

Cambridge University Press
978-1-108-94095-5 — Music and Philosophy in the Roman Empire
Edited by Francesco Pelosi, Federico M. Petrucci
Frontmatter
[More Information](#)

MUSIC AND PHILOSOPHY IN THE ROMAN EMPIRE

Is music just matter of hearing and producing notes? And is it of interest just to musicians? By exploring different authors and philosophical trends of the Roman Empire, from Philo of Alexandria to Alexander of Aphrodisias, from the rebirth of Platonism with Plutarch to the last Neoplatonists, this book sheds light on different ways in which music and musical notions were made a crucial part of philosophical discourse. Far from being mere metaphors, notions such as harmony, concord and attunement became key philosophical tools in order to better grasp and conceptualise fundamental notions in philosophical debates from cosmology to ethics and from epistemology to theology. The volume is written by a distinguished international team of contributors.

FRANCESCO PELOSI is Lecturer of History of Ancient Philosophy at the University of Pisa. His main field of study concerns the interaction between music and philosophy in ancient Greece, with a special focus on the mind-body relationship and theories of perception. He is the author of *Plato on Music, Soul and Body* (Cambridge, 2010).

FEDERICO M. PETRUCCI is Professor of History of Ancient Philosophy at the University of Turin. His main research areas are Plato and the Platonist Tradition and his publications include the first English translation of the texts of the Platonist Taurus of Beirut (2018).

MUSIC AND PHILOSOPHY IN THE ROMAN EMPIRE

EDITED BY
FRANCESCO PELOSI
University of Pisa

FEDERICO M. PETRUCCI
University of Turin



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press
978-1-108-94095-5 — Music and Philosophy in the Roman Empire
Edited by Francesco Pelosi, Federico M. Petrucci
Frontmatter
[More Information](#)

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom
One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA
477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
314-321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre, New Delhi - 110025, India
103 Penang Road, #05-06/07, Visioncrest Commercial, Singapore 238467

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.
It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of
education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org
Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781108940955
DOI: 10.1017/9781108935753

© Cambridge University Press 2021

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception
and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements,
no reproduction of any part may take place without the written
permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2021
First paperback edition 2022

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication data

NAMES: Pelosi, Francesco, editor. | Petrucci, Federico M., 1985– editor.
TITLE: Music and philosophy in the Roman Empire / edited by Francesco Pelosi, Federico M.
Petrucci.
DESCRIPTION: New York : Cambridge University Press, 2020. | Includes bibliographical
references and index.
IDENTIFIERS: LCCN 2020039512 (print) | LCCN 2020039513 (ebook) | ISBN 9781108832274
(hardback) | ISBN 9781108935753 (ebook)
SUBJECTS: LCSH: Music – To 500 – Philosophy and aesthetics. | Music and philosophy –
History – To 500. | Philosophy, Ancient.
CLASSIFICATION: LCC ML169 .M9 2020 (print) | LCC ML169 (ebook) | DDC 781.1/70937–dc23
LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2020039512>
LC ebook record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2020039513>

ISBN 978-1-108-83227-4 Hardback
ISBN 978-1-108-94095-5 Paperback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or
accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in
this publication, and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is,
or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

Contents

<i>Notes on Contributors</i>	<i>page</i> vii
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	xi
<i>List of Abbreviations</i>	xii
Introduction	i
<i>Francesco Pelosi and Federico M. Petrucci</i>	
1 The <i>Scala Naturae</i> and Music: Two Models in Philo's Thought	21
<i>Carlos Lévy</i>	
2 Music and Plutarch's Platonic Cosmos	38
<i>Bram Demulder</i>	
3 The Harmoniser God: Harmony as a Cosmological Model in Middle Platonist Theology	60
<i>Federico M. Petrucci</i>	
4 Alexander of Aphrodisias and Musical Models for Ontological Enquiries	85
<i>Laura M. Castelli</i>	
5 How to Resist Musical Dogmatism: The Aim and Methods of Pyrrhonian Inquiry in Sextus Empiricus' <i>Against the Musicologists</i> (<i>Math.</i> 6)	108
<i>Máté Veres</i>	
6 Shifting Epistemological Perspectives in Ptolemy's <i>Harmonics</i> : From the Science of Sound to the Study of Music	131
<i>Andrew Barker</i>	
7 Musical Imagery in Clement of Alexandria and Origen: The Greek Musical World Revised and Accepted	153
<i>Francesco Pelosi</i>	

vi	<i>Contents</i>	
8	Plotinus on Music, Rhythm, and Harmony <i>Alexandra Michalewski</i>	178
9	Porphyry's <i>Commentary on Ptolemy's Harmonics</i> : Questions of Philosophic and Scientific Identity <i>Harold Tarrant</i>	198
10	The Music of the Virtues in Late Ancient Platonism <i>Dominic J. O'Meara</i>	227
11	Harmonics as Theological Paradigm in Proclus <i>Stephen Gersh</i>	242
12	Calcidius on Cosmic Harmony <i>Christina Hoenig</i>	262
13	<i>Harmonia</i> in Philoponus' <i>Commentary on Nicomachus'</i> <i>Introduction to Arithmetic</i> <i>Giovanna R. Giardina</i>	286
	<i>Bibliography</i>	303
	<i>Index Locorum</i>	327
	<i>General Index</i>	346

Notes on Contributors

ANDREW BARKER is Emeritus Professor of Classics at the University of Birmingham. He is the author of eight books on ancient Greek music and musical theory, including *Greek Musical Writings* (2 volumes, Cambridge 1984–1989), *Ancient Greek Writers on their Musical Past* (Pisa and Rome 2014), and most recently *Porphyry's Commentary on Ptolemy's Harmonics: a Greek Text and Annotated Translation* (Cambridge 2017). He has also published over a hundred articles on topics in these and related areas.

LAURA M. CASTELLI is research and teaching Fellow at the Munich School of Ancient Philosophy (MUSAPh), LMU, Munich. She is the author of several publications on ancient metaphysics and logic, among which are *Aristotle, Metaphysics Iota. Introduction, Translation and Notes* (Clarendon, Oxford 2018); *Alexander of Aphrodisias, On Aristotle. Topics II* (Bloomsbury 2020); *Alexander of Aphrodisias, On Aristotle. Topics III* (Bloomsbury, forthcoming).

BRAM DEMULDER is currently substitute lecturer at KU Leuven and postdoctoral researcher at the University of Liège / F.R.S.-FNRS (Fonds de la Recherche Scientifique). His main research interest is the interplay between cosmology and ethics in the Platonist tradition. In his PhD thesis (KU Leuven 2018) he explored this theme in the work of Plutarch of Chaeronea.

STEPHEN GERSH, Emeritus Professor of Medieval Philosophy, University of Notre Dame. Author of numerous books on the ancient, medieval, and early modern Platonic traditions, among which are *Middle Platonism and Neoplatonism. The Latin Tradition* (Notre Dame 1986) and *Concord in Discourse. Harmonics and Semiotics in Late Medieval and Early Modern Platonism* (Berlin and New York 1998).

GIOVANNA R. GIARDINA is Professor of Ancient Philosophy at the University of Catania. Her studies focus in particular on the Aristotelian philosophy and on Neoplatonism. Among her recent studies are *Fisica del movimento e teoria dell'infinito. Analisi critica di Aristotele*, *Phys. III* (Sankt Augustin 2012); 'Providence in John Philoponus' *Commentary on Aristotle's Physics*', *CHORA* 13 (2015), 149–72; 'Jean Philopon Commentateur d'Aristote, *Physique* II 8', *Revue de Philosophie Ancienne* 32 (2014), 177–221; 'Aristotle vs. Empedocles in *Physics* II.8', in *Proceedings of the World Congress Aristotle 2400 years*, ed. D. Sfendoni-Mentzou (Thessaloniki 2019), 78–82; 'Platone, *Eutidemo* 294e2–3', *Museum Helveticum* 75/2 (2018), 129–37; *To Metron. Sur la notion de Mesure dans la Philosophie d'Aristote*, ed. by G. R. Giardina (Paris-Brussels 2020).

CHRISTINA HOENIG is Associate Professor in Classics at the University of Pittsburgh. Her main areas of research are the Greek and Roman Platonic traditions. She mostly works on topics in natural philosophy and theology, and a central theme of interest is the translation of Greek philosophical vocabulary into Latin. Representative publications include 'Calcidius and the Creation of the Universe', *Rhizomata* 2/1 (2014); further, 'Calcidius', in Tarrant, H., Baltzly, D. *et al.* (eds.), *A Companion to the Reception of Plato in Antiquity* (2018). Her monograph *Plato's Timaeus and the Latin Tradition* was published in *The Cambridge Classical Series* with Cambridge University Press (2018).

CARLOS LÉVY is Emeritus Professor of Roman Philosophy and Literature at the Université de Paris-Sorbonne (Paris IV). His main research interests are Philo of Alexandria, Hellenistic philosophy, and Cicero. Among his publications are *Cicero Academicus. Recherches sur les Académiques et sur la philosophie cicéronienne* (Rome 1992); *Philon d'Alexandrie et le langage de la philosophie* (Turnhout 1998); and the article *Philo of Alexandria* in the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*.

ALEXANDRA MICHALEWSKI is Research Fellow at the CNRS (Centre Léon Robin, Paris-Sorbonne). Her work focuses on Plotinus and the ancient Platonic tradition. One of her main research interests is the interplay between Aristotelianism and Platonism from the beginnings of the Imperial era to Late Antiquity. She is the author of a monograph on intelligible Forms as causes from Antiochus to Plotinus: *La puissance de l'intelligible. La théorie plotinienne des Formes au miroir de l'héritage médioplatonicien* (Leuven 2014). Recently she has published,

Notes on Contributors

ix

as co-editor with M.-A. Gavray, *Les principes cosmologiques du platonisme. Origines, Influences et systématisation* (Turnhout 2017).

DOMINIC J. O'MEARA is Emeritus Professor of Philosophy at the University of Fribourg (Switzerland). He has published widely on Plato and the history of Platonism in Antiquity and Byzantium. His books include *Pythagoras Revived. Mathematics and Philosophy in Late Antiquity* (Oxford 1989); *Plotinus* (Oxford 1993); *Platonopolis. Platonic Political Philosophy in Late Antiquity* (Oxford 2003); *Cosmology and Politics in Plato's Later Writings* (Cambridge 2017).

FRANCESCO PELOSI is Lecturer of Ancient Philosophy at the University of Pisa. His main field of study concerns the interaction between music and philosophy in ancient Greece, with a special focus on the mind–body relationship and theories of perception. In recent years he has been the principal investigator of a project devoted to the collection, translation, and analysis of the ancient Greek sources on the interplay between music and philosophy, from the Presocratics to late Antiquity (*Megiste mousike*, 2 vols., forthcoming De Gruyter). He is the author of *Plato on Music, Soul and Body* (Cambridge University Press 2010).

FEDERICO M. PETRUCCI is Professor of History of Ancient Philosophy at the University of Turin. He studied and obtained his PhD in Pisa. He was fellow of the Humboldt Foundation in Würzburg, of the Scuola Normale Superiore, and of the Durham University. He is particularly interested in Plato and the Platonist tradition. His publications include a translation and commentary of Theon's *Expositio* (Sankt Augustin 2012) and the monograph *Taurus of Beirut. The Other Side of Middle Platonism* (London and New York 2018).

HAROLD TARRANT studied at Cambridge and Durham UK, and taught Classics for thirty-eight years in Australian universities. After retiring to live in the UK from 2012 he remains Professor Emeritus at the University of Newcastle Australia. Recent publications include *Proclus: Commentary on Plato's Timaeus*, vol. 6 (Cambridge 2017); François Renaud and Harold Tarrant, *The Platonic Alcibiades I: The Dialogue and Its Ancient Reception* (Cambridge 2015); and (edited with D. A. Layne, D. Baltzly, and F. Renaud) *Brill's Companion to the Reception of Plato in Antiquity* (Leiden 2018).

MÁTÉ VERES is a Postdoctoral Fellow at the Collaborative Program in Ancient and Medieval Philosophy at the University of Toronto. He was

a Postdoctoral Researcher at the University of Hamburg, at the University of Geneva, and at Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest. He works mainly on Hellenistic philosophy, with a focus on epistemology and ethics. He received his PhD from the Central European University in November 2016, and was a postdoctoral researcher at the University of Hamburg and at the University of Geneva. His recent publications include ‘Sextus Empiricus on Religious Dogmatism’, *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* 58 (2020); ‘Keep Calm and Carry On: Sextus Empiricus on the Origins of Pyrrhonism’, *History of Philosophy and Logical Analysis* 23 (2020); ‘Theology, Innatism, and the Epicurean Self’, *Ancient Philosophy* 37 (2017).

Acknowledgements

This volume has its roots in the International Conference ‘The Harmony of Reason. Music and Philosophy from the Early Imperial Age to Late Antiquity’, held at the Scuola Normale Superiore (Pisa) in September 2016, in the framework of the three-year Research Project ‘I filosofi e la musica’ (‘Futuro in Ricerca 2013’ programme), supported by the Italian Ministry of Education, Universities and Research. We would like to thank all the participants in the Conference and the Scuola Normale Superiore for its generous support to the event. Some of the papers given at that conference were selected as the core of the present volume, while others were added upon invitation. As editors, we wanted different areas of international scholarship to be represented, and we especially sought to combine papers by younger researchers with ones by more experienced scholars. For his qualified proofreading of the chapters of non-native English authors, we would like to warmly thank Sergio Knipe.

Abbreviations

LCL: Loeb Classical Library
SVF: von Arnim, H. *Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta*. Indexes by
M. Adler, 4 vols. Stuttgart, Teubner, 1903–1924

As a rule, references to ancient authors and works follow the *Oxford Classical Dictionary*.

As a rule, we transliterate Greek words and short phrases (not sentences) in the main text; all Greek words and sentences in the main text – either transliterated or not – are accompanied by a translation.