PART I

Approaching Music and Memory

Introduction

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Μνημοσύνης δ' ἐξαῦτις ἐράσσατο καλλικόμοιο,
ἐξ ἧς οἱ Μοῦσαι χρυσάμπυκες ἐξεγένοντο
ἐννέα, τῇσιν ἄδον θαλίαι καὶ τέρψις ἀοιδῆς.

And then again, he desired Mnemosyne of the beautiful hair,
Of whom the Muses were born, with their golden crowns,
Nine in all, who delight in celebrations and the pleasure of song.

(Hes. *Theog.* 915–17)

As Hesiod tells us, the mother of the Muses was Mnemosyne, the female personification of memory. Memory produces the art of the *Mousai* – *mousikē*, a term that comprises song, dance, and instrumental music. This popular genealogy probably originated in hexameter poetry, where it reflects the superior powers of recollection required of a rhapsodic performer. Calling on the Muse(s) for inspiration, the rhapsode recounts long lists of names, places, and events, while the memorializing function of his song ensures that these people and stories are remembered for millennia to come.[1] Mnemosyne and the Muses appear together as mother and daughters in a wide range of subsequent art, song, and literature from across the ancient Greek and Roman worlds;[2] their relationship reveals the close connection between memory and *mousikē* in Graeco-Roman thought.[3] The pervasive association between music and the communication,

[1] On the "invention" of Mnemosyne as the Muses' mother in connection with hexameter (especially catalogue) poetry, see Maslov 2016.

[2] For example, *Hymn. Hom. Merc.* 429–30; Alc. frr. 3.1, 8, 9, 27, 28; Solon fr. 13.1–2; Terp. fr. 4; Pind. *Isthm.* 6.74–75, *Pae.* 6.54–56, 7b.15–17; Pl. *Tht.* 191d; Apollod. 1.13; Paus. 1.2.5; Cic. *Nat. D.* 3.21; Arnobius 3.37. Representations of the Muses with Mnemosyne in art include an Attic red-figure *lekythos* in Syracuse, dated to the mid-fifth century BCE (*BAPD* 207230; Museo Archeologico Regionale Paolo Orsi, inv. 20542) and a late Hellenistic circular floor mosaic in Elis (Archaeological Museum of Elis, *AAA* 1 [1968] 133, *AAA* 2 [1969] 15–18, fig. 1).

[3] *Mnēmosynē* and *Mousa* are probably also etymologically related, sharing the same Proto-Indo-European root of **mn*: see Nagy 1974: 249–50; West 2007: 34; also Griffith in this volume.

construction, and transformation of memory in the ancient world is the topic of this volume.

Greek and Roman music has become a burgeoning subfield of classical studies. It embraces not just the technical aspects of ancient instrumentation and notation, but also the broader musical practices of Greece and Rome, from the ubiquity of certain instruments like the *aulos* (double reed pipes; *tibia* in Latin) to the songs and dances of choruses and actors in the theater.[4] In studies of these rich performance cultures, the concept of memory often lies under the surface. This is perhaps most evident in the recent surge of publications on the appropriation and reperformance of ancient Greek lyric and drama across a wide range of genres and contexts.[5] But any study of ancient musical cultures relies on memories and reconstructions – on records and reenactments rather than live performances. In this sense, memory is built into the scholarly act of excavating ancient music in a particularly complex way.[6] Yet there has, in general, been little discussion of memory as an overarching framework within which to understand these ancient cultures' musical lives and the connections between them.[7]

Within musicology and ethnomusicology, on the other hand, memory has for some time been understood as a central aspect of music's power as an affective and cultural phenomenon. In her influential 1998 book, *Let Jasmine Rain Down*, a study of *pizmon* song among nineteenth and twentieth-century Syrian Jewish communities, Kay Shelemay asks: "Why is music so frequently implicated in sustaining memory? What is remembered through music? How are memories transformed during musical performance into meaningful acts of commemoration?"[8] Such questions could be asked of any musical society. But this volume demonstrates that

[4] The bibliography for ancient Greek and Roman music is vast; the establishment in 2013 of the journal *Greek and Roman Musical Studies* demonstrates its popularity as a subfield. Book-length studies include Barker 1984, 1989; West 1992; Rocconi 2003, 2010; Murray and Wilson 2004; Habinek 2005; Hagel 2010; Power 2010; Moore 2012; Franklin 2016; Phillips and D'Angour 2018; Weiss 2018a; Lynch and Rocconi 2020.

[5] See esp. Currie 2004; Hubbard 2004, 2011; Morrison 2010, 2012; Bosher 2012a; Lamari 2015; Curtis 2017; Hunter and Uhlig 2017a.

[6] Cf. Shelemay 2006 on the role of ethnomusicologists in constructing memory: "Ethnomusicologists do not simply gather individual and collective verbal memories shared during interviews; they are also instrumental in elaborating memories in and about musical performance into narratives about the past" (18).

[7] Memory more broadly conceived (that is, not specifically in relation to music) has long been a topic of interest in classics: for recent approaches see Castagnoli and Ceccarelli 2019.

[8] Shelemay 1998: 12. This book is one seminal example from a vast bibliography on the intersection of music and memory in musicology and ethnomusicology: see, e.g., Seeger 1993; Romero 2001; Emoff 2002; Harris 2004; Berger 2005; Bithell 2006a; D. Olsen 2008; Strong 2011.

they are especially relevant to the ancient Mediterranean, where we find a deep understanding not only of how the practice of *mousikē* involves memory, but also of how music, in reaching beyond the present to the past and future, both activates and constructs the memories of its audiences. "Memory" is an elastic, slippery concept that has a profoundly different set of valences in a world before recording technology, where sound accumulated differently than it does today. The following chapters approach this central term in different ways: the memory required to play music; the memory required to listen to music; the memory of past performances; the memories that music creates in future time. Memory can be both an individual experience and a cultural one; it can be an activity of the mind and one of the body. Taken together, the chapters reveal that musical memory, in all its various senses, formed a fundamental part of social, cultural, ritual, and political life in ancient Greece and Rome.[9]

The volume grew out of an Exploratory Seminar at the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study at Harvard University in May 2017. Its impetus stemmed from a desire to bring into dialogue the often disparate subfields of classics, where ideas about "music" and "memory" have become a focus of research – whether across disciplines (art history, philology) or across temporal and spatial boundaries in the Graeco-Roman world (archaic and classical Athens, Ptolemaic Alexandria, and the city of Rome). In particular, we wanted to bridge the often surprisingly wide divide between scholars working on music and musical culture in Greece and those working on Rome.[10] The resulting volume is organized into four broadly defined sections that make visible the themes or trends that became most recurrent and productive in our thinking: Music, Body, and Textual Archives; Technologies of Musical Memory; Audience, Music, and Repertoire; Music and Memorialization. This structure reflects our commitment to and the value of an interdisciplinary approach to music and memory, and it seeks to productively juxtapose papers focused on different times, places, and methodologies. In the Introduction we discuss some of the conceptual frameworks that both undergird the four sections and tie the chapters together across the volume as a whole. We focus here primarily on modern theoretical approaches. Mark Griffith's chapter, which

[9] Graeco-Roman music should also be understood as part of a wider continuum of musical practices across the ancient Mediterranean, including the Near East, where some of the earliest musical culture has been found. On the interface between Greek and Near Eastern music see esp. Westenholz et al. 2014; Franklin 2015; Bachvarova 2016. The broader Mediterranean context lies largely beyond this volume's scope.

[10] Examples of scholars whose work actively bridges the two are Curtis 2017; Schlapbach 2018.

rounds out the volume's introductory section, discusses some ancient (Greek) theories on the relationship between music and memory. The following chapters then provide multiple ways of approaching both music's role in the construction of memory and memory's role in the performance and reception of music across the ancient Greek and Roman worlds – and into our own.

Musical Memory from Athens to Etruria: Two Snapshots

To give a sense of the volume's integration of ancient literary texts, material culture, and cultural practice we begin with two brief case studies. They reveal – as, indeed, do all the chapters in this volume – the capaciousness of not only memory as an experience and concept but also music. In the first, we explore how musical scenes painted on the walls of an Etruscan chamber tomb demonstrate music's commemorative potential to remember the dead. In the second, we analyze a passage of Aristophanes' *Frogs*, where Dionysus shares with the characters onstage, and with the audience, his memory of watching the first production of Aeschylus' *Persians.* The juxtaposition of these two examples, from fifth-century Etruria and Athens respectively, also reminds us of the wide diffusion of musical cultures and technologies across the Mediterranean world. Both reveal, in very different ways, the complex interplay of memory on the part of an individual and that of a larger community that underpins many of the chapters. They also show how memory speaks to one of music's most basic aesthetic and social values across different cultures: its creation of an emotional response in an audience that draws on past memories and resonates beyond the immediate experience to inform the audience's world.

The painted chamber tombs from ancient Tarquinia are abundant in musical imagery, and the Tomb of the Triclinium (ca. 470 BCE), which gets its name from the elaborate scenes of feasting on the central rear wall, is one of the most musically rich among those that survive.[11] An entering visitor would have seen, on the left wall (Figure 0.1), alternating male and female dancers, surrounded by birds and animals and performing between foliage draped with offerings. The group surrounds a male *barbitos* player, and their lightly draped, sometimes translucent clothing clearly shows the movements of their bodies. The right wall (Figure 0.2) depicts another

[11] The tomb was discovered in 1830; its paintings have since been removed to the Museo Nazionale Archeologico di Tarquinia to aid their preservation. For a description of the tomb, with images and bibliography, see Steingräber 1986: 352–53 (with plates 166–71).

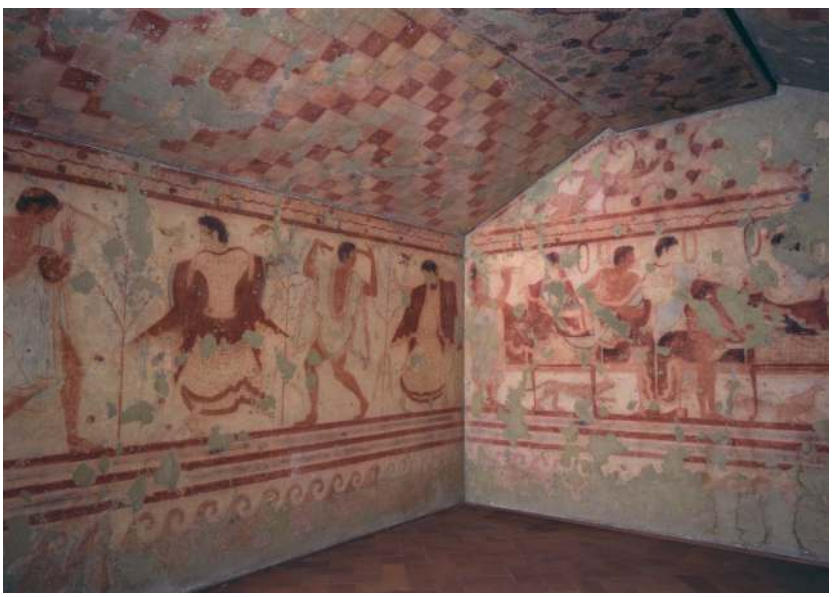

Figure 0.1. Left and center walls of the Tomb of the Triclinium, Tarquinia, Italy, ca. 470 BCE. Museo Nazionale Archeologico di Tarquinia. Photograph © Nimatallah/Art Resource, NY.

scene of men and women dancing in similar fashion, including a woman with her head thrown back, arms extended, clothes billowing as she moves. This group is accompanied by a male *aulos* player.

Elaborately decorated tombs such as this one belonged to the Tarquinian elite, but beyond that, we do not know for whom this tomb was created, or even whether the deceased is represented in its reliefs. The emphasis of the decorative program is on the shared, collective aspect of its celebration. The neat line of dancers on each wall suggests a choral procession. The dancing bodies are visually separated by foliage, but they frequently cross the border of their frame – the female dancer with her head thrown back (Figure 0.2) reaches out her hand through the branches and meets that of her male companion. Within the three-dimensional space of the tomb, however, these scenes bear a clear relationship with the body of the individual deceased. They provide the visual backdrop for their physical remains and therefore stage, in some way, their family's and/or community's remembrance of them.

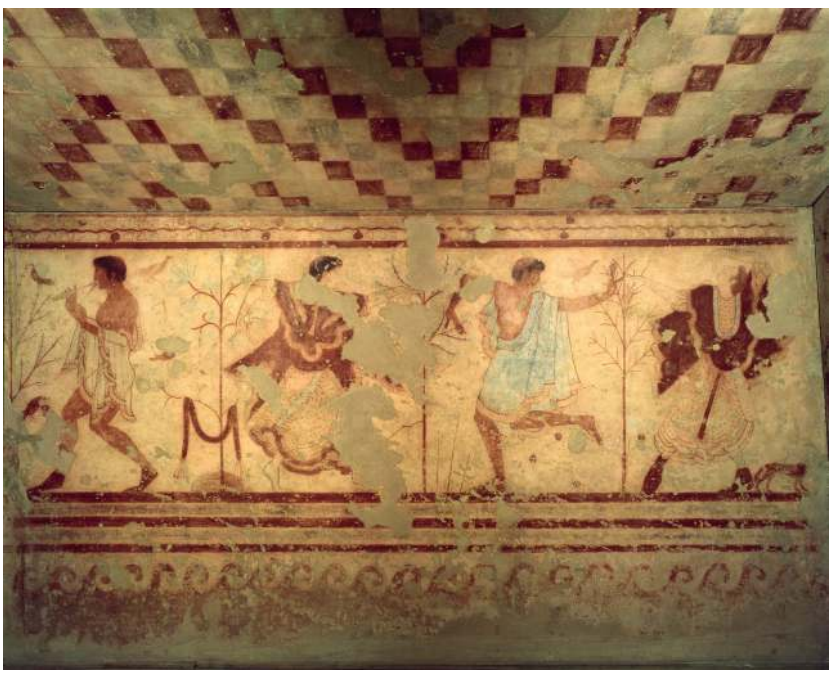

Figure 0.2. Right wall of the Tomb of the Triclinium, Tarquinia, Italy, ca. 470 BCE. Museo Nazionale Archeologico di Tarquinia. Photograph © Scala/Art Resource, NY.

"Remembering" is often thought to be an emotional response to actions, persons, or experiences past. But in this tomb memory is part of a more complex and overlapping set of temporalities, all evoked for the mourner by these musical scenes' affective power.[12] Do the scenes recall the past, fixing ephemeral moments of the deceased's happy life into the tomb's remembering walls? Or do they point to the future, locating these musical celebrations (and the accompanying feasting) in the Underworld, and imagining the tomb's inhabitant as a joyful resident of the next life whose animated embodiedness helps mitigate a sense of loss? Perhaps,

[12] Since the tomb was imagined to function, for the deceased, as a portal between the worlds of the living and of the dead (Torelli 1999: 156–57), it is not only the mourner's perspective that we should take into account. The experience of the deceased him- or herself was probably also considered important: the scenes may, for example, serve as a comforting memory of their own past life, or a hope for the afterlife. As with different temporal perspectives, so there could also be different subjectivities within the tomb.

instead, the music is located in the present, depicting not the life of the deceased at all, but rather their continuous ritual commemoration by family, friends, and society at large.[13] The tomb resists such hard and fast referential distinctions. Its musical scenes carry multiple significances, all of which might have been activated at different times – for example, when the body was placed in the tomb after the funeral, or when relatives visited to commemorate the deceased thereafter.[14] Indeed, this very activation may be the most important aspect of its memory-bearing capabilities. Etruscan tombs were not just burial places but also "sites for funeral rites and for the worship of the dead."[15] The collective dancing bodies on the frieze, therefore, not only partook in an imagined communion with the deceased, but would also have generated acoustic and visual interplay with the rituals of the living.

At the same time as it creates a dynamic, musically inflected space for commemorating an individual, the Tomb of the Triclinium also participates in broader currents of cultural memory. Richly decorated chamber tombs displayed status, wealth, and culture in elite Etruscan society.[16] In particular, their frequent use of sympotic and musical imagery references a family's cultural knowledge of practices from the Greek-speaking world that were embraced by the Etruscan aristocracy.[17] The walls' musical program, then, may tell us less about its inhabitant and more about their family's aspirations and self-image. But in fact, when it comes to the tomb's original function as a site for remembering the dead, such a distinction may not have mattered. The power of these musical images may have resided, in part, in their ability to refashion, year after year, a personal, emotional response out of the broad contours of cultural memory.

[13] The tomb's checkered ceiling clearly evokes one particular moment of commemoration: the richly-decorated tent where the body would have lain for its *prothesis,* a ritual that also involved music (in this case the mournful strains of lament, which were accompanied by the *aulos*).

[14] On the multiplicity of interpretations afforded by the imagined spaces of Etruscan tomb paintings, and how these spaces connect the presence of the deceased to the community of the living, see Krauskopf 2009.

[15] Steingräber 2013: 665–66. Some had in front of them open squares where funeral rites, games, and/or theatrical productions may have taken place either as part of the funeral or during regular rites of commemoration.

[16] So Cherci 2017: 242: the dance scenes "declare the identity and cohesion of the ruling class and accentuate the distinction from those who cannot live such happy moments." On tombs as spaces where Etruscan social values were communicated and transmitted, see esp. D'Agostino 1989.

[17] The imagery of the Tomb of the Triclinium, more specifically, is Dionysiac: ivy tendrils and a krater decorate the pediment of the rear wall (see Haynes 2000: 236–37). In this context the processional song and dance might be read as a Dionysiac *kōmos.*

Our second snapshot pans from Etruscan funerary painting to Attic comedy, a different medium altogether. A brief but striking exchange in Aristophanes' *Frogs* (405 BCE) reveals the complexity of an audience's collective memory. In the contest between the two tragedians, as Aeschylus begins to defend himself against Euripides' charges and to accuse him in turn, he boasts of his "excellent achievement" (ἔργον ἄριστον, 1027) in producing *Persians*, which taught its audience "to desire always to defeat the enemy" (ἐπιθυμεῖν . . . νικᾶν ἀεὶ τοὺς ἀντιπάλους, 1026–27). Dionysus, the judge, however, had a rather different impression of the play (1028–29):

> ἐχάρην γοῦν, ἡνίκ' †ἤκουσα περὶ† Δαρείου τεθνεῶτος,
> ὁ χορὸς δ' εὐθὺς τὼ χεῖρ' ὧδὶ συγκρούσας εἶπεν· «ἰαυοῖ.»
>
> I at any rate enjoyed it when †I heard about† dead Darius,
> And the chorus straightway clapped their hands together like this
> and said "*iauoi*!"

Dionysus remembers the *Persians* not for its content, but simply by his own delight at the chorus' clapping and cry of *iauoi*. Yet this moment never actually occurs in the tragedy itself, at least not in the text as we have it: the chorus does frequently include vowel-filled, foreign-sounding cries in its singing, but it does not emit this particular one, nor is there anything quite like it or an indication of its accompanying choreography at the moment when Darius' ghost appears.[18]

These lines reveal some of the cultural memory shared between Aristophanes and his audience and at the same time, problematize and undo it. They suggest that *mousikē* – a term that, as we noted above, includes dance as well as song and instrumental music – could be one of the most memorable aspects of a dramatic performance.[19] It could linger in the memories of theater-goers in Athens to such an extent that, in 405 BCE, almost seventy years after *Persians* was first produced, the audience of Aristophanes' play, none of whom could have been at the original performance and many of whom may never have seen a reperformance of it either, could understand Dionysus' reference here.[20] But they also suggest that "memory" is malleable. Since the moment Dionysus describes does

[18] On nonverbal, foreign-sounding language and the percussive sounds and movements of lament in Aeschylean tragedy, see Hall 1989: 78–79; Nooter 2017; Weiss 2017.
[19] Weiss 2018a.
[20] On the performance history of Aeschylus' tragedies in the classical period see Scodel 2007: 131–32; Bosher 2012c; Nervegna 2014: 166–76; Smith 2017.

not occur in the surviving script of *Persians*, we can understand it instead in terms of the cultural memory of Aeschylean choral song in general, not simply of this particular play – a memory of the playwright's predilection for percussive dance and nonverbal cries, which Euripides resurrects later in his parody of the older tragedian's lyric style with the refrain of "*Aiee* beating!" (ἰὴ κόπον).[21] Yet *Frogs* includes many accurate quotations from other plays by Aeschylus (including ἰὴ κόπον, which comes from his *Myrmidons*),[22] so Aristophanes seems to have deliberately misquoted here. For anyone in the audience who has a precise memory of Aeschylean choral lyric, whether from reperformances or by reading the plays, Dionysus' act of misremembering provides some extra comedy to the scene: the god of theater himself cannot properly recall what he has seen performed in his honor. Furthermore, the fact that the one thing Dionysus says about the play does not appear within it undermines Aeschylus' lofty claims for its lasting impact, pointing to the potential differences between how an artist may try to shape his own oeuvre and how he is subsequently remembered.

This passage also raises an important question about our own assumptions as scholars regarding the surviving records of ancient *mousikē*: to what extent do they correspond to actual practice? *Frogs* as a whole, a comedy full of nostalgia for the musical productions of Athens' three great tragedians, reveals and enacts the transmission of musical memory and its faultlines.[23] It shows us what can live on and what distortions can occur; it also itself participates in the memorialization of the Athenian classical past, both for its original audiences and for modern scholars, who attempt to reconstruct the music of Aeschylean tragedy through the lens of this play.[24]

What Is Musical Memory? Technology, Affect, and Cognition

This pair of case studies addresses some of this volume's central themes. Both point to music as a mode of preserving and transmitting knowledge

[21] Ar. *Ran*. 1265, 1267, 1271, 1275, 1277. Cf. Nooter 2017: 103: "[Dionysus'] associating of this chorus with expressive but nonverbal sound is telling of how *Persians* might have been remembered in the Athenian popular imagination."

[22] Aesch. *Myrmidons* fr. 132 *TrGF*.

[23] On nostalgia in *Frogs*, cf. Power in this volume. On music and nostalgia, see esp. Leonard and Knifton 2014; Van der Hoeven 2018.

[24] See esp. Griffith 2013: 131–36. See also Nooter 2017: 53–59, 79–84, 102–07 on the characterization of Aeschylus' voice in Aristophanes' *Frogs*.