

ARISTOPHANES, *AMPHIARAUS*, FR. 29 (KASSEL–AUSTIN): ORACULAR RESPONSE OR EROTIC INCANTATION?

A hexametrical couplet from Aristophanes' lost *Amphiaraus* has in the past been interpreted as a fragment of an oracular response:¹

ὁσφὺν δ' ἐξ ἄκρων διακίγκλισον ἥ τε κίγκλου
ἀνδρὸς πρεσβύτου· τελέει δ' ἀγαθὴν ἐπαοιδήν

1 κίγκλος Bergk 2 ἀνδρὶ πρεσβύτῃ Taillardat τελέει vulg.; τελεῖ LV; τελέειν Bergk; τέλεσον Blaydes

The traditional approach to this fragment was established by Bergk nearly one hundred and fifty years ago, when he suggested that these two lines were originally part of a hexametrical oracle that prescribes how the petitioner might increase the sexual ardour of an unnamed old man.² His interpretation included, among other things, the emendation of the manuscripts' τελέει to an infinitive of imperative force – an emendation that has been printed by nearly every subsequent editor,³ until the relatively recent rehabilitation of the manuscript reading by Taillardat and others.⁴ Despite disagreements about this emendation and a few other minor details⁵ all modern commentators agree that the text is part of a hexametrical oracle. Drawing

¹ The fragment is preserved by Aelian, *N.A.* 12.9. I give the text of R. Kassel and C. Austin, *Poetae Comici Graeci*, iii.2: *Aristophanes* (Berlin, 1984), pp. 47–8, fr. 29.

² T. Bergk, *Aristophanis Fragmenta* (Fragmenta Comicorum Graecorum, 2.2) (Berlin, 1847), p. 67: 'Haec autem ad modum oraculi praecipiunt mulieri, ut senis robur excitet.'

³ The infinitive is printed, e.g., in the editions of Kock (1880–8), Hall–Geldart (1920) and Edmonds (1957), all of whom follow Bergk's interpretation of the fragment as an oracle. The Loeb translation of A. F. Scholfield, *Aelian: On the Characteristics of Animals*, iii (Cambridge MA, 1959), p. 25 provides a good illustration of this approach: 'Give the old man's loins a thorough shaking, as the wagtail does, and work a powerful spell.' Bergk and Kock give several examples from comic authors of an infinitive used as an imperative, including one instance in a comic oracle (*Eq.* 1039).

⁴ F. H. M. Blaydes, *Aristophanis deperditarum comoediarum fragmenta* (Hal. Sax., 1847), pp. 14–15, printed τελέει (but see below n. 26) and suggested that Amphiaraus is the old man seeking the oracle and that the subject of the second verb is the action prescribed by the first verb: 'Lumbum autem senis (sc. Amphiarai) tanquam cincli (pennas caudinas) a summo exagita seu concute: namque id facit potentem incantationem.' In this century J. Taillardat, *Les images d'Aristophane: Études de langue et de style* (Paris, 1962), pp. 106–7, defended the MS. reading, and translated as follows: 'Comme une bergeronnette, remue le bout de ta croupe pour aider le vieillard. Amphiaréôs rendra l'incantation efficace.' He is followed by J. Henderson, *The Maculate Muse: Obscene Language in Attic Comedy* (New Haven, 1975), p. 179. Kassel–Austin, op. cit. (n. 1), print the MS. reading τελέει. The switch from the second-person imperative to the third-person indicative (future or present) is awkward but preferable (according to Taillardat and Kassel–Austin), since the action described by τελέει ἐπαοιδήν is more suitably undertaken by a divinity.

⁵ Aside from the disagreement over the identity of the old man and the subject of the second verb (both mentioned above in note 4) I cite, e.g., two other minor discrepancies: (1) Bergk, op. cit. (n. 2), emends the final word in the first line to the nominative (κίγκλος), a change challenged by Kock ('nam non suam senex, sed mulier senis coxam quassare iubetur') and resisted by most editors; and (2) Henderson, op. cit. (n. 4), 179, combines Bergk's κίγκλος with an emendation proposed by Taillardat (ἀνδρὶ πρεσβύτῃ) and translates the first part of the verse as follows: 'Wiggle your ass like a wagtail against the old man.'

parallels from the various corpora of Greek magical texts,⁶ I shall argue that the fragment seems to reflect the closing lines of a traditional magical incantation, and that an imperative or its equivalent is the most probable construction for the final hemistich.

It is, in fact, the expression *τελείν ἐπαιοιδήν* that provides the key to this new interpretation. Although the somewhat similar combination, *τελείν εὐχήν*, is used by both Clytemnestra (*Ag.* 973: *Ζεῦ Ζεῦ τέλειε, τὰς ἐμὰς εὐχὰς τέλει*) and Theognis (341: *ἀλλά, Ζεῦ, τέλεσόν μοι, Ὀλύμπιε, καίριον εὐχήν*) in their simple appeals to Zeus, the closest parallels are to be found in the short prayers that usually appear at the end of erotic magical incantations. A recently published Berlin papyrus (a fragment of a magical handbook) preserves four instances of the formulaic expression *τελείν τελεῖν ἐπαιοιδήν*, including one which appears in the final line of a hexametrical erotic incantation that is to be spoken three times over an apple (column 1, lines 5–14):⁷

ἦ ἂν δῶ μήλω τε βάλῳ μήλω τε πατάξω,
πάντα ὑπερθεμένη μαίνουτ' ἐπ' ἐμήφι φιλότῃτι,
εἴτ' ἐν χειρὶ λαβοῦ[σ]α φάγοι <...-...-x>
ἦ ἐν κόλπῳ καθίσαι <καί> μὴ παύσαιτο φιλεῖν με.
<πότνια> Κυπρογένεια, τέλει τελέαν ἐπαιοιδήν.

To whomsoever I give the apple or at whomsoever I throw the apple or hit with it, setting everything aside, may she be mad for my love, whether she seizes it in her hand and eats it <...> or sets it down in her bosom, <and> may she not stop loving me. O Cyprian-born <goddess> bring to perfection this perfect spell.

The age of this incantation is significant. The papyrus itself, dating palaeographically to the time of Augustus, is one of the earliest extant magical papyri. The corruption of the metre of the incantation suggests, moreover, that it has been copied over more than once and therefore probably dates to some even earlier period.⁸ The closing hemistich of this incantation (*τέλει τελέαν ἐπαιοιδήν*) would appear to be the earliest extant example of a traditional coda to actual Greek hexametrical incantations.⁹ A roughly contemporary charm for curing headaches, preserved in the

⁶ The following abbreviations will be used throughout for the basic corpora of ancient Greek magical texts:

DT = A. Audollent, *Defixionum Tabellae* (Paris, 1904).

DTA = R. Wünsch, *Defixionum Tabellae Atticae*, Appendix to *Inscriptiones Graecae*, iii (Berlin, 1897).

Suppl. Mag. = R. W. Daniel and F. Maltomini, *Supplementum Magicum*, i (Papyrologica Coloniensia, 16.1) (Cologne, 1990).

*PGM*² = K. Preisendanz and A. Henrichs, *Papyri Graecae Magicae: Die griechischen Zauberpapyri*² (Stuttgart, 1973–4).

The numbers following these abbreviations refer to the number of the texts in the collection, unless indicated otherwise.

⁷ W. M. Brashear, 'Ein Berliner Zauberpapyrus', *ZPE* 33 (1979), 261–78; F. Maltomini, 'P. Berol. 21243 (formulario magico): due nuove letture', *ZPE* 74 (1988), 247–8; and R. Janko, 'Berlin Magical Papyrus 21243: A Conjecture', *ZPE* 72 (1988), 293. Prof. Maltomini has kindly provided me with a copy of his new edition of the text (it will appear in the second volume of *Suppl. Mag.* as text no. 72), which I print here with one exception: I prefer to retain Brashear's *φιλεῖν* in the penultimate line to Maltomini's *φιλῶν*.

⁸ There are, in fact, indications both in much earlier Greek myth and wedding ritual, and in Neo-Assyrian magical ritual as well, that the particular type of ritual employed here (the throwing or presentation of apples) was exceedingly old; see C. A. Faraone, 'Aphrodite's *KEΣΤΟΣ* and Apples for Atalanta: Aphrodisiacs in Early Greek Myth and Ritual', *Phoenix* 44 (1990), 233–6.

⁹ All of the parallels that I discuss below are listed by Brashear, *op. cit.* (n. 7), 268, whose comments are in turn cited by Kassel–Austin, *op. cit.* (n. 1), 48. I have ignored other obviously

so-called 'Philinna papyrus' is probably hexametrical as well, but its terribly lacunose state precludes certainty.¹⁰

The publication of the Berlin papyrus strengthens the perception that this closing formula is most at home in erotic spells. It does appear twice in non-erotic spells of late antique date, once at the end of a non-metrical spell for picking magical plants,¹¹ and once in a pseudo-Homeric account of a necromantic ceremony.¹² But all ten other examples occur in erotic incantations. In addition to the 'apple spell' quoted above, the Berlin papyrus preserves three other instances of its use at the end of love spells, one (or perhaps two) addressed to Isis and one to Aphrodite.¹³ The expression has also been plausibly restored at the end of two fragmentary love spells of similarly early date,¹⁴ and appears four more times at the end of erotic spells dating to the late-antique period.¹⁵

related expressions that appear in magical texts, such as, e.g.: *τέλει τὴν προγνώστικὴν* (PGM² iii.194); *τέλει τελείαν τελετὴν* (xii.306); *τέλει τὸ μέγα φυλακτήριον* (iv.1690); *τέλεσον τὰ ἐγγεγραμμένα* (xixa.16); or *ἐλθετε καὶ τελειώσατέ μοι τὴν πραγματείαν ταύτην* (DT 38.14–15). As for the adjective *ἀγαθός* with *ἐπαιδὴ*, see the boast at Euripides' *Cyclops* 646: *ἀλλ' οἷδ' ἐπωδὴν Ὀρφῆως ἀγαθὴν πάνν*.

¹⁰ PGM² xx.4: *τέλεσον τελέαν ἐπαιδὴν*. P. Maas, 'The Philinna Papyrus', *JHS* 62 (1942), 33–8, reconstructed the text by joining *P. Berol.* 7504 and *P. Amherst* ii, col. II(A). For the most recent commentary, see *Suppl. Hellenisticum* no. 900. The spell in question is usually assumed to be hexametrical, because its fragments seem to be of that metre and because the two other charms preserved in the papyrus are hexametrical, leading to the plausible hypothesis that this particular handbook was a collection devoted solely to hexametrical spells.

¹¹ PGM² iv.294–5: *τελείσατέ μοι τὴν τελείαν ἐπαιδὴν*.

¹² *P.Oxy* 412.14, a curious papyrus fragment of the third-century A.D. author Julius Africanus, who quotes a wildly expanded version of the necromancy in *Odyssey* 11, in which Odysseus asks the rivers, earth and those who punish oath-breakers to fulfil his charm. The lines seem to be a transplanted version of *Il.* 3.278–80 (part of the oath scene between the Trojans and the Greeks), in which the second hemistich of line 280 (*φυλάσσετε δ' ὄρκια πίστα*) has been replaced with a variation of the coda under discussion: *τελείετε δ' ἄμμιν αἰοιδὴν*. A few lines later (line 25) Anubis, Hermes and Zeus are invoked and commanded: *κρηήνατε τήνδ' ἐπαιδὴν*. For text and general discussion, see R. Wünsch, 'Der Zaubersang in der Nekyia Homers', *ARW* 12 (1909), 2–19 and J.-R. Vieillefond, *Les 'Cestes' de Julius Africanus: Étude sur l'ensemble des actions avec édition, traduction et commentaire* (Florence, 1970), pp. 277–91.

¹³ Brashear, op. cit. (n. 7), 263, col. i.26–7 (*πότνια θεά, ... τέλεσον μοι τελέαν ἐπαιδὴν*) and col. ii.8 (*δέσποινα Ἴσι, τέλει τελέαν ἐπαγοιδὴν*), and 264, col. ii.25 (*Κυπρογένεια τέλει τελέαν ἐπαιδὴν*). See Brashear's comments ad loc. for the probable identity of the *πότνια θεά* at col. i.26 as Isis. Although these three spells are all very fragmentary, each time the phrase appears, it is marked with a peculiar 'Schlangelinie' and followed by an *ekthesis* or indentation of the following line – clear indications that in each instance these are the final words of the incantation (see Brashear, *ibid.* 262 for discussion).

¹⁴ F. Maltomini, 'P. Mon. Gr. Inv. 216: Formulario magico', in A. Carlini et al. *Papiri letterari greci* (Biblioteca degli studi classici e orientali, 13) (Pisa, 1978), pp. 237–66, no. 34 – republished in A. Carlini (ed.), *Papiri letterari greci della Bayerische Staatsbibliothek di Monaco di Baviera* (Stuttgart, 1986), pp. 40–55, no. 28 –, argues persuasively (p. 247) for a join between two small papyrus fragments of a first-century B.C. magical handbook that yields *τελέαν ἐπα[οιδὴν]*, after which the papyrus is blank, an indication that this phrase marks the end of the spell. The spell itself is fragmentary, but (as Maltomini notes) the mention of alienating someone from her husband and other vocabulary points inescapably to an erotic spell. Prof. Maltomini has kindly sent me his new edition of *P.S.A. Athen.* 70, an erotic charm of the first century A.D. (or perhaps, as Carlini suggested *per litteras* to Maltomini, late first century B.C.), which will appear as text no. 73 in the forthcoming second volume of *Suppl. Mag.* He restores the final line as follows: [*τελείαν ἐπα[οιδὴν]*].

¹⁵ The four late-antique examples are: PGM² iv.2939 (*σὺ δέ, Κυπρογένεια θεά, τέλει τελέαν ἐπαιδὴν*, which is printed with one minor change on p. 261 of the second volume of PGM² as part of a hexametrical hymn to Aphrodite reconstructed by Heitsch: {*σὺ δέ*} *Κυπρογένεια θεά, <σὺ> τέλει τελέαν ἐπαιδὴν*); PGM² vii.992 (*καλῶς μοι τέλει ταύτην τὴν ἐπα[οιδὴν]*); an erotic

This special connection with erotic magic can, moreover, be illustrated in two cases where the same closing formula seems to be reflected in literary texts.¹⁶ Sappho, for example, appears to echo the coda at the end of her so-called *Hymn to Aphrodite* (fr. 1.21–8 [Voigt]):

καὶ γὰρ αἱ φεύγει, ταχέως διώξει,
αἱ δὲ δῶρα μὴ δέκετ', ἀλλὰ δώσει,
αἱ δὲ μὴ φίλει, ταχέως φιλήσει
κωὺκ ἐθέλοισα.

ἔλθε μοι καὶ νῦν, χαλέπαν δὲ λύσον
ἐκ μερίμναν, ὅσσα δέ μοι τέλεσσαι
θύμος ἰμέρρει, τέλεσον, σὺ δ' αὐτα
σύμμαχος ἔσσο.

The penultimate stanza contains the end of a speech of Aphrodite that Sappho seems to recall from a former occasion, a speech in which the goddess promises and predicts a reversal in the behaviour of the poet's beloved. More than a half-century ago, Cameron¹⁷ pointed out how the peculiar syntax of the goddess' promises (conditional clause and predicted reversal)¹⁸ coupled with the repetition of the adverb *ταχέως*¹⁹

defixio, *Suppl. Mag.* 45.32 (τελίτε τελίαν τὴν ἐπαῦδῆν); and the final line of an erotic spell in a new Munich papyrus soon to be published by W. Brashear in *Studien zur altägyptischen Kultur* (...)]ε τελίαν τὴν [ἐπαῦδῆν).

¹⁶ Brashear, op. cit. (n. 7), ad loc., notes both of these parallels without comment.

¹⁷ A. Cameron, 'Sappho's Prayer to Aphrodite', *HTR* 32 (1939), 8–10, C. Segal, 'Eros and Incantation: Sappho and Oral Poetry', *Arethusa* 7 (1974), 148–9, and A. P. Burnett, *Three Archaic Poets: Archilochus, Alcaeus, Sappho* (London, 1983), pp. 254–5. Cameron also points out that Aphrodite's claim to lead people to love even when they are unwilling (line 24: κωὺκ ἐθέλοισα) appears in the hymn to Aphrodite, op. cit. (n. 15), embedded in an elaborate erotic spell (*PGM*² iv.2935: οὐκ ἐθέλοντα).

¹⁸ In the magical incantations spoken by the human practitioner, the imperative or optative appears (as one would expect) instead of the divinely assured future tense employed by Aphrodite in Sappho's poem. Cameron, op. cit. (n. 17), 8, cited the long list of such pairs in *PGM*² iv.1510–20: εἰ κάθηται, μὴ καθήσθω, εἰ λαλεῖ πρὸς τινα, μὴ λαλείτω, εἰ ἐμβλέπει τινί, μὴ ἐμβλεπέτω, εἰ προσέρχεται τινί, μὴ προσερχέσθω, εἰ περιπατεῖ, μὴ περιπατεῖτω, εἰ πίνει, μὴ πινέτω, εἰ ἐσθίει, μὴ ἐσθιέτω, εἰ καταφιλεῖ τινα, μὴ καταφιλείτω, εἰ τέρπεται τινί ἡδονή, μὴ τερπέσθω, εἰ κοιμάται, μὴ κοιμάσθω, ἀλλ' ἐμὲ μόνον τὸν δεῖνα κατὰ νοὺν ἐχέτω. Other shorter examples include: *PGM*² iv.2740–2 (εἰ δέ τινα ἄλλον ἔχουσ' ἐν κόλποις κατὰκειται, κείνον ἀπώσασθω); *Suppl. Mag.* 45.49–50 (εἰ δέ καὶ ἑτερο[ν] ἔχει ἐν κόλποις, ἐκείνον μὲν ὑπερθέσθω); and *P.S.A. Athen.* 70 as restored by F. Maltomini, 'Osservazione al testo di alcuni papiri magici greci I', in R. Pintaudi (ed.), *Miscellanea Papyrologica* (Papyrologica Florentina, 7) (Florence, 1980), p. 172 (ἐὰν καθεύδῃ μὴ [καθευδέτω, ἐὰν φάγῃ μὴ] φαγέτω, ἐὰν πίνῃ μὴ πινέτω). The last example is the most important parallel as it dates to the first-century A.D. or earlier and it ends with the traditional coda (see note 14 above). A. Giacomelli, 'The Justice of Aphrodite in Sappho Fr. 1', *TAPA* 110 (1980), 135–42, argues that Aphrodite's words do not refer to a specific individual (and thus do not constitute a promise), but that they are simply the statement of a natural law of erotic relationships, i.e. that all who are sought shall some day be seeking. Drawing on some homoerotic parallels in the *Palatine Anthology* (all of which deal with the unavoidable passage in status from *erōmenos* to *erastēs*) she suggests that the absence of specific names or pronouns in the penultimate stanza of Sappho's poem is a deliberate device of the poet to stress the universal nature of Aphrodite's pronouncements. The parallels, however, from the magical spells quoted above indicate that such incantations are similarly generic and vaguely worded; thus no pronouns or names are used to indicate the victim (e.g. εἰ κάθηται, μὴ καθήσθω) and indefinite pronouns (not names) are used to indicate the potential rivals for her affections (e.g. εἰ λαλεῖ πρὸς τινα, μὴ λαλείτω). For this peculiarity of magical formulae, see F. Graf, 'Prayer in Magic and Religious Ritual', in C. A. Faraone and D. Obbink (eds.), *Magika Hiera: Ancient Greek Magic and Religion* (Oxford, 1991), p. 190.

¹⁹ Segal, op. cit. (n. 17), 158 n. 16, notes how the placement of the caesura after the fifth syllable of lines 21 and 23 emphasizes the repetition of *ταχέως*. The doubling ἦδη, ἦδη, ταχύ,

seems to reflect the demands voiced in traditional magical spells.²⁰ And although Sappho's request *ὄσσα δέ μοι τέλεσαι θῦμος ἰμέρρει, τέλεσον* can be interpreted as one common to Greek prayer generally (like the prayers of Clytemnestra and Theognis quoted above), the other echoes of magical incantations in the closing two stanzas of her poem make it much more likely that she is adapting the traditional coda *τέλει τελέαν ἐπαοιδήν* that appears at the end of the erotic spells discussed above, four of which are similarly addressed to Aphrodite herself.²¹

The second literary adaptation of this type of coda is not as obvious. At the beginning of the magical ceremony in Theocritus' *Pharmaceutria*, Simaetha greets Hekate with a hexametrical invocation and asks her to bring the proceedings to fruition (*Id.* 2.14): *χαῖρ', Ἐκάτα δασπλήτι, καὶ ἐς τέλος ἄμμιν ὁπάδει*. Theocritus' version is closest to that used by Odysseus in Africanus' Homeric pastiche (above n. 12): *τελείετε δ' ἄμμιν ἀοιδήν*. One might argue that the erudite Roman was directly influenced here by the Greek poet, but it seems safer to assume that both writers are echoing the popular incantatory phrase. In fact, it is Theocritus who gives it the strongest twist. First he places it at the beginning of the incantation, instead of the end.²² Then, although he retains the dative of interest (*ἄμμιν*) that is sometimes expressed in the other examples,²³ he reverses (in a manner one might expect from a Hellenistic poet) the traditional word order by replacing the verb *τελεῖν* with the related noun *τέλος* and then turning the usual final noun *ἐπαοιδήν* into a verb *ὁπάδει*, all the while playfully echoing the sounds of the traditional coda: *τέλος ἄμμιν ὁπάδει*; cf.: *τελέαν ἐπαοιδήν*.

The fact that this traditional coda appears in an imperative construction in at least ten (and probably all) of the thirteen extant examples²⁴ – including two hexametrical

ταχύ is extremely common in magical incantations, especially erotic ones, see, e.g.: *PGM*² i.262; iii.35, 85 and 123; iv.973, 1593 and 2037; vii.248, 330, 410 and 993; viii.52 and 84; x.50; and xliii.27. One also finds *ταχέως* (*PGM*² i.107; iv.72, 384 and 1265) and *τάχιστα* (*PGM*² iv.2619, 2742, 2757 and 2782).

²⁰ The phrase *κατατρέ[ε]χω, αὐτὸς δέ με φεύγει* appears in one of the erotic incantations in the Berlin spell that ends with the traditional coda (Brashear, op. cit. [n. 7], col. ii.9–25). J. J. Winkler, 'The Constraints of Eros', in Faraone and Obbink, op. cit. (n. 18), 239 n. 55, suggests that this spell seems to employ the same language of pursuit and flight used by Sappho, another indication, perhaps, that Sappho is reflecting a traditional erotic spell. The phrase, however, appears in a very fragmentary part of the papyrus and its wider context is unknown. See also P. Levi, 'The Prose Style of the Magical Papyri', in *Proceedings of the XIV International Congress of Papyrologists* (London, 1975), 215 n. 21, who suggests that Aphrodite's question in line 20 of Sappho's poem (*τίς σ' ... ἀδικεῖ;*) recalls complaints like that expressed in a Cnidian *defixio* of Hellenistic date (*DT* 2): *ἀδίκημαι γάρ, Δέσποινα Δάματερ*, a rhetorical strategy common to a type of Greek imprecation known as a 'judicial prayer'; see H. S. Versnel, 'Beyond Cursing: The Appeal to Justice in Judicial Prayers', in Faraone and Obbink (n. 18), 65–9, who discusses the Cnidian text and three curses of similar date from Attica, including, e.g., *DTA* 98 (*φίλη Γῆ, βοήθει μοι. ἀδικούμενος γάρ...*).

²¹ Or Isis, her Egyptian counterpart from the late Hellenistic period onward; see Brashear, op. cit. n. 7), 268–9, for a brief discussion of the later syncretism of Isis and Aphrodite and some select bibliography.

²² The usual procedure in magical and other prayers seems to be to ask the deity in the beginning to come and listen to the prayer or spell, and then request at the end that she bring to fulfilment what she has just heard. See, e.g., an elaborate hexametrical hymn to Selene that begins with *ἐλθέ μοι... εὐμενίῃ δ' ἐπάκουσον ἐμῶν ἱερῶν ἐπαοιδῶν* (*PGM*² iv.2786–8) and ends with *καὶ μοι τόδε πρᾶγμα ποιήσον* (2871–2).

²³ See, e.g., the Berlin papyrus published by Brashear, op. cit. (n. 7), col. i.27: *τέλεσόν μοι τελέαν ἐπαοιδήν*, or *PGM*² vii.992: *μοι τέλει ταύτην τὴν ἐπαοιδήν*.

²⁴ See above, notes 10–15. I disqualify the two fragmentary spells discussed in n. 14 (*P. Mon. Gr.* 216 and *P.S.A. Athen.* 70) and the new Munich papyrus (quoted in n. 15), where in each case

incantations of the first century B.C. – and is twice reflected in even earlier literary texts of the same construction (Sappho's *τέλεσον* and Theocritus' *ὀπάδει*) strongly suggests that the second part of the hexametrical fragment from the *Amphiaraios* be emended to some imperatival construction and then translated as a single sentence: 'Shake the old man's tail from its foundations like a *κύκλος*-bird and bring to perfection this excellent charm.' Bergk's influential emendation *τελέειν* is irresolvably problematic,²⁵ but the parallels from the magical spells quoted above suggest that we should emend the verb with Blaydes to the aorist imperative *τέλεσον*²⁶ or perhaps even more likely to the present imperative *τέλει*.²⁷

Aristophanes supplies us with two additional details that help bolster the claim that the poet is alluding to some form of erotic magic. In the fragment, someone directs an attack on an old man's rear end (*ὀσφὺν δ' ἐξ ἄκρων διακύκλισον*). Such attacks on specific body parts or intellectual faculties are, in fact, regularly requested of Aphrodite or other supernatural entities in extant Greek erotic magic; see for example the violence requested in this invocation: *ναί, κύριε δαίμον, ἄξον, καῦσον, ὀλεσον, πύρῳσον, σκότῳσον [καί]ομένην, πυρουμενῆν, κέντει <β>ασιζομένην τὴν ψυχὴν, τὴν καρδίαν τῆς Κάρωσα, ἣν ἔτεκεν Θελώ, ἄχρις ἂν ἐκκηδήσασα [ἐλ]θῇ πρὸς Ἀπαλώς* ('Aye, lord daemon, attract, inflame, destroy, burn, cause her to swoon from love as she is being burnt, inflamed. Sting the tortured soul, the heart of Karosa, whom Thelo bore, until she leaps forth and comes to Apalos').²⁸ Part of the joke in the *Amphiaraios* passage undoubtedly stems from the use of the old man's rear end as

lacunae make it impossible to know the construction of the verb. I am, however, in complete agreement with the editors of these spells (Maltomini and Brashear, respectively, *ad loc.*) who assume that some form of imperative was employed.

²⁵ For Bergk's emendation and its influence, see above, note 3. Kassel and Austin, *op. cit.* (n. 1), 48, report the two objections of Wilamowitz (see below, n. 26): (1) that Aristophanes would not have used the uncontracted form *τελέειν*; and (2) that the use of a present infinitive after an aorist imperative was impossible. The first point is decisive since even if we argue that Aristophanes is mimicking some archaic usage peculiar to traditional hexametrical compositions, we run into the problem that in hexametric verse the form *τελέειν* appears to be used only to indicate the asigmatic future, e.g.: *ἔμελλεν ἐκτελέειν* (*Od.* 10.26–7) or *ἐλπίμενοι τελέειν* (*Hes. fr.* 204.85 M–W).

²⁶ Blaydes, who printed *τελέει* in his 1847 edition of the fragments, *op. cit.* (n. 4), much later in his life (*Adversaria in comicorum graecorum fragmenta*, ii [Hal. Sax., 1896], p. 55) suggested *τέλεσον*, an emendation approved by Wilamowitz, *Griechische Verskunst* (Darmstadt, 1921), p. 349 n. 1. The form *τέλεσον* can in fact be defended by its appearance in the magical tradition discussed above, beginning with Sappho's prayer to Aphrodite and then again (in a hexametrical context) in two of the earliest magical papyri, *PGM*² xx (n. 10) and the Berlin papyrus (n. 7), which both date to the first century B.C.

²⁷ Here, too, the magical tradition discussed above provides support. The present imperative is by far the most popular and it is attested early both in conventional prayers (e.g. Clytemnestra's appeal to Zeus quoted above) and in the magical tradition, appearing thrice in the first-century B.C. Berlin papyrus (n. 7) and twice in late-antique spells: *PGM*² vii.992 (n. 14); and *PGM*² iv.2939, the final line of a fairly polished hexametrical hymn to Aphrodite (n. 15): *Κυπρογένεια θεά, <σύ> τέλει τελέαν ἐπασιδὴν*. We can in fact more easily reconcile the present imperative to the MS. readings (*τελέει* and *τελεῖ*) than we can the aorist *τέλεσον*. E. Courtney and R. Janko both suggest (*per litteras*) the addition of *σύ* (as in the hexameter quoted above from *PGM*² iv.2939) to restore the metre: *ἀνδρὸς πρεσβύτου. <σύ> τέλει δ' ἀγαθὴν ἐπασιδὴν*.

²⁸ *PGM*² xixa.50. The spirited translation is that of E. O'Neill and R. Kotansky in H. D. Betz (ed.), *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation*, i (Chicago, 1986), p. 257. For similar examples of such exhortations to attack, see, e.g.: *PGM*² iv.1540–1 (*κατάκαυσον τὸν ἐνκέφαλον, ἔκκαυσον καὶ ἐκστρεψον αὐτῆς τὰ σπλάγχνα*); *PGM*² iv.2767 (*φλέξον ἀκοιμήτων πυρὶ τὴν ψυχὴν*); *PGM*² xvi (*καῦσον τὴν καρδίαν*); *PGM*² O[stracon] 2.29–30 (*καῦσον, πύρῳσον τὴν ψυχὴν*); *Suppl. Mag.* 42.37–8 (*βασανίσσατε αὐτῆς τὸ σῶμα*); 45.31–2 (*καύσατε αὐτῆς τὰ μέλη, τὸ ἦπαρ, τὸ γυνεκίον σῶμα*); *DT* 51 (*κατακαίετε... ψυχὴν καὶ τὴν καρδίαν*); and *DT* 271.12–14 (*ἀγαγεῖν καὶ ζεύξαι τὸν Οὐρβανόν... βασανίζομενον*).

a target, since the most common targets of such erotic spells are the more abstract faculties like the *ψυχή*, the *πνεῦμα* and the *καρδιά*.²⁹ It is no accident, moreover, that Aristophanes makes a doubly emphatic reference to the *κίγκλος*-bird in this passage (*διακίγκλισον ἥτε κίγκλου*). Given the fact that nearly every ancient allusion to this bird seems to be in the context of explicit sexual activity,³⁰ it should come as no surprise to learn that among the later Greek natural historians and scholiasts it is frequently assimilated to the *σεισοπυγίς* and the *κιναιδίον*,³¹ birds that are both employed in Greek erotic spells precisely because the peculiar spasmodic movements of their tails were thought to mimic the exertions of coitus; in such spells the magical practitioner apparently hoped that by sympathetic magic he might transfer the peculiar lascivious behaviour of these birds to the victim of the spell.³² Thus the request in the *Amphiaraus* fragment – one might paraphrase it as ‘jiggle the old man’s tail like (the tail of) a jiggle-bird’ – may, in fact, reflect the use of this peculiar bird in love magic.

In conclusion, I think that Fragment 29 clearly reflects a traditional form of hexametrical erotic incantation. It is most economical to assume that the two hexameters were originally found at the end of an erotic spell chanted by one character with the goal of encouraging some deity such as Aphrodite to arouse the passions of the unnamed old man. The probability of a direct parody is high, given the fact that elsewhere in his plays Aristophanes finds humour in traditional magical practices, such as his allusion to inscriptions found on apotropaic rings³³ or his use of a form of divination known as catoptromancy in staging an exchange of threats in the final scene of the *Acharnians*.³⁴ Aristophanic adaptations of traditional hieratic forms are not, however, always so straightforward, and given the small size of the fragment it is impossible to know whether part of the joke lies in the fact that he has with some unknown dramatic goal in mind purposely taken language from a popular magic spell out of its proper context and used it in an oracle or some other literary form that employs hexameters, for example a traditional hymn.³⁵ Such uncertainty

²⁹ See, e.g., some of the examples quoted above in note 27.

³⁰ See Taillardat, op. cit. (n. 4), and Henderson, op. cit. (n. 4).

³¹ See *LSJ* s.v. *σεισοπυγίς* and D. W. Thompson, *A Glossary of Greek Birds*² (Oxford, 1936), pp. 140–1, who quotes most of later sources in full and in the original.

³² See, e.g., D. Kaimakis, *Die Kyraniden* (Beiträge zur klassischen Philologie, 76) (Meisenheim am Glan, 1976), pp. 63–4 (*κιναιδίον* used in love potions and erotic amulets) and 229 (*σεισοπυγίς* used in a love potion).

³³ At *Plut.* 883–5 the ‘Just Man’ disregards the threat of Carion the sycophant explaining that he is wearing a special ring, to which Carion replies: ἀλλ’ οὐκ ἔνεστι “συκοφάντου δῆγματος” a reference to magical rings bearing inscriptions such as σκορπίου δῆγματος; see C. Bonner, *Studies in Magical Amulets* (Ann Arbor, 1950), pp. 4–5, and R. Kotansky, ‘Incantations and Prayers for Salvation on Inscribed Greek Amulets’, in Faraone and Obbink, op. cit. (n. 18), pp. 110–11.

³⁴ At *Acharn.* 1128–31, when Lamachus orders his slave to pour oil on his shield and then claims that he sees legal problems in the future for Dicaeopolis, he is imitating a form of prognostication performed by gazing into mirrors or still pools of liquid, a practice known elsewhere from Pausanias and the magical papyri; see: the scholia ad loc.; W. R. Halliday, *Greek Divination* (London, 1913), p. 153; A. Delatte, *La catoptromancie grecque et ses dérivés* (Liège, 1932), pp. 133–5; and E. R. Dodds, *The Ancient Concept of Progress and Other Essays* (Oxford, 1973), p. 186 n. 4.

³⁵ I thank J. Henderson for this insight. The traditional suspicion that the fragment is part of an oracle arises naturally enough from its metre and from the fact that there existed near the border with Boeotia a famous oracular shrine of Amphiaraus, after whom the play is named. The authority cited by, e.g., Kassel and Austin, op. cit. (n. 1), 48, is Pausanias 1.34.4, whose testimony is ambiguous at best. He describes the oracular shrine as a place where people spent the night in hopes of getting oracular *dreams*, not pronouncements. In fact, he specifically

has, in fact, prompted the disjunction and the punctuation of my subtitle, but regardless of the manner in which Aristophanes ultimately used these two hexameters in his comedy, he has provided us with the earliest verbatim quotation of a traditional ending of an erotic hexametrical incantation that seems to have survived for more than a millennium in ancient Greece.³⁶

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dismisses as spurious the hexametrical oracles of Amphiaraus collected by Iophon of Cnossus (otherwise unknown and therefore unable to be dated; see A. Bouché-Leclercq, *Histoire de la divination dans l'antiquité*, ii [Paris, 1879], p. 225). But even if Amphiaraus' shrine did not actually produce hexametrical oracles we cannot rule out the possibility that the fragment under discussion was put into the mouth of a manifestly fraudulent oracle-monger, a frequent butt of Aristophanic jokes; see N. Smith, 'Diviners and Divination in Aristophanic Comedy', *CA* 8 (1989), 141–7.

³⁶ I should like to thank W. M. Brashear, E. Courtney, J. Henderson, R. Janko, R. Kaster, R. Kotansky, F. Maltomini and A. Rossius and Z. Stewart for their comments on earlier versions of this paper. Naturally the defects which remain are my own. I owe additional gratitude to Bill Brashear and Franco Maltomini for allowing me access to the preliminary texts of the papyri discussed in notes 7, 14 and 15. This paper was researched and written at the Center for Hellenic Studies during the academic year 1991–2. I owe many thanks to Z. and D. Stewart, the other junior fellows, and the staff for making my stay a particularly enjoyable and productive one.