

## MUSIC AND METAMORPHOSIS IN GRAECO-ROMAN THOUGHT

Where does music come from? What kind of agency does a song have? What is at the root of musical pleasure? Can music die? These are some of the questions the Greeks and the Romans asked about music, song, and the soundscape within which they lived, and that this book examines. Focusing on mythical narratives of metamorphosis, it investigates the aesthetic and ontological questions raised by fantastic stories of musical origins. Each chapter opens with an ancient text devoted to a musical metamorphosis (of a girl into a bird, a nymph into an echo, men into cicadas, etc.) and reads that text as a meditation on an aesthetic and ontological question, in dialogue with “contemporary” debates – contemporary with debates in the Graeco-Roman culture that gave rise to the story, and with modern debates in the Posthumanities about what it means to be a human animal enmeshed in a musicking environment.

PAULINE A. LEVEN is an associate professor of Classics at Yale University. She is the author of *The Many-Headed Muse: Tradition and Innovation in Late Classical Greek Lyric Poetry* (Cambridge, 2014), which received the Samuel and Ronnie Heyman Yale College Prize for outstanding publication. She is also co-editor, with Sean Gurd, of the first volume of *A Cultural History of Western Music* (forthcoming) and currently at work on two monographs – one entitled *Poetry and the Posthuman*, the other devoted to music and mortality. A member of MOISA (the Society for the Study of Greek and Roman Music and its Cultural Heritage), she has taken an active role in promoting and disseminating the study of ancient Greek and Roman musical culture.

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Pauline A. LeVen  
Frontmatter  
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*To my son Hudson, for teaching me better than  
any posthuman glossary about the meaning of “connectedness,”  
and opening my ears to a new world of sounds*

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## *Acknowledgments*

Like the myths it examines, this book has an origin story. It started with a conversation with Froma Zeitlin, after one of her seminars on the Greek novel. I was finishing my dissertation and considering the next project. “You like stories and you are a musician – why not work on musical myths?” said Froma, shrugging as if it were an evidence. She was of course right, but it took me some time to put this idea in motion, and the manuscript itself went through several metamorphoses.

In its initial stages, it was shaped by inspiring conversations on myth with Jay Fisher and Lowell Edmunds; by exchanges with Mark Payne, who generously offered his guidance from afar and his thoughts on music and the posthuman; and by discussions with Bridget Murnaghan, Helene Foley, Barbara Kowalzig, Timothy Power, and other participants in our stimulating Epichoreia Saturdays at NYU.

As the chapters took form, they benefited from feedback from the whole MOISA team, especially from Tosca Lynch, Donatella Restani, and Eleonora Rocconi; and from audiences at Penn, Trento, Riva del Garda, Oxford, University of Missouri, Princeton, Johns Hopkins, Yale, CUNY, Rutgers, Urbino, Ravenna, Nanterre, EHESS, and KCL. I was also lucky to have conversation partners in the UK and the US always ready to talk about things musical and share their work and ideas (Armand D’Angour, Andrew Barker, Josh Billings, Felix Budelmann, Shane Butler, David Fearn, Sarah Nooter, and Tom Phillips), and to find engaged interlocutors who welcomed me (back) in Paris during a year of leave (Charles Delattre, Nadine Le Meur, Alexa Piqueux, and Evelyne Prioux). I am particularly grateful to Mark Griffith for his faithful support over the years. I have learned very much thanks to our many exchanges about our converging book projects. From his comments on the first draft of the first chapter to his final reading of the whole manuscript, he has lead me to enrich my interpretations, to correct missteps, and to enlarge my musical horizons.



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There are three friends and colleagues without whom this book would not have materialized: Melissa Mueller, who read most of the chapters in their early form, and workshopped them with me, sharing her deep literary insights and perspicuity; Victor Bers, who asked the right questions, read the final manuscript, and made it much less stylistically infelicitous; and Sean Gurd, who engaged with the book as an ideal reader would – with big demands and intellectual generosity. Without their contributions and their friendship, this book, and my life, would be a lot less rich.

As in all metamorphoses, a lot went on unseen behind the scenes, and I am particularly grateful to my research assistants: Paul Eberwine, whose meticulous reading of the manuscript early on was instrumental in clarifying the argument, and Sam Katz, whose last-minute fact-checking saved me from some embarrassing blunders; to our Classics librarian Colin McCaffrey, who not only helped me find books, but also made me think about them in a different way; to the two anonymous readers who pushed me to refine the project's initial form; to Kate Mertes, who compiled the index, and Alwyn Harrison, who copy edited the final typescript, and improved it in numerous ways, not least with some felicitous suggestions for translations; and to Michael Sharp at Cambridge University Press, who trusted me again, and showed an ideal combination of patience and guidance.

Finally, I would be remiss in not thanking my friends for their welcome interruptions, their faithfulness, and their sense of fun; my extended family for living with the project for six years and helping in small and big ways (not least with their babysitting and chauffeuring services); my mother, for

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lovingly keeping me on track, and always listening; Thomas and Ox, for those long walks up East Rock during which we worked out insoluble questions, only to come up with new answers on the next walk; and my son Hudson, to whom this book is dedicated. The book entered the production process in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic. For five months between March and August 2020, we lived in a cabin in Vermont and experienced first-hand coexistence with the nonhuman – with an invisible virus, a very vocal menagerie (a seventeen-year-old cat, four hens, and a rooster), and the new virtual reality of online friends. I hope those months will remain in Hudson's memory (as in mine) a moment full of new relationships rather than a time of isolation.

## Abbreviations

Greek and Latin texts are quoted from their OCT, Teubner, or reference edition, with my own translations, except where otherwise noted. Abbreviations for ancient authors, works, and modern reference editions follow those used in fourth edition of *The Oxford Classical Dictionary* (ed. Simon Hornblower, Antony Spawforth, and Esther Eidinow, Oxford, 2012).

<i>Anth. Lat.</i>	D. R. Shackleton Bailey (ed.), <i>Anthologia Latina</i> , Vol. 1. (Stuttgart: 1982)
<i>CIG</i>	<i>Corpus Inscriptionum Graecorum</i> , ed. A. Boeckh et al. (Berlin: 1828–1877)
DK	H. Diels and W. Kranz (eds.), <i>Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker</i> , 6th ed. (Berlin: 1951–1952)
<i>FGrH</i>	F. Jacoby, <i>Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker</i> , 15 vols (Berlin: 1923–1958)
G&P (1965)	A. S. F. Gow and D. Page (eds.), <i>The Greek Anthology: Hellenistic Epigrams</i> , 2 vols. (Cambridge: 1965)
G&P (1968)	A. S. F. Gow and D. Page (eds.), <i>The Greek Anthology: The Garland of Phillip</i> , 2 vols. (Cambridge: 1968)
G&S	A. S. F. Gow and A. F. Scholfield (eds.), <i>Nicander: The Poems and Poetical Fragments. Edited with Introduction, Translation, and Notes</i> (London and Newburyport: 1997)
Kern	O. Kern (ed.), <i>Orphicorum Fragmenta</i> (Berlin: 1922)
Maehler	H. Maehler (ed.), <i>Bacchylides: Lieder und Fragmente. Griechisch und Deutsch</i> (Berlin: 1968)
<i>PCG</i>	R. Kassel and C. Austin (eds.), <i>Poetae Comici Graeci</i> , 5 vols. (Berlin: 1983–2001)
Perry	B. Perry (ed.), <i>Aesopica: A Series of Texts Relating to Aesop or Ascribed to Him or Closely Connected with the Literary</i>

*List of Abbreviations*

*Tradition that Bears His Name: Collected and Critically Edited, in Part Translated from Oriental Languages, with a Commentary and Historical Essay* (new edition)  
 (Urbana: 2007)

- PMG* D. Page (ed.), *Poetae Melici Graeci* (Oxford: 1962)  
*RE* A. Pauly, G. Wissowa, W. Kroll, et al. (eds.), *Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft* (Stuttgart: 1893–1980)  
*SEG* *Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum* (Leiden and Boston: 1983–2014)  
*TrGF* B. Snell, R. Kannicht, and S. Radt (eds.), *Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta*, 6 vols. (Berlin: 1971–2004)  
 Voigt E.-M. Voigt (ed.), *Sappho et Alcaeus. Fragmenta* (Amsterdam: 1971)  
 Wehrli F. Wehrli (ed.), *Die Schule des Aristoteles*, 10 vols and 2 supplements, 2nd ed. (Basel: 1967–1978)  
 West M. L. West (ed.), *Carmina Anacreontea* (Leipzig: 1984)  
 West *IE*<sup>2</sup> M. L. West (ed.), *Iambi et Elegi*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: 1989–1992)