
Greek and Roman Musical Studies 1 edited by Andrew Barker

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Greek and Roman Musical Studies (*GRMS*) is the inaugural issue of a new journal. The initiative for this journal came from The International Society for the Study of Greek and Roman Music and Its Cultural Heritage ('Moisa' is the clever and convenient nickname). But it is not an 'in house' journal of the society. It was conceived by the membership as meeting a need: there has not been a journal devoted to research in this area until now. *GRMS* aspires to be for ancient Greek and Roman music what the journal *Phronesis* is for ancient philosophy. Still its mission is not narrow, as we learn from the opening editorial by Andrew Barker (who is not only editor-in-chief but also the dedicatee of this first volume, on the occasion of his 70th birthday). Music in the ancient world stood in relation to many other disciplines: mathematics, natural philosophy, psychology, medicine, poetry, politics, and so forth. *GRMS* is soliciting contributions that shed light on all these points of contact. I am pleased to see that it is also soliciting contributions on the music of other ancient cultures in the Mediterranean and on the reception of Greek and Roman music by later and more geographically remote musical cultures.

This first volume of *GRMS* is a sampler of what the journal might offer in the future. Two papers in particular help to indicate the wide range of topics that might be covered.

One is by Christophe Vendries, a historian at the Université de Rennes, on the question of what may be learned from certain terracotta figures depicting musicians about possible connections between Greek and Egyptian culture (musical and otherwise) in Hellenistic and Roman Egypt. The figures in question are of uncertain date. They seem to have been produced in series by anonymous craftsmen in workshops attested in Alexandria and the Nile valley. They are, for the most part, small figurines (between 8 and 30 cm)

cast from moulds in two halves and then painted: trinkets of modest price for people of modest means. The analogue in our culture (if there is one) might be the little bust of Beethoven inevitably on display in the home music studio of private piano teachers, with this one difference at least: the figurines discussed by Vendries seem to have served the needs of private devotion, expressing ordinary hopes for prosperity. As musical iconography goes, they are completely lacking in splendor or even the miniature razzle-dazzle of the cylinder seals at the Pergamon Museum in Berlin. It is not surprising that they have been completely eclipsed by the temple iconography from the time of the Pharaohs. From the time of Hellenistic and Roman Egypt, the preferred source of information for scholars interested in music has been papyrus fragments. Vendries is surely right to call our attention to the terracottas. What may be learned from them, however, is not yet clear.

If one hopes to learn about instruments and their construction, one will likely be disappointed. On the one hand, they show a concern for realism, as indicated by the visible joints in depictions of trumpets. On the other hand, the depiction of harps, lyres, and kitharas is too small and notional to tell us reliably the number of strings. One might hope too to find in these figures a window into the role of music in local cults and festivities. Indeed, they number various gods and goddesses in the act of minstrelsy, the most surprising of which may be an Isis/Nike on horseback, plucking a harp. But since the local deities were not traditionally associated with a musical instrument, it is often unclear whether any given female musician is a goddess or a mortal.

The observation made by Vendries that most struck me took the form not of an answer but of a question. Some of the figurines depict animals playing musical instruments, notably an ass with an outsize phallus, playing a lyre. The question is which culture provides the key to understanding the iconography. If we think in Egyptian, we may perhaps be reminded of the harp-playing ass found in satirical papyri from the New Empire. But if we think in Greek, we will likely take the image to represent an uncultivated boor. As Vendries points out, this association was known in Alexandria, since Athenaeus relates that an inhabitant of that city proposed changing the more usual ass putdown to the 'ox with a lyre' in honor of a kithara player familiarly known after the other heavy-footed beast [*Deip.* 4.8 349c]. Even if Vendries is right to think that the Greek construal of the image is the relevant one, his

observation helps bring sharply into focus the distinctive and yet enigmatic cultural bivalence of Hellenistic Egypt as reflected in these figurines.

It is not news that Hellenistic/Roman Egypt was multicultural. Professional Egyptologists will no doubt find other points of interest in Vendries' article that escaped me. I think it right, though, to call attention to something that I found striking (precisely as a non-Egyptologist) because I predict that this will be part of the experience that readers of *GRMS* can look forward to. Because the mission of the journal is broad (without being diffuse), any of us who pick it up out of one interest or another should expect to find contributions that spark interest in fields remote from his or her own. In short: this will be a journal that we should expect to find stimulating. I might add that the pictures and photographs of the figurines that Vendries discusses—and those of other objects related to other contributions in this issue—are clear, easy to look at, and often downright beautiful. Whether the ass with lyre may rightfully be called beautiful, I leave to the judgement of other readers. But I found it striking that he seemed to be stopping the strings of his lyre with four, perhaps five, digits and a thumb on what appears to be his left hand, rather than a hoof. A hoof may well terminate his right foreleg and perhaps he is using it to strum his strings, as one might a pick or a plectrum. Hoof, like horn, might be a very good material for such an implement. This thought suggests that our friend's technique may have been less clumsy than rumor would hold.

The second paper that I propose to highlight illustrates, by contrast, how wide the possible range of themes and topics of *GRMS* might be. It is by Pauline LeVen of the Yale Classics Department. It takes us from Egyptian iconography to questions about the vocabulary available to archaic and classical Greek poets to communicate thoughts about, and the experience of, soundscapes.

It is a challenge to set in words the quality of the sounds that we hear, no matter what language we speak. That is because the qualities that we are trying to describe are so unlike the other things which we think about or experience. There are conventions for talking about clashes, clangs, clatters, and thuds. But who knows whether I will really get you to hear in your mind's ear what I mean when I use these words. Perhaps for this reason,

our vocabulary for sounds is often clumsily onomatopoeic,¹ on loan from our language for the other senses or just made up. This difficulty is on display in any of the selfconscious efforts made by mathematical and physical scientists to distinguish the different sound qualities that they either hope to explain

¹ I say ‘clumsily’ onomatopoeic because, though such words are supposed to mimic the sounds that they refer to, it is striking how little agreement there is among the different languages that I know about what the relevant sounds are supposed to sound like in human language. Consider, again, the English words ‘clash’, ‘clatter’, ‘clang’, and ‘thud’. Their Greek equivalents are, respectively, «πάταγος», «δοῦπος», and «κλαγγή». «Κλαγγή» and ‘clang’ may sound alike but I am not sure that they really cover the same sounds, since the Greek is associated with squawks and shrieks of birds, dog barks, and the shouts of men. That is not what my ear associates either with the English ‘clang’ or the German ‘Klang’. It may well be, in fact, that the only piece of onomatopoeia that all or most human languages can agree on is ‘meow’. I wonder if this diversity among languages indicates that the purpose of onomatopoeia is not what it is usually said to be. One piece of circumstantial evidence is that we do not use onomatopoeia when it is really important to give our interlocutor a precise idea of what we have heard. If you are startled by a loud sound and you are alarmed enough to report it to the police, you will say: ‘I think I heard an explosion two doors down.’ You will not say: ‘Ka-Boooooom!’ If we ask what other function onomatopoeia may have, besides entertaining children, one answer may be that it is used to liven up poetry; and perhaps the fact that it is pressed into the service of meter and sometimes rhyme explains why it varies so much from language to language. This thought occurred to me in the course of writing the current review because we find a passage at the beginning of Hermann Helmholtz’ *Die Lehre von den Tonempfindungen* that is reminiscent of Ptolemy, *Harm.* 1.3 (discussed in the following paragraphs). It is reminiscent in that Helmholtz is trying to convey roughly what accounts for differences in (certain) modifications of sound. In an effort to focus our imagination, Helmholtz (like Ptolemy) gives us some examples: ‘Das Sausen, Heulen und Zischen des Windes, das Plätschern des Wassers, das Rollen und Rasseln eines Wagens’ [1913, 13]. The list includes the sounds made respectively by wind, water, and wagons. All of the words are onomatopoeic, e.g., the ‘Zischen’ of the wind, likewise its ‘Heulen’, although ‘Heulen’ is more usually reserved for the howling of wolves. But it is very striking how many of these words are found repeatedly in classical German poetry. One example will suffice: that of ‘rasseln’, one of the sound-words Helmholtz associates with wagons. It turns up in the second line of Goethe’s *Kronos*: ‘Spude dich Kronos|Fort den rasselnden Trott!’, (‘Make haste, Cronus!|Away, at a clattering trot!’). A poetic pedigree can also be attested for ‘sausen’ and ‘plätschern’.

or at least to characterize in some way for the purposes of doing physical acoustics.

A good example of this, with an interesting stock of Greek vocabulary for sound qualities, can be found in Ptolemy, *Harm.* 1.3 where the question is whether modifications in sound are qualities or quantities. That question is supposed to turn on the causal factors at play. If the causal factors are or have quantities, then so must their effects. One of the causal factors that Ptolemy fixes on is the physical constitution of the striking body. The striking body may be dense or fine, thick or thin, rough or smooth: to that extent, it will produce a sound with the same quality and the same degree or intensity. It will be called πυκνός or χαῦνος, παχύς or ἰσχνός, τραχύς or λειός [Düring 1930, 7.15–19]. Since the relevant qualities of the striking body are supposed to be quantifiable, so too the resultant qualities of the sound that we hear. This makes sense on the face of it since, for example, the coarser the grade of sandpaper, the raspier the sound that we hear. Ptolemy's reflections may indicate that much of our vocabulary for sound is, in *some* sense that will be examined more closely below, taken from our vocabulary for other qualities of bodies.

I propose to use Ptolemy's reflections to get a handle on LeVen's claims, which I found interesting but elusive. Precisely because Ptolemy is not a poet but a mathematical scientist, his struggle at the beginning of the *Harmonics* is to figure out how the vocabulary for sound works: how it refers and what aspect of sounds it refers to. The very nature of his enterprise requires that he step back from this vocabulary and reflect on it in a selfconscious way. Poets do not do this: they use, and perhaps also sometimes willfully abuse, the language available to them without selfconsciously trying to understand what is going on, at least not in their poetic output as such. Ptolemy has to lay his cards on the table; the poets do not. Thus, Ptolemy offers a readymade account of the matter. I am going to take advantage of this, not in the interest of making mischief but as a way of raising questions that I hope will clarify how some of LeVen's suggestions might be cashed out. Ptolemy is writing several centuries after the archaic and classical poets who are the immediate object of LeVen's interest. But that does not matter for the purposes at hand: the idea is not to represent the poets as implementing proto-Ptolemaic ideas in their treatment of modifications of sound but rather to ask LeVen for guidance on how her ideas should be understood.

The impression to start with (and it is nothing more than an impression) is that there may be an important contrast between LeVen and Ptolemy. LeVen is interested in Greek vocabulary for sound that presumably cannot be analyzed in the way that I indicated earlier on Ptolemy's behalf, namely, as having been taken from the vocabulary available for sensible qualities other than sound. The special case, for LeVen's purposes, is the word «ποικίλος» and its related forms. As an adjective, this word is often unambiguously visual because it means 'multicolored', 'piebald', 'speckled', or 'dappled', like the back of a snake or the feathers of a bird. But it is also used for sound as when Pindar characterizes the *phorminx* as ποικιλόγαρυς (multi-voiced) [*Olympia* 3.8]. We can point, wave, or gesture at brightly feathered, multi-hued birds when we are trying to convey what we mean by «ποικίλος»; but we cannot point, wave, or gesture at the sounds that we hear. For that reason, one might think that the application of «ποικίλος» to sound is something like that of «τραχύς» or «λεῖος», as explained by Ptolemy, except without the causal underpinnings and taken this time from the Greek vocabulary for visual rather than tactile qualities: what Pindar may have meant when he called the *phorminx* ποικιλόγαρυς—so the thought runs—is that it is an instrument that produces as many different musical sounds as the plumage of the relevant bird has colors. Thus, metaphor (or some kind of analogy) would be in play here. But LeVen unambiguously resists this way of thinking.²

She argues instead that «ποικίλος» is in the first instance neither visual nor auditory. Rather it functions in certain contexts as an all-purpose synonym for 'fine' or 'beautiful', except that it does not—or does not merely—denote a quality of the beautiful object; it also evokes the response of the person or being who admires the object. Perhaps, in fact, the claim is better understood as saying that the word denotes the disposition of the object to produce this response in the admirer [238].³ Thus, it will turn out that «ποικίλος» functions in archaic and early classical Greek much as 'cool' does in the idiom of North American undergraduates (and those who spend too much time in their company). 'Cool' literally denotes a tactile quality but, as used in colloquial English, that is not what it means at all: it is a term of general

² In fact, if Ptolemy himself were going to treat «ποικίλος» as he does «τραχύς» and «λεῖος», he too would deny that its application to sound is metaphorical. See below.

³ I will return to this below.

commendation applied to those things or states of affairs that elicit in us admiration—or, anyway, approval.

LeVen does not deliver a conclusive argument in defense of her thesis; rather, she sketches out a line of enquiry with suggestive passages from Aristotle and the relevant poets. The purpose for doing so, I take it, is to stimulate thought and discussion. It is in that spirit that I now ask a couple of questions because the issues that she raises are both intrinsically interesting and difficult.

My first question is whether the function of «ποικίλος» in archaic and classical Greek poetry is so different from that of the vocabulary for sound canvassed by Ptolemy in the passage that I mentioned earlier in *Harm.* 1.3. Let me be clear: my question is not whether ποικιλία is quantity or quality.⁴ It is whether the aesthetic use of «ποικίλος» that expresses admiration for something can plausibly be understood as having been taken (in the relevant sense) from an implied use of «ποικίλος» to denote the modification in the object that produced admiration in the eyes or ears of the beholder, just as ‘rough’, ‘coarse’, or ‘raspy’ might be said of a sound (with or without praise or blame) on account of the corresponding roughness in the sounding body.

⁴ This clarification may well seem out of place. As James Porter has indicated to me in correspondence, it is surely uncontroversial that ποικιλία is not a quantity at all but rather a quality. That may well be true. But as long as we are thinking about the matter in light of Ptolemy, it is not uncontroversial. Ptolemy treats roughness, smoothness and so forth as quantities (or as qualities that have quantity) in *Harm.* 1.3. As Porphyry points out (critically) in his commentary, Ptolemy may well be picking up on a remark that Aristotle makes in *Categories* 10a16. Aristotle calls into question the idea that the dense, the fine, the rough, and the smooth are qualities: ‘For they seem rather to indicate in each case a certain arrangement of the parts.’ Thus, something is dense if its parts are arranged close together. Porphyry says that this is as good as to treat the dense, the fine, the rough and the smooth as quantities [Düring 1932, 42.29]. Thus, on Porphyry’s view, Ptolemy’s only contribution is to make this explicit. Porphyry himself takes the view that these modifications are qualities; I suspect that he and Porter would be in agreement about «ποικιλία» [43.18–19]. If, however, we look at things from Ptolemy’s point of view, ποικιλία might well turn out to be a quantity (or a quality that has quantity), i.e., the quantity of differences that a thing exhibits. A thing will be all the more ποικίλον the more its parts are different from some other. Be that as it may, and I believe it is quite interesting in its own right, I want to set aside the question of quality *versus* quantity and focus on the question that I formulate in what immediately follows.

I am led to raise this question because, in spite of the apparent contrast that I noted at the outset, there seem to be two notable points of contact between LeVen and Ptolemy.

The first is that Ptolemy would deny, for example, that the words ‘rough’ and ‘smooth’ as applied to sound are being used metaphorically. If you sand a surface with sandpaper, the sound produced will be rough just like the sandpaper itself. The term that you use to describe the sound will be the same as the one you use to describe the striking body: that term will not have to be stretched, extended, or contorted in any way. For the quality of the striking body and the quality that it imparts to the sound emitted are the same. Ptolemy says explicitly that sameness of quality is tracked by sameness of term. In Andrew Barker’s translation, the relevant passage [Düring 1932, 7.15–20] reads as follows:

Through smoothness and roughness, again, it [*scil.* the striking body] creates only a quality in accordance with which sounds are described by the same words, smooth or rough, since the qualities are essentially the same. Through diffuseness or density and thickness or fineness, it makes qualities in accordance with which we again call sounds by the same words, dense or flabby, thick or thin.... [Barker 1989, 280].

That the same term is used for the same quality, whether apprehended by the ear or by touch, means that the term is not used metaphorically. This makes for a point of contact because LeVen says that «ποικίλος» as applied to sound is not metaphorical either: for her, it is a word that has no primary residence in some one sense (vision, say) but is at home in, or appropriate to, them all [234–235].

The second point of contact is that, like Ptolemy, LeVen speaks of causal factors. She writes:

This is, I believe, what ποικίλος encapsulates in the archaic and classical period: it captures ...the notion that the luscious patterns in a bird’s feathers, the wrought motives of a shield, or the many-voiced and swift-moving notes of a lyre *cause* an aesthetic reaction of rapt pleasure through the senses. [238, my emphasis]

Precisely because there is something in the admired object that causes the admiring state of mind in the speaker, it would be a mistake to translate

«ποικίλος» as ‘ooh’ or ‘ah’.⁵ The better translation would be a quasi-Homeric epithet: ‘provoker of ooh’s and ah’s’. This captures both the significance of the beholder’s admiring response and the object’s role in provoking the response. It does not privilege one over the other. LeVen herself stresses the idea that the archaic and classical use of «ποικίλος» treats the two aspects as inseparable or intimately related. It is hard to see how that could be unless a causal relation were at work. That too is suggestive of Ptolemy’s account of ‘rough’ and ‘smooth’ as applied to sound in *Harm.* 1.3: we have seen that there too causal factors are at work.

But it might be objected, and perhaps LeVen herself would agree, that a causal relation all by itself is not enough to get the sameness of terms that Ptolemy calls to our attention. So this may be where she and Ptolemy part company. I can clarify the point by appeal to David Hume’s essay ‘Of the Standard of Taste’.

Hume opens his essay by recalling an episode in Cervantes’ *Don Quixote*: two of Sancho Panza’s cousins, both known for their delicacy of taste, are called on to test some wine. One says that it tastes ‘leathery’; the other that it tastes ‘ferrous’. They are both vindicated when the barrel is emptied and an iron key on a leather thong is found among the dregs. Here is a straightforward case of a causal relation that allows the use of the same terms both for certain qualities in certain objects and for the (same) qualities produced by the objects in a person’s sense experience. The one cousin was right to say that the wine tasted leathery because the leather of the thong caused him to experience the quality of leather as a certain taste sensation. The other cousin was right to pronounce it ferrous because he tasted a certain ferrous quality caused by, and present in, the iron key. The problem with beauty, according to Hume, is that we never find anything in the object

⁵ It may well be that ‘cool’ in the English dialect of North American undergraduates is often equivalent to ‘ooh’ and ‘ah’. That does seem to be the case when an undergraduate spontaneously exclaims ‘Cool!’ If so, my suggestion earlier that «ποικίλος» functions like ‘cool’ needs to be revised. Porter has helped me to see this. On the other hand, it does seem that ‘cool’ does not always function like ‘ooh’ or ‘ah’ because people do often say ‘That’s cool!’. But nobody says ‘That’s ooh!’. I think this is instructive: it shows just how difficult it can be to specify how the terms (and exclamations) of commendation work in one’s own language. How much more difficult it is to figure out how they work in a language no longer in use.

that could vindicate our judgements in the way that the discovery of the iron key on the leather thong vindicated the pronouncements of Sancho's cousins. We call beautiful objects 'beautiful' on account of *something* in the object that we take to be the cause of our response to it but we really do not know what this thing is. That is why the legitimacy of judgements of taste is open to doubt, as when people say 'à chacun son goût'. But, at the same time, people have the intuition that some aesthetic judgements are right and some are wrong. That intuition leads Hume to argue that we can justify our aesthetic judgements if we can figure out who are the true judges of beauty. Then, it will just be a matter of aligning our judgements with theirs. Hume argues that we can, in principle and without threat of circularity, figure out who these people are if we can draw up a list of personal and intellectual qualities that it seems plausible to think that they must all have. If you want to know whether *X* is beautiful, find somebody who has these qualities and ask his or her opinion.

The point here is not to foist Hume's aesthetics on poets singing in archaic and classical Greek but rather to point out that Hume's line of thinking suggests a block to my hypothetical Ptolemaic move for «ποικιλία». One might plausibly think that, though there is something in the objects that Pindar and company call ποικίλον which causes an admiring state of mind either in them or the beings—god, man or beast—of whom they sing, they know what this thing is no more than Hume can tell what it is in beautiful objects that sets the true judges on fire. Since they are presumed not to know what this thing is, there cannot be any sameness of term tracking sameness of quality because the relevant qualities cannot be directly compared: one knows directly only the state of one's own mind as an admirer of a certain object; one knows the quality in the object that caused this state of mind only by its effect. By contrast, with 'leathery', 'ferrous', 'rough' and 'smooth', «ποικίλος» is a term that does not track. That is what makes it neither primarily visual nor primarily auditory. Unless I am much mistaken, I take it that LeVen might embrace this thought. (I hesitate, though, because I am not really sure.)

I myself think that embracing the thought I am offering LeVen would be too hasty—certainly without further reflection. I do not mean to suggest that Pindar and company would have had any worked out account of «ποικιλία»—something like a definition that would have satisfied Plato's

Socrates. Why should they be expected to have done that? I mean only that the word does seem to have a range of different connotations that they may have had in mind and that may be relevant to the issues raised in LeVen's paper. That brings me to my second question: When we take these other connotations into account, is it not possible that «ποικίλος» does track sameness of quality after all?

«Ποικίλος» as an adjective often means 'varied', 'manifold', 'diverse'. These meanings play out not only in space but in time too. So we find that the word can also mean 'changing' or 'capable of change'. Diversity and mutability are qualities that can be seen, heard, and sensed by all the other human senses. As such, the words that we use for them in any language do not have to be extended or used metaphorically when we apply them to different sense qualities. Moreover, it might be thought that the diverse or mutable sense experience we have of an object—whether visual, auditory, or whatever it may be—is diverse or mutable because of the underlying diversity or mutability of the object itself. This, in turn, suggests that our words for diversity or mutability may be terms that track sameness of quality in the cause and in its effect, just like 'leathery', 'ferrous', and 'rough'. At least to that extent, perhaps «ποικίλος» is a tracking term too in as much as it can have the relevant meanings. But even if we are willing to countenance this much ptolemizing, we may perhaps doubt that the ptolemizing can be extended to the aesthetic uses of «ποικίλος»—the uses of immediate interest to LeVen. For it may be doubted, quite reasonably on the face of it, that the admiring state of mind constitutive of an aesthetic response to the admired object is an experience of diversity or mutability. Perhaps the one who admires is favorably struck by the diversity or mutability of the admired object. But does the admirer *feel* diverse or mutable in the presence of this object? Is the admirer affected by it in such a way as to *become* diverse or mutable? What would that even mean? Here I suggest that Pindar has an answer to this question.

But first, perhaps I need to spell out why I think that the question has to be asked in this way. What is at issue is an aesthetic experience: what it is like to experience a certain, positive aesthetic response to an admired object and thereby find oneself in a certain subjective state. I am asking whether this very subjective state can be ptolemized, just as Ptolemy himself may be understood to have 'ptolemized' qualities of sound at the beginning

of the *Harmonics*. That means that I am asking not if the admirer *hears* diversity in sound and admires the sound on account of its diversity but rather whether the subjective aesthetic state of the admirer, as admirer, is a state of being or feeling diverse that corresponds to the state of diversity in the admired object, just as the raspiness of the sound of sanding corresponds to the coarseness of the sandpaper.⁶

Now, one of the things that counts as varied and mutable for Pindar is human life. Indeed, *Isthmia* 3 ends with the remark, as rendered by William H. Race [1997], that ‘As the days roll by, one’s life changes now this way|now that...’.⁷ The remark is explicitly intended to contrast our condition with that of the ‘sons of the gods’, who remain ἄτρωτοι (unwounded). These beings never experience upheaval as we do. But the contrast of interest for our purposes is with the condition of death, since Pindar sometimes plays up this contrast in such a way as to suggest that the variability of life manifests itself as vigor and fruitfulness. It is interesting to note that he sometimes uses the word «ποικίλος» in these contexts. Perhaps the prettiest example is to be found in *Olympia* 4. Pindar recounts that four members of the victor’s clan were lost in battle on the same day and adds that the victory of their kinsman at the Pancratium is a sort of return to life, as summer follows winter:

However, in a single day
a cruel blizzard of war stripped
their blessed hearth of four men.
But now again, after a winter’s gloom lasting months,
it is as if the dappled earth had blossomed with red roses.

The condition of death is one of monotonous, barren gloom. The return to life breaks the monotony. It restores the clan’s vigor and fruitfulness, like the ‘dappled earth’ that returns to vibrant bloom in summer. ‘Dappled’ is Race’s translation of «ποικίλα».⁸

⁶ I thank Sara Magrin for helping me to clarify this point.

⁷ All my quotations from Pindar are from this edition and translation.

⁸ The association of diversity and mutability with life itself does not seem to be an idiosyncrasy of Pindar. It is interesting to remember in this context the confrontation between Socrates and Callicles in Plato’s *Gorgias*. Callicles claims that the best life is that of the best men: it is the one that affords these men the opportunity not only to satisfy their desires but to cultivate their desires and pleasures so that they will experience as many new ones as possible. Callicles and Socrates both assume that pleasure is the replenishment of an empty state. Socrates compares the life that

I suggest that this passage supplies an answer to the difficult question that I raised against the ptolemization of the aesthetic uses of «ποικίλος». What would it mean for the one who admires to *feel* or *become* (inwardly and perhaps also outwardly) diverse and mutable in the presence of the relevant object? It would mean that that person or being feels, and is, invigorated by it. This suggestion may perhaps be confirmed by the second strophe of Pindar's *Nemea* 4. This time the victor has lost his father. Pindar imagines how the father, if he were still alive, would express his admiration for his champion son, who is just a boy.

And if your father Timokritos
were still warmed by the blazing sun, often would he have

Callicles is praising to the condition of a leaky jar. When he asks Callicles if it would not be preferable to live a life like the condition of a well made jar without holes that has been filled and properly sealed so that it never loses any of its contents, Callicles protests that that would be the life of a 'stone'. It would have no variety or mutability of pleasure—indeed it would be without pleasure!—and, hence, it would not even count as a life at all [*Gorg.* 494a–b]. It is interesting too that, in *Republic* 8, when Socrates and Adeimantus try to sketch the psychological profile of the democratic man living under a democratic constitution, they stress the great variability and mutability of that man's pleasures. The life of the democratic man is (almost) the life that Callicles praises in the *Gorgias*. (I say 'almost', because it ultimately finds its purest expression in the life of the tyrant). In G. M. A. Grube's translation, as revised by Reeve, Socrates traces the emergence of the democratic man to the moment when the son of the oligarch starts to associate with 'wild and dangerous creatures who can provide every variety of *multicolored* pleasure in every sort of way...' [559d–e: Grube 1997, 1170 (my emphasis)]. 'Multicolored' is Grube's translation of «ποικίλαι» as applied to pleasures. The life of the democratic man, like the one praised by Callicles is not merely a life of pleasure, it is a life of diverse and mutable pleasures—one that may well be characterized as ποικίλος. Callicles himself might have used this word; and if he had, he would have used it as a term of commendation. It is clear that Plato is not recommending either the life praised by Callicles or that of the democratic man. For that reason, he uses «ποικίλαι» at *Rep.* 559d as a term of censure. All of this suggests that Plato was responding to a view out there that associated diversity and mutability with life (and often did so by way of the diversity and mutability of pleasure, as a fundamental part of human life). Plato himself must have felt the pull of these associations too—or, at any rate, some of them. In *Soph.* 248e–249a ff., he represents Theaetetus and the Eleatic Visitor as shrinking from the idea that *that which wholly is* might be deprived of change and life. As Theaetetus says, that would be a frightening thought.

played an elaborate tune on the lyre, and, relying on this song, would have celebrated his triumphant son.

Timokritos cannot do this, of course, because he is dead. Pindar himself will have to take over because only the living can praise in song. That is presumably because such praise requires vigor; and the vigor of the poet in particular reflects, and is inspired by, that of the hero whom he admires and celebrates. The poet puts this vigor on display in the song of praise that he sings, which outwardly expresses his admiring state of mind. One should, therefore, expect the song of praise itself to be vigorous, i.e., varied and diverse. So it is. Pindar says that, were he alive, Timokritos himself would celebrate his son by playing ‘an *elaborate* tune on the lyre’. This is Race’s translation of «ποικίλον κιθαρίζων».⁹

If my thoughts are on the mark, I leave it as a question for LeVen why we should not think of «ποικίλος» as an aesthetic (musical) term that functions along the lines suggested by Ptolemy for ‘rough’ and ‘smooth’. What is there in classical and archaic Greek lyric poetry that would block the ptolemization of «ποικίλος»?¹⁰ LeVen’s paper is stimulating. That is because she is willing

⁹ The suggestion implies, of course, that «ποικίλον» might be translated by ‘vigorous’ or ‘lively’. That will seem implausible if we navigate by the first meaning of the word that turns up for «ποικίλος», ‘dappled’. It would seem that ‘dappled’ and ‘lively’ do not mean precisely the same thing. Granted. But first of all we do not call a melody or a song ‘dappled’. We might call it ‘elaborate’, as Race suggests in his translation. We might also characterize an elaborate tune as a lively one, i.e., as one that manifests its liveliness in its diverseness. I thank Sara Magrin for helping me to clarify this point too.

¹⁰ One thing that might conceivably block it is a thought that James Porter has shared with me. If ptolemization goes through, the effect of something ποικίλον on the admirer is to induce in that person or being a subjective state that might also be characterized as ποικίλον. That will conceivably work for the ποικίλον, assuming that it can be understood as sometimes equivalent to being or feeling enlivened by something. But even if we grant that it may, it does not seem that other aesthetic terms allow for ptolemization. Porter points out that I might admire subtlety in something and not myself by translated into a subtle subjective state. Perhaps I might also admire the beauty of something, yet not feel or become subjectively beautiful—and so on. These points must be conceded. I am just not sure what they show. They might just show that English aesthetic terms cannot be ptolemized. But they might also show that some aesthetic terms, in whatever language, cannot be ptolemized. I am not sure, however, that they show that no aesthetic terms can be ptolemized.

to try out a big idea and also because the idea itself is intrinsically interesting. This is commendable. But it is just as important to clarify what an idea boils down to and to test it as best one can. That is what I missed in her paper. I could not tell precisely how she understands the language of *ποικιλία* to work.

When one considers the *ποικιλία* of *GRMS*—its diversity of topic as reflected in the two papers that I just reviewed—it is clear that the journal faces a challenge: maybe not so much to attract submissions but rather to attract readers—or rather, certain circles of readers. People who explicitly think of themselves as interested in ancient Greek and Roman music will not have to be prodded to pick up a copy of *GRMS* because there has been no journal devoted to their topic until now. But, as the papers by Vendries and LeVen show by way of example, there must be plenty of potential readers out there who probably do not think of themselves as especially interested in ancient Greek and Roman music as such, but who would likely find articles of interest to them in this journal: classicists, Egyptologists, Byzantinists, historians of Renaissance polyphony, historians of science in the Islamic world, and no doubt many others. It is to be hoped that the editorial board of *GRMS* will undertake (if it has not done so already) a vigorous outreach campaign to the neighboring disciplines so that the journal is actually read by people in all the fields that the journal will likely cover.

It remains for me to call attention to a special feature of the inaugural issue of *GRMS*. This issue has two, distinct parts. The two papers that I have just reviewed appear in the second part along with two other papers. One is by Massimo Raffa about technical vocabulary in ancient Greek music theory. It regards a debate among music theorists—our witness is Porphyry in his commentary on Ptolemy's *Harmonics*—about whether there is, or should be, a difference in meaning between «*λόγος*» (as in 'numerical ratio') and «*διάστημα*» (as in 'interval'). I will not discuss this paper here, not because it is uninteresting (on the contrary) but rather because it is time to push on. The other paper in the second part of this issue is by Maurizio Bettini. I will discuss it later, in part because of its intrinsic interest but also because of a

Ptolemy himself may be instructive here. He can be understood to say in *Harm.* 1.3 that human reason in studying mathematics (mixed as well as pure) apprehends beauty and goodness and that this apprehension is not merely theoretical: it has practical applications, one of which is to make human beings good and beautiful [Düring 1930, 93.1–10]. I myself do not think that this is a crazy idea.

question that it raises about the principal object of discussion in the first part of this issue of *GRMS*, which is an archeological discovery made in Athens on 13–14 May 1981.

On that date, two tombs were excavated at Daphne (at 53 Odos Olgas). The first tomb contained one adult human skeleton of uncertain sex (the person would have been in his or her 40s) and four *lekythoi*. The second tomb contained one adult skeleton of uncertain sex (this person would have been in his or her 20s), nine knucklebones (toys?), a chisel, a saw, a writing case containing a bronze stylus and ink-pot, four wooden writing tablets with traces of wax (and fragments of a fifth), a papyrus roll (complete on discovery and now completely disintegrated), pieces of tortoise shell (plaques) presumed to have once been the soundbox of a lyre, one wooden *aulos* tube (the tube that would have completed the pair is missing), and fragments of a harp.

In the first paper on this find, Egert Pöhlmann reviews the excavation of the two tombs and their contents. Their close proximity is thought to indicate a family burial but no stela was found and so the identity of these people remains unknown. The style of the *lekythoi* (their shape and their paintings) suggests for the first tomb a date right around 430 BC, as argued by Erika Simon and Irma Wehgartner. Chrestos Terzes argues that the harp in the second tomb may be dated to some time between 430–410 BC. If he is right, then the two graves are almost exactly contemporaneous. I am doubtful, not because his claim is impossible but because it ultimately rests on just five Athenian vases depicting harps of the relevant sort by two artisans whose period of activity apparently coincides with the very two decades in question. Since the literary evidence for such harps indicates their presence in ancient Greek musical life from the early fifth to the second century BC, why pump for such a precise dating of the second tomb?¹¹ The find would be no less interesting if it turned out that the two tombs were a generation (or more)

¹¹ To be sure, Simon and Wehgartner offer an even more precise date for the four white *lekythoi* found in the other grave. But the weight of the evidence seems to support this decisively: the style of the ornaments, the choice of colors, the techniques used, the fact that the four pieces must have come from the same workshop and must have been purchased together (namely, on the occasion of the deceased's funeral) all seem to exclude other dates [see 64–65].

apart, which is often (not always, but often) the case with family burials (if indeed that is what we have here).

Though the two tombs attracted media attention at the time of their discovery and excavation, they have apparently gone unstudied until now. Given the obvious interest of their contents, it is natural to hope that they may shed new light on ancient Greek musical practice.

There have been *aulos* finds before, including complete pairs (most of them made of bone). Indeed, Stelios Psaroudakes uses these finds in his paper as a comparison class to get a fix on the widowed Daphne *aulos* tube and bulb that terminates it. But here there seem to be no great surprises, except for the absence of a mate. By contrast, I surmise that the Daphne harp is the first and only harp to have come to light. But, to my frustration, I cannot really be sure from the paper devoted to it by Chrestos Terzes. Three pages into his paper, he mentions in passing that the Daphne harp is ‘unique’. But it is not clear what this means. Does it mean, in fact, that no other ancient harp has ever turned up until now? Does it mean that no other ancient harp has turned up at Greek excavation sites? Is it possible that harps, or harp fragments, of Greek design have turned up at Egyptian excavation sites?¹² Unlike Psaroudakes, Terzes does not survey other harp finds. Should we infer from this that there are none to survey? (Why must readers be asking *this* question? *GRMS* is not supposed to be a journal exclusively devoted to ancient instrument reconstruction; accordingly, it should require that its contributors on this subject (and all others) communicate effectively what they know.) As for the soundbox of the tortoise-shell lyre, we learn

¹² The triangle harp is attested in Egypt. In fact, there are two photos of two different terracotta figurines playing this instrument at the end of Vendries’ paper. But the reader can see that these harps are not the same as those discussed by Terzes, at least by comparing the figures shown in Plates IX.1b, 2b at the end of Vendries’ paper with the five Athenian vase paintings that Terzes reproduces in Plate VI.2. The Egyptian harp seems to have been played standing up; the Athenian harp, sitting down. All three sides of the Athenian harp are made of wood: of the two sides forming a right angle, the one rests on the left leg of the seated player, the other stands upright; the hypotenuse (and with it, the soundbox of the instrument) is away from the player’s torso. By contrast, the Egyptian harps shown in Plates IX.1b, 2b have only two wooden sides. The side of the triangle farthest away from the player’s torso is not a wooden part fitted to the rest of the frame, but a string, the longest one of the instrument as a whole.

from Psaroudakes first of all that Hellenistic tortoises and their present-day descendants are the same in species (of which there are three) and, hence, that their respective shells can be compared. But we learn second of all that such comparisons indicate that the number and pattern of shell plaques on the Daphne find are anatomically incorrect: the wrong number and the wrong arrangement [see Plates V.12–13 to spot the difference]. This unfortunate state of affairs seems to have come about *after* the excavation, i.e., as a result of a botched attempt to reassemble the plaques, which had long since come apart. *Ô stupeur!*

There remains one last question that I wish to raise. It concerns the professional, or perhaps hobbyist, identity of the occupant of the grave whose contents I have been discussing. Part 1 of the inaugural issue of *GRMS* is entitled ‘The Musician’s Grave’. That is fitting in view of the musical instruments discovered at the site. But the presence of a decayed papyrus roll and writing implements might also suggest a literary profile. Perhaps we might speak of the ‘lyric poet’s grave’.¹³ It is stimulating to reflect on this thought in light of Maurizio Bettini’s contribution in part 2 of this issue of *GRMS*.

Bettini’s concern is not music in ancient or classical Greece, nor is it even music in the first instance. It is, rather, ‘effective speech’ in the Roman context.¹⁴ Typical examples of such speech include formulae used for good

¹³ In fact, the grave has more usually been referred to in newspaper reports as the ‘poet’s grave’ [84].

¹⁴ I should say that Maurizio Bettini has a broad scholarly interest in voice/speech in general and not only human voice/speech. He is the author of ‘Laughing Weasels’ [2008], in which he asks whether weasels can plausibly be said to laugh, as suggested by Ovid’s story of the transformation of one of Alcmena’s attendants, Galanthis, into a weasel in the *Metamorphoses*. To my ear, it has always seemed that the domestic ferret ‘giggles’, ‘chuckles’ or ‘chuckle-beeps’—at least when it seems to be enjoying itself. Bettini argues that the sound which Galanthis makes during her encounter with Lucina (Juno’s envoy, whose mission was to prevent the birth of Hercules) is, upon transformation, an ‘explosive bark or chirp’ of terror or stress. I can attest that the domestic ferret does indeed shriek in terror when appropriately terrified. But Galanthis seems no more terrified or even just stressed by Lucina after transformation than before. She laughs at Lucina as a human because she is amused at having tricked Juno’s envoy into allowing her mistress, Alcmena, to give birth (after seven days and seven nights of labor). But she continues to laugh as a weasel. There is no reason to think that she is any less delighted, as a weasel, at having outwitted

augury and the enactment of laws. All such speech rests on some authority. This authority (usually divine) makes itself felt not simply in the content of the speech but in its mode. Effective speech sounds catchy to the ear, as in the *tria verba* of the *praetor* passing sentence—*do, dico, addico*—or in the formula pronounced for good augury—*quod bonum, faustum, felix fortunatumque esset*. The authoritative effect is achieved by semantic parallels, alliteration, wordplay, and word rhythm more generally. These devices allow the voice of the relevant authority to be heard coming through, or supervening on, the words themselves as uttered by the relevant human officer. Thus, it is natural to include poetry as an instance of ‘effective’ speech since the same linguistic devices are used: when properly used, they have the effect of compelling the minds of listeners to attend, to recall, and even to be swept away—as though under the power of some higher, non-human authority. The technical term for this effect is ‘*delectatio*’, which does not mean ‘delight’ so much as ‘being drawn to bait’. However remote we may be from ancient Rome, we are familiar with this effect: it is felt in the best of advertising jingles. ‘*Sachez chasser vos achats sur le champ!*’ was in circulation about 10 years ago to promote the Yellow Pages in Montreal: it has the jingly features of Roman effective speech (or French analogues thereof). We would be wrong to dismiss it as lacking any *auctoritas*. Silly though it may be, it establishes its *auctoritas* by being catchy enough to hook people. That it ‘hooked’ me at least is obvious just from the fact that I remember it to this day with much amusement and fondness (how fast can you say it out loud three times in a row?)—even as the Yellow Pages are ceding their authority as a search engine to the faster, vastly more powerful and far-ranging services now available on the internet. In the context of ancient Rome, the hook and bait of poetry was typically used to subdue audiences in the theatre and to get them to attend to the action on stage as though it were reality. It is here that music makes its entry.

Lucina. So she giggles or chuckle-beeps. I should add that Bettini’s argument rests in part on passages in Horace perceived to be onomatopoeic. But, for the reasons that I mention in footnote 1 [p. 148, above], I doubt that onomatopoeic words really help us hear what the mimicked sounds really sound like. A Martian visiting Earth, after reviewing the words that different human languages have invented to convey ‘what dogs say’ would probably have to suspend judgement on the question what dogs really say.

As Bettini points out, music could and did heighten the effects of ‘effective speech’ in the theaters: no doubt by playing up, or juxtaposing with, the rhythms and sonorities of the words. The upshot of his paper is that music and poetry in ancient Rome (as in other cultures, ancient and extant) were intimately related to each other in a way perhaps no longer obvious or natural to us: they formed, together with the techniques of stagecraft, a total means of expression that had at least one significant effect on the world, namely, to make theatre goers pay attention. It seems plausible to think that the phenomenon that Bettini describes in the ancient Roman context had a Greek analogue. That analogue would be the total art form that went by the name «μουσική»: neither melody on its own nor mute verse recorded on a wax tablet nor a lone dancer kicking up his heels but rather melody, catchy verse, human movement, and stagecraft woven together to make a splash and to have an effect on the world. The intended effects could range from securing patronage for stars, honoring ‘good’ tyrants and remonstrating with ‘bad’ ones, reproducing the city, maintaining good relations with the gods, luring fellow citizens to the bait of entertainment. None of these effects could be achieved except through the appropriate higher authority whose voice—one would say, following Bettini—could be heard rising above and penetrating through the spectacle of it all.

It was the ambition of contributors to the recent volume *Music and the Muses* [2004], edited by Penelope Murray and Peter Wilson, to study the phenomenon of μουσική in all of these dimensions. Perhaps they would be willing to think of themselves as doing for Athens of the fifth and mid-fourth centuries what Bettini tries to do in *GRMS* for Rome (or perhaps the question should go the other way around). With that thought in mind, one cannot help but wonder about the person buried in the second grave at 53 Odos Olgas. What was that person’s relation to μουσική as the ‘effective’, total means of expression just described? Did that person contribute verse as well as melody? The question is all the more alluring if it turns out that the grave goes back to the last quarter of the fourth century (100 years later than Terzes and company say). For that is a time, even in Athens, when the remains testifying to μουσική are scarce (the remains suggest that the fifth century was its heyday).¹⁵ One would naturally hope to find answers—or,

¹⁵ In that case, the find might conceivably offer another datum of significance for the newest project undertaken by Pauline LeVen. In *The Many-Headed Muse: Tradi-*

anyway, hints—in the written remains found at the site. These are the object of M. L. West's contribution. Alas, his report is very discouraging.

The pieces of writing in the second grave at 53 Odos Olgas would compel our attention even if they turned out to be a shopping list or something equally mundane. They include the oldest Greek papyrus now known to us (assuming Terzes and company are right about the dating). Until the discovery of the Derveni papyrus, which is about 100 years later than this one (on that assumption), most of our surviving Greek papyri were discovered in Egypt, where they were preserved by the dry conditions. In Greece proper, as in Italy, papyri were lost due to the far damper conditions. The Derveni papyrus, discovered in 1962 in Thessaloniki, survived because it had been carbonized by the heat of a funeral pyre. The papyrus and wooden writing tablet discovered in the grave under discussion survived in very humid conditions because they were enclosed in a marble sarcophagus. The papyrus, at any rate, survived as 'a shapeless, flattened mass', as reported by the Athenian correspondent to *The Times* on 25 May 1981 (as quoted by Pöhlmann [9]). I had imagined something like what happens to your research notes if you neglect to extricate them from your shirt pocket before throwing all your laundry into the washing machine, except that this papyrus roll was also thoroughly rotten: much of it had disintegrated into sand and earth. The reader can see what it looked like before restoration by examining Plate I.2. Nevertheless, bits were recovered. But that is all they are: no continuous text emerged out of them. The reader can see roughly the state of things after restoration by examining Plates IV.6–10. The surviving bits of writing tablet can be seen on Plates IV.1a–4. Athina Alexopoulou and Agathi-Anthoula Kaminari subjected them (and other artifacts found at the site) to noninvasive multispectral imaging. The reader can see from Plates II.3a–8b how these techniques brought some of the papyrus to life and from Plates II.9a–12b clearly detectable traces of writing on pieces of wax still clinging to the writing tablets (tablets of the same design as those used by the boy shown learning his lessons on the Douris Cup). But for all that, West could

tion and Innovation in Late Classical Greek Poetry [2014], she tries to counter the prevalent idea that lyric poetry somehow ran out of steam by the late fourth century.

recover only a snatch of a word here or there.¹⁶ We can always hope that future advances in imaging technology will recover more in the future.

The written texts found at 53 Odos Olgas may never shed light on the professional or hobbyist profile of the person buried at that site. Was that person a musician only or a singer of verse who would accompany his/herself? It is true that no one can accompany his or her own singing on the *aulos*. The presence of an *aulos* in the grave might point to a fulltime musician or—anyway—a part-time *aulete*. On the other hand, there is no way of knowing whether the person ever owned a complete *aulos* pair: all that was unearthed was a single pipe without its mate. Then, again, a chisel and a saw were also discovered in this grave. So perhaps we have neither a poet nor a fulltime musician nor any direct contributor to μουσική as such but perhaps a maker of musical instruments. Perhaps the written texts were accounts of instrument design and craftsmanship. Perhaps the widowed *aulos* tube is not a widow after all but rather the lone maiden tube that the craftsman (he would then surely be a man) finished before his untimely death.

It remains now only to extend belated birthday greetings to Andrew Barker along with hopes for the success of *Greek and Roman Musical Studies*.¹⁷

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¹⁶ One thing that the infrared imaging managed to establish is that the presence of inter-linear letters on MII 8523 is due to the fact that text shows through from other layers of papyrus that could not be detached. As West points out, this blocks the temptation to read these letters—as inventory notes apparently do—as musical notation [83].

¹⁷ I am grateful to Sara Magrin of the Classics Department at the University of California, Berkeley and James Porter of the Classics Department at the University of California, Irvine for taking the time to read and comment on this review.

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