the intersection between music and sex may enact is Aristoph. 930* K-A (Phot. (z) ined. = Suid. s.v. χιάζειν 296) αὐτὸς δείξας ἐναρμονίως (Phot., Suid. A^{r} SC: ἐν ἁρμονίαις Suid. GFM: ἔν θ' ἁρμονίαις Toup) χιάζων ἢ σιφνιάζων. In this case the reference to the baroque style of composition in the manner of the Chian Democritus or of the Siphnian Philoxenides[20]

[15] Cf. L.R. Palmer, *The Greek Language* (London, 1980), 252; see LSJ s.v. κιθαρισμός.

[16] See Palmer (n. 15), 252: 'less frequently such formations [i.e. deverbatives in -μα] are action nouns and so come into competition with -ή and particularly with -σις'.

[17] The examples quoted by Palmer (n. 15, ἐπίταγμα/ἐπιταγή, ἔνταλμα/ἐντολή, ἐπαύξημα/ἐπαυξή/ἔπαυξις) belong in fact to this typology. Besides, a standard semantic equivalence of the nominal suffixes (ισ)μός/-μα is only the result of a late development of modern Greek, cf. again Palmer (n. 15), 252.

[18] Such a difficulty is clearly perceived by Faraone's tentative translation ([n. 3], 14) 'her entrance (πάροδον?)'. Gager ([n. 3], 86, n. 3) suggests in the first instance that the term πάροδος might either designate 'a particular way of entering a room', or refer to some kind of theatrical performance (public recitation): yet this second technical sense recorded by LSJ s.v. πάροδος BIII.2–4 (i.e. 'first entrance of a chorus', 'song sung by the chorus', 'use of stage for an artist's performance', 'public recitation') does not seem to fit the context. Finally Gager adds a third possible interpretation, the erotic one (πάροδος 'may also have sexual overtones'), which I think worthy of further investigation, see below.

[19] Cf. J. Taillardat, *Les images d'Aristophane. Études de langage et de style* (Paris, 1962), 456–61.

[20] Cf. Poll. *Onom.* 4.65 τὸ μέντοι σιφνιάζειν καὶ χιάζειν, τὸ περιέργοις μέλεσι χρῆσθαι, ἀπὸ Δημοκρίτου τοῦ Χίου καὶ Φιλοξενίδου τοῦ Σιφνίου κτλ. For verbal formations in -άζειν as denoting stylistic features, cf. e.g. LSJ s.v. γοργιάζειν, κριτιάζειν, ἱππιάζειν; for the alleged verbal forms τιμοθεάζειν and ἡγησιάζειν as reconstructed on the basis of the substantives τιμοθεαστής and ἡγησιαστής attested in *IDid* 181, lines 5–6 (A.D. 213/250) see A. Rehm, 'Neue Wörter aus Didyma', *IF* 61 (1954), 179.

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conveys a clear allusion to the erotic practice of *pedicatio*: for the equivalence σιφνιάζειν ~ καταδακτυλίζειν, cf. in fact *adesp*. 942* K-A (σιφνιάζειν· ὡς κρητίζειν καὶ λεσβιάζειν, ἀπὸ νήσου Σίφνου καλουμένης. ἔστι δὲ τὸ ἅπτεσθαι τῆς πυγῆς δακτύλωι), Hesych. s.v. σιφνιάζειν 783, III, 36 Schmidt and *CPG* I.452 s.v. Σιφνιάζειν. An analogous *double entendre* playing again on the overlap between compositional and erotic activity (in this case *fellatio*) can be found also in the use of the verb λεσβιάζειν in Ar. *Ran*. 1305 αὕτη ποθ' ἡ Μοῦσ' οὐκ ἐλεσβίαζεν, οὔ (Dionysus referring to Euripidean poetry).[21] Even more explicit is the case of Ar. *Ran*. 1327 where Euripides is charged with composing his own music ἀνὰ τὸ δωδεκαμήχανον Κυρήνης, with a clear reference to the *figurae Veneris* enacted by the well-known hetaira Kyrene (cf. Σ ad 1328a): Euripidean musical καμπαί are directly associated with perverted erotic postures.[22]

The possibility of this metaphorical overlap seems indeed to be especially productive in the case of κιθάρα/κιθαρίζειν: the act itself of playing the kithara, by means of tightening and loosening alternately the strings (ἐπίτασις and ἄνεσις), is substantially perceived as the same as the alternating of muscular contraction and relaxation displayed by organs involved in sexual activity.[23] This semantic ambiguity underlies the very beginning of the famous Pherecratean fragment of the *Chiron* where Music itself complains about the ethical and aesthetic perversions introduced by Melanippides (Pherecr. 155.3–5 K-A):

> ἐμοὶ γὰρ ἦρξε τῶν κακῶν Μελανιππίδης,
> ἐν τοῖσι πρῶτος ὃς λαβὼν ἀνῆκέ με
> χαλαρωτέραν τ' ἐποίησε χορδαῖς δώδεκα.

Music's complaints refer in the first instance to Melanippides' fondness for the so called 'loose' tunes:[24] beside the overlaps between musical and rhetorical terminology,[25] another important feature of this fragment is also the pervasive presence of words that are strongly 'eroticized' (λαβών,[26] ἀνῆκε, χαλαρωτέραν[27]), which suggests envisaging the relationship between Melanippides and Music in terms of sexual intercourse.[28]

[21] Cf. K. J. Dover, *Aristophanes' Frogs* (Oxford, 1993), 351–2.

[22] Cf. Taillardat (n. 19), 428 with n. 4 and J. Davidson, 'Gnesippus paigniagraphos: the comic poets and the erotic mime', in D. Harvey and J. Wilkins (edd.), *The Rivals of Aristophanes. Studies in Athenian Old Comedy* (London, 2000), 60, n. 12.

[23] See Adams (n. 12), 21 and 25.

[24] An up-to-date critical survey of the main musical charges brought against Melanippides is offered by F. Conti Bizzarro, *Poetica e critica letteraria nei frammenti dei poeti comici greci* (Napoli, 1999), 145–9.

[25] This aspect has been emphasized by D. Restani, 'Il Chirone di Ferecrate e la 'nuova' musica greca', *Rivista italiana di musicologia* 18 (1983), 142–7.

[26] For '(the) sexual aggressiveness' conveyed by λαβεῖν, see Henderson (n. 6), 156, n. 25 and more recently Conti Bizzarro (n. 24), 145.

[27] The obscene meaning of χαλάω/χαλαρός is a commonplace in comic poetry, cf. e.g. Ar. *Lys*. 419 χάλασον and the scholium *ad hoc* (χάλασον. καὶ τοῦτο εἰς τὸ κακέμφατον): see Henderson (n. 6), 177. According to G.W. Dobrov and E. Urios Aparisi, 'The maculate music: gender, genre, and the Chiron of Pherecrates', in G. W. Dobrov (ed.), *Beyond Aristophanes. Transition and Diversity in Greek Comedy* (Atlanta, 1995), 155 with n. 58, the expression χορδαῖς δώδεκα in Pherecr. 155.5 K-A would hint at '*multae fututiones*'.

[28] Cf. Dobrov and Urios Aparisi (n. 27), 143 and 155–7: in Pherecr. 155 K-A 'the active performance of music and passive submission to intercourse are fused and her body becomes a lyre'. The obscene connotation of ἀνῆκέ με χαλαρωτέραν τ' ἐποίησε χορδαῖς δώδεκα has been recognized also by I. Düring, 'Studies in musical terminology in 5th century literature', *Eranos* 43

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A direct equivalence between *κιθαρίζειν* and erotic performance can be found also in an anonymous epigram[29] of the *Anth. Pal.* (5.99), where a male person, perhaps a musician himself, is addressing the *κιθαρωιδός*, probably a woman, who is supposed to accompany his performance by playing the kithara:[30]

> *Ἤθελον, ὦ κιθαρωιδὲ, παραστὰς, ὡς κιθαρίζεις*
> *τὴν ὑπάτην κροῦσαι τήν τε μέσην χαλάσαι.*

Musical technicalities (*τὴν ὑπάτην κροῦσαι τήν τε μέσην χαλάσαι*) are here instruments of a more sensual and allusive courtship: professional skill in playing the kithara becomes an image of another kind of virtuosity, the erotic one.[31] This ambiguity was broadly exploited in Latin literature.[32] A significant instance, if compared with the lead tablet 22(a) lines 7–8 Ziebarth, is Varro, *Sat. Men.* 366 Cèbe:

> *ei indicunt suam Briseidem producere quae eius nervia tractare solebat*
> *ei indicunt* Müller: *et id dicunt* codd.

The underlying text is of course the famous passage of the first book of the *Iliad* (1.326ff.) where Talthybios and Eurybates summon Achilles to surrender Briseis to Agamemnon: once again the wordplay focuses on the interference between the proper (kithara's strings) and metaphorical sense (penis) of *nervia*. Briseis' virginal talent in playing the kithara is reinterpreted as the consummate skill in satisfying Achilles'

(1945), 180; Taillardat (n. 19), 458, n. 4; Conti Bizzarro (n. 24), 145, 147–8, and E. Hall, 'Female figures and metapoetry in old comedy', in D. Harvey and J. Wilkins (edd.), *The Rivals of Aristophanes. Studies in Athenian Old Comedy* (London, 2000), 414–15.

[29] *Sic* P transmitting the epigram as *ἄδηλον*, while on the contrary the appendix Barberino-Vaticana assigns the distich to Meleager, but see the reasonable scepticism expressed by Waltz in P. Waltz and J. Guillon, *Anthologie grecque* II (Paris, 1928), LVII, n. 1.

[30] The epigram's heading transmitted by P is the following one: *εἰς γυναῖκα ορ^{x}*. The abbreviated word ορ^{x} has been variously interpreted by scholars: Desrousseaux in Waltz and Guillon (n. 29), 55, n. 1, followed by Conti Bizzarro (n. 24), 147–8, suggests reading *εἰς γυναῖκα ὀρχ<ηστήν>*, arguing that 'ce serait un danseur qui s'adresserait ainsi à la musicienne qui l'accompagne', whereas previous scholars had understood the abbreviation transmitted by P as *ὀρχ<ηστρίδα>*, which seems indeed still to be the more likely explanation (see e.g. F. Dübner, *Epigrammatum Anthologia Palatina* I [Parisiis, 1864], 130; I thank the anonymous referee for pointing this out to me). Be that as it may, if we agree that in this distich there is a sexual overtone, the person addressed as *κιθαρωιδός* at line 1 is very likely to be a woman, cf. Waltz in Waltz and Guillon (n. 29), 55, n. 2 and already Boissonade in Dübner (n. 30), 130 ('suspicantur viri docti scriptum esse in virum. Sed tum *τὸ ὕπατον* et *τὸν μέσον* scribi oportuit, et sic periisset iocus, qui circa *τὴν ὑπάτην* chordam et *τὴν μέσην* versatur. Si factum in feminam, uterque epithetorum sensus reperitur').

[31] As to the double meaning *τὴν ὑπάτην κρούειν* ~ *sinum pulsare* and *τὴν μέσην χαλάζειν* ~ *vulvam laxare*, see Miller *per litteram* in Dübner (n. 30), 130 ('l'*ὑπάτη* n'est autre que le sein qu'il faut simplement *κρούειν*, *pulsare*, jouer dessus de l'épinette, tandis qu'il cherche à détendre, *χαλάσαι*, la corde du milieu, *rigidam tentigine vulvam*') and Adams (n. 12), 173. The passage of Ar. *Ach.* 274 *μέσην λαβόντα* quoted by Conti Bizzarro (n. 24), 148 with regard to *Anth. Pal.* 5.99.2 is not relevant: in *Ach.* 274 *μέσην* is simply used as predicative of *Θρᾶιτταν*, the young girl carrying stolen wood whom Dicaeopolis imagines he is able to ravish 'taking her by the waist' and throwing her down.

[32] For the identity penis = lyra's strings, cf. e.g. *Priap.* 68.15–16 *ille* (i.e. Achilles) *Pelethroniam cecinit miserabile carmen / ad citharam, cithara tensior ipse sua*, 6.4–6 *totamque* (i.e. *mentulam*) *hanc sine fraude, quantacunque est, / tormento citharaque tensiorem / ad costam tibi septimam recondam*. A survey of the main passages attesting such a metaphorical use of *κιθαρίζειν* can be found in Adams (n. 12), 21, 25, and C. Goldberg, *Carmina Priapea. Einleitung, Übersetzung, Interpretation und Kommentar* (Heidelberg, 1992), 81–2.

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erotic pleasure by handling his genitalia (*eius nervia tractare solebat*).[33] In other words, in Varro, *Sat. Men*. 366 Cèbe the *κιθάρισμα sui generis* performed by Briseis turns out to coincide with the satisfaction of Achilles' erotic desire.

On the basis of the examples quoted above and the erotic context we can confidently reconstruct for the lead tablet, there seems to be a strong case for taking into account the possibility of a sexual overtone for *τὸ κιθάρισ*[*μα*] *αὐτῆς* at line 7: in this way the word *κιθάρισμα* would be perfectly consistent with the previous *τὴν συνουσίην* (line 7) and the following *τὴν ἡδονήν* and *τὸ πυγίον* (line 9). As a consequence the original resultative meaning of the deverbative nominal suffix -*μα* would be preserved (we would be dealing therefore with a kind of erotic foreplay) and at the same time it would be possible to provide a coherent explanation also for the second member of the syntagm at lines 7–8, that is *κὴ τὴν πάροδον αὐ*[*τῆς*], which is otherwise hard to explain. In this case *πάροδος* would maintain the usual meaning of 'entrance, passage'[34] and would activate the widespread metaphor for sexual penetration *πρωκτός*/*θύρα et sim.* well attested in the literary tradition (especially in old Attic comedy).[35] In the lead tablet 22(a) Ziebarth we no longer find a chaotic enumeration of unrelated items but a coherent picture: the spell of a disappointed rival.

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[33] Cf. J.-P. Cèbe, *Varron, Satires Ménippées* IX (Rome, 1990), 1540 'ces rappels (i.e. the Iliadic echoes) donnent la clé de la relative à double sens *quae* (. . .) *solebat* et de son équivoque scabreuse *nervia tractabat* où *nervia* désigne en même temps les cordes de l'instrument et le sexe d'Achille que Briséis "maniait, caressait" (*tractabat*) tour à tour', M. Coffey, *Roman Satire* (London and New York, 1976), 162, and A. Barchiesi, *P. Ovidii Nasonis Epistulae Heroidum 1–3* (Firenze, 1992), 234–5 *ad* Ov. *Her*. 3.113–20.

[34] See LSJ s.v. *πάροδος* BI–II.

[35] Cf. Taillardat (n. 19), 70–1, Henderson (n. 6), 137–8; for the Latin instances of this image, see Adams (n. 12), 89 and 190–1. To suppose a metaphorical use also for *πάροδος*, once this possibility has been verified for the contiguous *κιθάρισ*[*μα*], does not entail additional difficulties: the connective *κή* suggests by itself a coherent interpretation of the syntagm as a whole.

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