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ANCIENT GREEK AND ROMAN MUSIC

EDITED BY

TOSCA A.C. LYNCH AND ELEONORA ROCCONI

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A COMPANION TO ANCIENT GREEK AND ROMAN MUSIC

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Abbreviations

Abbreviations of the names of ancient authors and the titles of their works follow the conventions of the *Oxford Classical Dictionary* (4th ed.). References to journal titles conform to *L'Année philologique*.

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Introduction

Eleonora Rocconi and Tosca A.C. Lynch

The Ancient Notion of *Mousikē*

In Graeco-Roman antiquity, performing arts were grouped under a single inclusive term: the Greek word *mousikē* (sc. *technē*), and its Latin calque *ars musica*. These terms allude to a much broader notion than their modern counterparts: they embraced many artistic activities (song, dance, poetry, instrumental accompaniments, or solos) and brought them all within the Muses' domain. "Musical" (lit. "related to the Muses") events often involved competitions and occurred on different religious and social occasions, in public spaces (as in the case of rituals that took place during civic festivals) as well as private homes (e.g. symposia). Through these musico-poetic performances, which were shared and experienced collectively, Archaic and Classical *poleis* transmitted and reinforced important civic values. Later on, the professional performances of Hellenistic artists spread musico-theatrical culture all over the Greek-speaking world; the Roman Imperial power made the most of these performances too, in order to amuse and entertain the citizens of a "globalizing" world: at different times and in a variety of ways, music was at the core of Greek and Roman society.

Over the last decades, a wide range of scholarly disciplines have increasingly paid attention to ancient music culture. With regard to Classical Studies, the initial impulse originated with the so-called *performative turn*, which affected numerous disciplines in the humanities and social sciences. This led Classicists to adopt the famous definition of *song culture*—coined by Herington (1985)—with the aim of emphasizing the intimate connection between song and poetry in Archaic and Classical Greece.[1] As a consequence of this (by now) shared assumption, classical scholarship has considerably changed its approach to what we call "literature," complementing a purely philological analysis of ancient texts with investigations into their performative components—key aspects that had often been overlooked in previous studies.

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Scholars working on Ancient Philosophy and Science have also long recognized the key role played by theoretical disciplines related to music—especially harmonics, the most important branch of ancient music theory—in the development of ancient scientific and philosophical thought, stressing their contiguity with other intellectual pursuits with regard to their methods, goals, and broader conceptualizations.

This exchange was facilitated by the fact that a large number of theoretical texts on music—which form the bulk of surviving documentary evidence on the topic of ancient music—have recently crossed the frontiers of exoteric knowledge, becoming more widely known and read. A key role in this process has been played by the outstanding work of Andrew Barker, who produced English translations and commentaries to the most relevant texts on ancient musical practice as well as harmonic and acoustic theory, ranging from their earliest stages in the Archaic age to the subsequent centuries (Barker 1984 and 1989). The ensuing publication of updated and comprehensive handbooks by eminent classicists (esp. West 1992) further contributed to shaping a historically informed picture of ancient musical concepts and practices, making basic knowledge on the topic much more accessible and at the same time encouraging the growth of specialist publications. The first repertoire of the surviving remains of notated music appeared about fifty years ago, thanks to the pioneering work of Egert Pöhlmann (1970); it was subsequently updated in collaboration with Martin West, producing a new English collection which is now the standard edition (Pöhlmann and West 2001). This collection contains new papyrological discoveries (with the exception of a few extra specimens found since 2001) as well as careful revisions of older texts, offering a more comprehensive account of the development of ancient music from the fifth century BC to the fourth century AD. Last but not least, archaeologists and art historians have paid a great deal of attention to visual evidence (including pictorial depictions, especially vase-paintings, as well as reliefs, statues, coins, etc.), in order to identify the cultural meanings or the practical contexts of the musical scenes and items displayed on these artefacts. These efforts further confirmed the pervasiveness and relevance of the "art of the Muses" in the Greek and Roman worlds.[2]

Musicological Studies have traditionally focused on the reception of ancient culture in later times (especially up to the beginning of the Modern Era), seeking to identify the Classical roots of Medieval, Renaissance, and Early Modern musical theories and ideas. Up to the late 1990s, these musicological investigations were dominated by American scholars, especially Claude Palisca, the leading expert on the Florentine Camerata and the Italian musical Renaissance and early Baroque (times when intellectuals looked at Classical antiquity as an authoritative model);[3] and Thomas J. Mathiesen, who is particularly known for his *catalogue raisonné* of ancient musical manuscripts for the *Répertoire International des Sources Musicales*—a collection of documentary evidence thanks to which ancient theoretical knowledge on music entered the Modern Era—and for establishing the online *Thesaurus Musicarum Latinarum* (TML) in the 1990s.[4] More recently, musicologists have questioned the very definition of "music" and, consequently, have broadened their inquiry to include any kind of sound event and ancient soundscape.[5] This has led to the emergence and development of frontier disciplines such as Music Archaeology (which promotes experimental explorations that aim at recreating instruments as well as playing techniques) and Archaeoacoustics (which examines the acoustics of archaeological sites and artefacts, regarding them as the products of intentional processes);[6] these emerging areas have also benefited from hybridizations and mutual exchanges with the closely related disciplines of Anthropology and Ethnomusicology.[7]

Thanks to the contribution of these and other scholarly fields, the research field of Ancient Greek and Roman Music has now been established in its own right, and is recognized worldwide. This progress is also reflected by numerous conferences and workshops that—since the 1980s—have been devoted to this research area,[8] and by the birth of associations that promote the creation and growth of international networks of scholars.[9]

The interdisciplinary nature of the topic is still very much central to the study of ancient *mousikē*, a field that continues to rely on contributions that differ significantly from one another (e.g. in their methodology and scholarly interests)—a variety that is reflected in the contributions collected in this *Companion*. Since the turn of the millennium, new research approaches have been developed too, including a more careful and meaningful evaluation of material evidence. This multidisciplinary endeavor is most clearly shown in the pivotal work of researchers like Stefan Hagel, who has investigated the relationship between instrumental practice and evolving conceptions of pitch, combining ancient theory with the evidence offered by the extant musical fragments and in-depth analyses of musical instruments in the archaeological record (Hagel 2010). Another important contribution came from the "sensory turn" that took place in contemporary scholarship and has affected also the study of Classical Antiquity, as demonstrated by the numerous studies and volumes recently published on the topic:[10] see especially the series of books *The Senses in Antiquity*, whose sixth and final volume is dedicated to sound (Butler and Nooter 2018). The burgeoning field of ancient Greek and Roman dance is also moving beyond general investigations on the ancient chorus and chorality, and is finding its own identity and autonomy (e.g., Naerebout 1997; Gianvittorio 2017; Schlapbach 2018).[11] Roman music, often underestimated in the past in comparison to Greek music, has gradually gained greater prominence too: the pioneering volume by Wille, published in 1967, was the first book exclusively dedicated to music in Roman culture, but many others have appeared in recent years (Baudot 1973; Vendries 1999; Moore 2012; Vincent 2016). One should also not forget the diverse contributions given by many scholars who examined philosophical texts with an interest in music and have offered detailed interpretations of technicalities within the wider context of ancient Greek science and thought (e.g. Barker 2000 and 2007; Creese 2010; Pelosi 2010), provided new critical editions or commentaries to lesser known works or fragmentary texts (Petrucci 2012; Barker 2015; Wallace 2015; Raffa 2016a, 2016b and 2018), or focused on the reception of ancient concepts and ideas in later times (Hicks 2017; Prins and Vanhaelen 2017). Undoubtedly, Ancient Greek and Roman music is now a blossoming research field.[12]

The Organization of This Companion

This book follows a thematic, rather than a chronological division. It is divided into five main sections that reflect different aspects of contemporary scholarship (Philology, Archaeology, Musicology, Philosophy, Literary Studies, Reception Studies, etc.) and showcase the most promising directions for future research, relying on the expertise of leading specialists in the field as well as on contributions by younger scholars.

Part 1 ("Mythical Paradigms") offers a survey of some key musical myths of antiquity, which turned into paradigmatic models for visual and literary representations of musical ideas and activities. To begin with (Chapter 1), Penelope Murray focuses on the deities from which the term "music" has been coined; this comprehensive account shows how, in Greek antiquity, the Muses—who were conceived as the embodiment of oral communication

through song and dance—became the means through which human wisdom was preserved and transmitted to future generations. In Chapter 2, Ian Rutherford examines the musician god *par excellence*, Apollo, and looks at his mythical persona, musical instruments, genres and cult centers, as well as some key cultural values that originated from his figure: the symbolism of civic and cosmic harmony. Chapter 3, by Giorgio Ieranò, investigates the complex and ambivalent role of Dionysus as a musical god, in cultic settings as well as literary and visual representations. In Chapter 4, Pauline LeVen explores the relationship between music and natural environment through the figure of Pan, interpreting the symbolism behind this figure as a way of conceptualizing some unsettling aspects of the sounds of nature. Chapter 5, by Susanna Sarti, deals with the most important musical heroes of Greek myth (Orpheus, Olympus, Thamyris, and others), whose stories offer paradigmatic examples of music's "psychagogic" power and illustrate the dangers of competing with the gods for excellence in artistic performance. The first section of the volume is closed by Luigi Galasso (Chapter 6), who looks at the transformation (or metamorphoses) of Hellenic musical myths in Roman culture focusing on one of the most popular works of ancient mythology: Ovid's *Metamorphoses*.

Part 2 ("Contexts and Practices") opens with an archaeological overview by Sylvain Perrot (Chapter 7)—a chapter that offers a topographical survey of Greek and Roman settings in which musical performances took place (including occasional spaces as well as areas specifically designed for this purpose), and also takes into account their possible acoustic properties. The next two chapters focus on the different media through which these performances were documented, preserved and transmitted: Chapter 8, by Maria Chiara Martinelli, looks at the relationship between oral techniques and literate technologies, especially papyri; Chapter 9, by Sheramy Bundrick, examines visual representations, the problems that arise in interpreting them, as well as the challenges faced by ancient artists in attempting to convey auditory experiences through a pictorial medium. The focus then shifts to specific genres and contexts, including theatrical performances (Chapter 10, by Marco Ercoles; Chapter 11, by Timothy J. Moore) and choral performances (Chapter 12, by Naomi A. Weiss; Chapter 13, by Zoa Alonso Fernández), both Greek and Roman. The following chapters investigate the specific techniques employed by various types of performers, with a special interest in professional musicians (Chapter 14, by Timothy Power, who looks at competitions as a pervasive factor that shaped Greek and Roman musical culture) and their vocal and instrumental skills (Chapter 15, by Kostantinos Melidis, on vocal training; Chapter 16, by Chrestos Terzēs, a detailed survey of the most important musical instruments of Classical Antiquity). In the last chapter of this section (Chapter 17), John Franklin explores the relationship between Greek musical culture and other Mediterranean musical traditions, with a special interest in Near Eastern music.

Part 3 ("Conceptualizing Music: Musical Theory and Thought") explores the multiple ways in which music was conceptualized in philosophical, theoretical, medical, and rhetorical sources, looking at the interplay between their different approaches to, and uses of, music. Chapters 18–21 introduce readers who may not be familiar with these topics to the intricacies of Greek theoretical speculations, presenting different branches of music theory (Chapter 18, on acoustics, by Egert Pöhlmann; Chapter 19, on harmonics, by Andrew Barker; Chapter 19, on rhythmics, by Tosca A.C. Lynch), as well as the development of the ancient Greek system of musical notation (Chapter 21, by Stefan Hagel). The subsequent essays deal with other aspects of ancient musical thought: its role in education (Chapter 22, by Massimo Raffa), the evaluation, judgment, and criticism of its aesthetic value and quality (Chapter 23, by Eleonora

Rocconi), and the intense emotional effects that music has on human beings (Chapter 24, by Francesco Pelosi). This section ends with discussions of the use of musical concepts and techniques in medical sources (Chapter 25, by Antonietta Provenza) and in rhetorical treatises (Chapter 26, by Verena Schulz)—discussions that show the permeability and interactions between different sciences in ancient times.

Part 4 ("Music and Society: Musical Identities, Ideology and Politics") provides in-depth evaluations of topics that have attracted considerable attention in recent scholarship. In Chapter 27, Mark Griffith discusses the key role played by music in defining the cultural identity of the Greeks, focusing on the—real and imaginary—musical cultures of Lesbos, Thebes, Thrace, and Anatolia. In Chapter 28 Mariella De Simone investigates the relationship between music and gender, exploring the role of women in musical composition and performance. The next chapter (Chapter 29, by Armand D'Angour) addresses the crucial function of musical ideology in ancient Greek culture, with special focus on the Classical Athenian debate on the phenomenon of "New Music." The last two chapters examine the central, but markedly different, political functions that music had in Greek and Roman culture (Chapter 30, by Eric Csapo and Peter Wilson; Chapter 31, by Paola Dessì).

The chapters grouped in the last section of this book (Part 5: "Rediscovering Ancient Music: The Cultural Heritage of *Mousikē*") explore the long-lasting influence exerted by ancient Greek and Roman music on the following centuries, looking at its theoretical impact on Medieval music theory (Chapter 32, by Cecilia Panti) as well as aspects of modern performance (Chapter 33, by Donatella Restani) and visual heritage (Chapter 34, by Daniela Castaldo). These chapters do not, of course, offer comprehensive investigations of the complex transmission and modern reception of ancient theoretical concepts, models of performance and visual representations; they represent a preliminary, if incomplete, sketch of the influence of ancient musical models on the Medieval and Modern Age, bringing these often neglected areas to the attention of a wider scholarly community. The book is closed by an Appendix (by Tosca A.C. Lynch) that presents transcriptions and diagrams of the latest scholarly reconstructions of the ancient modes (*harmoniai*) attested in ancient musical treatises, accompanied by concise explanatory notes and references to relevant literature; this brief appendix is intended as a way to facilitate access to the most recent scholarship on this vital, if at times forbidding, aspect of ancient music for a variety of readers, including musicologists and professional musicians.

The succinct yet informative accounts presented in this *Companion* share the same overarching goal, but showcase different scholarly traditions and complementary methodologies. The Editors have strived to integrate these perspectives and establish links between them, in order to create a multifaceted and mutually enriching picture; individual authors remain of course responsible for the contents of their chapters, the accuracy of translations and references to ancient and modern sources. Eleonora Rocconi and Tosca A.C. Lynch have jointly edited the volume as a whole, with the exception of Chapters 6, 15, 16, 18, 25, 26, 28, 31–34, which have been edited independently by Eleonora Rocconi (I warmly thank Prof. Ian Till for his great help in editing the English).

We hope that the interplay of many voices and approaches will allow readers to gain an inclusive and "polyphonic" understanding of the culture of *mousikē* in Greek and Roman antiquity. We also hope that this Companion will give readers a chance to appreciate the abundance of subjects involved in this research field, and the crucial importance that each individual contribution has for the success of this enterprise: indeed, as Heraclitus put it, "the most beautiful harmony arises from different voices" (*ek tōn diapherontōn kallistēn harmonian*).

NOTES

1 Among the most important studies on the topic, see Havelock 1963; Gentili 1988; Edmunds and Wallace 1997; Goldhill and Osborn 1999. More generally on the phenomenon of cultural turns, see Bachmann-Medick 2016.

2 Wegner 1949; Paquette 1984; Maas and MacIntosh-Snyder 1989. Most recently, e.g., Castaldo 2000; Bundrick 2005; Lissarrague 2006; Bellia and Marconi 2016.

3 See especially Palisca 1985 and 1994.

4 Mathiesen 1988. The manuscripts listed and discussed in this catalogue run from the eleventh to the sixteenth centuries AD. The vast majority of them, however, was produced between the fifteenth and the sixteenth centuries, when the diffusion of big scriptoria and a growing demand for authoritative evidence on ancient Greek music theory—until then known only through Boethius' authority and mediation—led to the production of composite collections of theoretical musical writings, featuring a great variety of combinations (Mathiesen 1992).

5 On the notion of soundscape, see Schafer 1977. The most recent contribution on the topic, as far as antiquity is concerned, is Emerit, Perrot, and Vincent 2015.

6 Both 2009; Till 2014.

7 E.g. Restani 2006.

8 The first international gathering of scholars working on ancient Greek music took place on the occasion of a conference entitled *La Musica in Grecia*, held at the University of Urbino in 1985 (see Gentili and Pretagostini 1988). Several other international conferences that focused on ancient Greek and Roman music have followed since, including the Moisa Meetings, Moisa Summer Schools and the Arion-Moisa Seminars (see n. 9). It was only much later that a full-scale international conference was entirely dedicated to the music of Augustan Rome: the symposium entitled *Music in the Time of Vergil*, sponsored by the Vergilian Society in June 2016 in Cuma, Italy (see Moore 2018).

9 See especially Moisa: *International Society for the Study of Greek and Roman Music and its Cultural Heritage* (http://www.moisasociety.org/). In the past twenty years, other societies and study-groups have been created: some focus on specific topics (e.g. *The Network for the Study of Archaic and Classical Greek Song*, whose proceedings are published in a dedicated series titled "Studies in Archaic and Classical Greek Song"), whereas others aim at comparing different ancient musical cultures (e.g. *ISGMA: the International Study Group on Music Archaeology*, founded by Ellen Hickmann and Ricardo Eichmann, which promoted the publication of a book series called "Studien zur Musikarchäologie").

10 E.g., Toner 2016; Betts 2017.

11 Two recent international conferences have been devoted to the topic of ancient dance: the first, entitled *Narratives in Motion. The Art of Dancing Stories in Antiquity and Beyond*, took place in June 2018 at the Department of Classics of the University of Vienna, Austria; the second, focused on Roman culture (*The Dance of Priests, Matronae, and Philosophers: Aspects of Dance Culture in Rome and in the Roman Empire*), was held at the University of Fribourg, Switzerland, in June 2019. For detailed reports of these events, see Gianvittorio 2020 and Schlapbach 2020.

12 A journal wholly dedicated to ancient Greek and Roman music was established in 2013: *Greek and Roman Musical Studies* (https://brill.com/view/journals/grms/grms-overview.xml).