

P.Tebt. 694 is the only direct witness of the method of concords, a procedure for the tuning of string instruments that could also be used, as is the case here, for the measurement of the length of the intervals between notes. Yet, beyond its importance for the scholars of ancient music, P.Tebt. 694 is of great interest also for a study of the use of a text by a reader, because it may preserve one of the few marks ever left on a papyrus to demarcate a specific passage.

The papyrus is remarkable for its bookhand and for the presence of a coronis on the margin of col.2, a very early example going back to the first decades after the introduction of this diacritical sign. Yet, the most interesting feature of P.Tebt. 694 is the mark on the margin of col.2, a large curved sign informally drawn in a darker ink than the rest of the text and probably made by the reader to mark a passage of particular interest, the conclusion of the demonstration carried on between col.1 and the first half of col.2.

The text reflects the strong interest for one of the most technical aspects of music theory, the measurement of intervals, a topic often debated in antiquity: it gave rise to divergent views on the length of the tetrachord and of the units in which it could be divided, tone, semitone, and diesis. While the Pythagoreans believed that once a semitone was subtracted from a tone what was left was less than a semitone, a diesis, Aristoxenos supported the opposing view, that a tone was divisible into two semitones. P.Tebt. 694 contains precisely the application of the procedure consisting in the repeated subtraction of one tone from the tetrachord to determine the dimensions of the interval left after the subtraction of all whole tones, most probably with the goal of measuring the interval left.

In his publication, Grenfell briefly investigated the context from which this treatise on music derived and he stressed the points of contact with Philolaus Fr.6. The elements suggesting a connection with Philolaus are undeniable: P.Tebt. 694's technical terminology, in particular the use of terms like $\delta\iota'$ $\acute{\omicron}\xi\epsilon\iota\omega\nu$ and $\sigma\upsilon\lambda\lambda\alpha\beta\acute{\eta}$, is paralleled in Fr.6. The closeness between this last fragment, of undisputed attribution, and the tradition reflected by P.Tebt. 694 seems to be confirmed also by one of our best sources on Pythagorean musical theory, namely Boethius *De institutione musica* 3.9, a passage repeating very closely the operations outlined by our fragment: in this passage, the procedure described in detail by Boethius, the method of concords, is clearly attributed by him to Philolaus, and as a further confirmation of the connection to the Pythagorean milieu, the description of this procedure appears within a section of book 3 dedicated to Pythagorean musical theories.

P. Tebt. 694 offers motifs of interest both for a study of the text and its reader and for its content. The use of the method of concords, a procedure otherwise known only through the indirect tradition, is thus

confirmed by a witness about as old as our oldest sources, and the use of this method can be confirmed as having enjoyed a wider diffusion than could previously be demonstrated.