

[Entry] δεκαβάμων, -ονος (adj.)

[Translation] «of ten steps», *i.e.* «of ten intervals»

[Source] Cleonid. *Isag. Harm.* 12 (p. 202 Jan) = Man. Bryenn. *Harm.* 1, 8 (p. 116 Jonker)

[Other occurrences] *hapax legomenon*

[Reference editions] Ion Chius fr. 5 Gent.-Pr. = 32 West² = 93 Leurini = 4 Valerio

[Brief Discussion]

Attested only in l. 1 of fr. 5 Gent.-Pr. of Ion of Chios, the compound refers to τάξις «order», «arrangement»), and it is part of an articulated metaphor (ll. 1-2) that takes place within the image of 'sound space', here at its first attestation (see Rocconi 1999, 97-98). The adjective, created by the combination of the numeral δέκα with the term βῆμα («step»), conveys an idea of movement (see West 1992, 25): the τάξις δεκαβάμων, literally an «arrangement in ten steps», indicates the «arrangement in the ten spaces (*i.e.* located between the eleven strings)», that is «in ten intervals», proper to the hendecachord. This image might recall that of the modern musical scale, but the connection is misleading. In fact, it should be pointed out that for the ancient world, we cannot speak of verticality regarding sound organization (see Rocconi 2003, 73 and n. 439). The musical scale metaphor will be established only from the Renaissance onward (see Giani 1994). Related compounds, but in a non-musical context, recur in the Euripidean tragedies: τριτοβάμων in *Tr.* 275 and τετραβάμων in *El.* 476; *Tr.* 516; *Hel.* 376; *Phoen.* 792, 808.

[Bibliography]

M. Giani, ««Scala musica». Vicende di una metafora», in F. Nicolodi - P. Trovato (edd.), *Le parole della musica*, III, Firenze 1994, 31-48; E. Rocconi, «Terminologia dello «spazio sonoro» negli *Elementa Harmonica* di Aristosseno di Taranto», *QUCC* n.s. 61, 1999, 93-103. E. Rocconi, *Le parole delle Muse. La formazione del lessico tecnico musicale nella Grecia antica*, Roma 2003; M.L. West, «Analecta Musica», *ZPE* 192, 1992, 23-28.

[Keywords]

Interval, sound space, hendecachord

[Serena Napoleone]