

**INTERPRETING AND STAGING MUSIC  
IN ANCIENT SOUTHWEST ASIA AND BEYOND.  
REVIEW ARTICLE OF THE STUDY  
OF MUSICAL PERFORMANCE IN ANTIQUITY:  
ARCHAEOLOGY AND WRITTEN SOURCES**

Daniel SÁNCHEZ MUÑOZ

*Abstract*

*The contents of The Study of Musical Performance in Antiquity: Archaeology and Written Sources (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2018) are discussed in depth in this review article, including some preliminary methodological considerations about the notion of 'performance'. Some lines of research advanced in the reviewed volume are encouraged to continue in the future. The reviewer also discusses the question of 'musical performance' as 'musical staging': may we talk about the existence of concerts already in Antiquity? Are they as recent as musicology traditionally asserts?*

**Introduction**

This review article discusses a volume derived from the workshop 'The Study of Musical Performance in Antiquity: Archaeology and Written Sources', which was held at the *Sapienza Università di Roma* on the 6th of November, 2015<sup>1</sup>). The book, which covers musical cultures from Mesopotamia to Late Antiquity, has already been reviewed on several occasions<sup>2</sup>). However, while those reviews are mostly descriptive<sup>3</sup>), many interesting issues dealt with in this book require a deeper examination as a basis for the subsequent scholarship. Because of the journal's focus and the reviewer's Assyriological expertise, the chapters on Southwest Asia and Egypt will be more extensively discussed than those about other cultures. This review article will also suggest necessary developments in research on musical interpretation and staging, the two aspects covered by the 'musical performance' with which this book is concerned (see *infra*).

**Methodological considerations (Introduction's review)**

The aims and contents of this volume are presented by the editors in an introduction (pp. 1–7), in which the book is defined as 'a series of examinations of literary data and materials from different areas of the Classical World and the Near East in ancient times and in late Antiquity' (p. 1). As suggested by the title of the next section within the introduc-

tion ('A Glimpse into Musical Performance in Antiquity', pp. 2–4), those examinations concern musical performance in Antiquity. The editors are to be praised for this innovative choice, but three key methodological aspects might have been addressed:

Firstly, how is 'musical performance' defined? The English 'performance' refers both to the way in which a musical piece is played (the 'interpretation') and the event where music is offered to the public (the 'staging'). However, 'interpretation' and 'staging' are distinguished and separate in many other languages, for instance in the Spanish *interpretación* for the way of playing a musical piece, and *actuación* for the event where the music is played in public. 'Performance' seems to be broadly defined in the reviewed volume. Four chapters address the 'performance' as 'interpretation' by studying several techniques and instruments for making music (Chapters 3–5 and 10), whereas six chapters deal with musical events: the spaces (Chapters 7 and 9) and musicians involved in those events (Chapters 1–2, and 8), besides the purpose (Chapter 6) and reception (Chapter 11) of those performances. Such a dual vision of the 'musical performance' aligns with the character of the 'Performance Studies'<sup>4</sup>).

Secondly, what has been previously written about musical performance in Antiquity? It is a pity that the only comment on secondary literature within the first pages of this volume is E. Rocconi's preface (pp. xi–xii), which is about a global history of archaeomusicology. Some studies on ancient musical performance certainly exist now<sup>5</sup>), but there is still a lot to do in that field. Such a remark might have better justified the appearance of this new volume.

Thirdly, how does the study of ancient musical performance help us to understand better ancient music in general? The notion of performance is indeed essential for understanding music in the ancient world, illuminating, for example, the ancient extant melodies that are currently preserved from the Babylonian and Greek traditions. It is not enough to have accurate, playable replicas of ancient instruments and reliable editions of the texts noting those melodies. Knowing something of the interpretative conventions from the time of each piece is also necessary for re-enacting them, and this can redefine current understandings of them. Just think of how the Historically Informed Performance has impacted our vision of Early Modern European music. Some thoughts in this line are offered by Köpp-Junk in Chapter 4 (see *infra*), but the reader might be left wanting to read more about this topic in the reviewed volume.

The cultures covered by this volume are Mesopotamia (Chapters 1–3), Egypt (Chapter 4), Ancient Israel (Chapter 5), Greece in dialogue with the indigenous populations from several parts of Italy (Chapters 6–7), the Iberians (Chapter 8), Rome (Chapters 9–10), and Late Antiquity focusing on the Syriac groups (Chapter 11). The editors have gone far beyond their own expertise: A. García Ventura and L. Verderame are Assyriologists, whilst C. Tavorieri is a specialist in Roman and Late Antique history. They have offered

<sup>1</sup>) GARCÍA VENTURA, A./C. TAVOLIERI/L. VERDERAME (eds.) – *The Study of Musical Performance in Antiquity. Archaeology and Written Sources*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Newcastle upon Tyne, 2018. (21 cm, XII, 260). ISBN 978-1-5275-0658-9. £ 61.99. The reviewer thanks Nolke Tasma (BiOr team), for his invitation in April 2021 to offer a contribution related to this book, to Gioele Zisa for reading an earlier draft of this paper, and to Max Stocker for improving the English of this text.

<sup>2</sup>) See the reviews by M. Díaz Andreu (*Índice Histórico Español*, 2018, online), R. da Riva (*Antiguo Oriente*, 16, 2018, pp. 245–247), J. Grier (*The Classical Review*, 69(2), 2019, pp. 621–623), and M. La Rosa (*Greek and Roman Musical Studies*, 9(1), 2021, pp. 211–213) besides the review-article Zisa, G., *Per un'etnomusicologia storica del Vicino Oriente antico*, *Historiae*, 15, 2018, pp. 87–96.

<sup>3</sup>) Probably except Zisa, G. *op. cit.*, pp. 93–96, who encourages taking more into consideration the principles of Anthropology and Ethnomusicology in future research on Music in Ancient Southwest Asia.

<sup>4</sup>) On performance studies, see Schechner, R. A., *Performance Studies. An Introduction*. London, Routledge, 2020 (4th edition).

<sup>5</sup>) See Hagel, S./C. Harrauer (eds.), *Ancient Greek Music in Performance* (Wiener Studien 30). Vienna, VÖAW, 2005, besides the contributions by S. Mirelman about the performance indications in Late Babylonian ritual texts (<https://scholar.google.com/citations?user=BLyW10YAAAAJ&hl=en>).

here a fairly representative overview of the ancient world in less than 300 pages, not an easy task. One might regret, in any case, the absence of at least one chapter about a musical culture outside the Mediterranean basin. Archaeomusicological meetings usually have contributions to Pre-Hispanic or ancient Chinese musical worlds, besides those around the broad Mediterranean region<sup>6</sup>).

### Mesopotamia (Chapters 1–3)

**Chapter 1:** This chapter by M. V. Tonietti is about mid-third-millennium music in Ebla in northwestern Syria, and it is complemented by another article by the same researcher officially published in 2018, although printed in 2020<sup>7</sup>). After a contextualisation (pp. 9–12) and typological presentation of the sources (pp. 12–14), the author presents the textual evidence for Eblaite musicians (pp. 14–25) and musical instruments (pp. 25–27). The information about musicians is concluded with some thoughts on Eblaite musicians' onomastica and mobility (pp. 28–31). A key point of the chapter is the existence of multiple musical styles (style being a key aspect of performance as 'interpretation') in Ebla because of the presence in that city of musicians from surrounding cities, such as Mari (pp. 31–32). The author also offers interesting remarks about solo and choral performances in Ebla (pp. 27–28).

The consultation of T. J. H. Krispijn's work on Eblaite music according to textual and visual sources<sup>8</sup>) might have reinforced Tonietti's argumentation at some points, as in the suggestion (in p. 26 n. 78) that VE: 365 (ġeš-maš = a-u<sub>3</sub>-um) referred to the a<sub>2</sub>-la<sub>2</sub>/alû(m) giant drum. A stela from second-millennium Ebla depicting a large drum and commented on by Krispijn would have better supported this identification. Care should also be taken with *Sumerian Proverbs* 2.54, a text commented on in p. 25 in order to suggest (even indirectly) that players of aerophones in Ebla did not have high social status. This proverb says first 'a fallen (festive) musician is a player of the ge-di aulos' (nar pe-el-la<sub>2</sub> lu<sub>2</sub> ge-di-da-kam), and then 'a fallen lamentation priest is a player of the ge-su<sub>3</sub>-flute' (gala pe-el-la<sub>2</sub> lu<sub>2</sub> ge-su<sub>3</sub>-(a)-kam<sup>9</sup>). The ge-di was an instrument notably used in lamentations (think, e.g., of the ir<sub>2</sub> ge-di / taqribti ebbūbim 'lament of the aulos' from PBS 5, 149: obv. 10), while the ge-su<sub>3</sub> gave its name to the homonymous category of praise hymns<sup>10</sup>). Therefore, *Sumerian Proverbs* 2.54 might propose that bad 'musicians' (nar) and lamentation priests were those performing tasks totally

opposite to those they originally performed, and not anything about aerophones themselves.

**Chapter 2:** R. Pruzsinszky studies low-ranking Mesopotamian musicians, starting with the depictions of and textual allusions to monkey musicians (pp. 42–48). The author displays a great control of the topic, having already worked on it<sup>11</sup>). Her study would have benefitted from an image from the stamp of the cylinder-seal from the Pierpont Morgan Library, studied on p. 47. Pruzsinszky refers to a link, which contains only a description of the seal, and so the reviewer was forced to find an image by other means<sup>12</sup>). In the image<sup>13</sup>), the motif of the dancers commented on by Pruzsinszky appears to be quite small and surrounded by other elements. A drawing of the seal stamp in this chapter might have definitely helped the reader to see the motif better.

After the monkey musicians, Pruzsinszky offers some remarks about musicians performing extra-musical tasks in temples (pp. 48–50), focusing on the evidence from the late third- and early second-millennium BCE. One may find here, among others, a good historiographical overview of the relationship between musicians and priests in Mesopotamia (p. 49 n. 45). Her observations are based upon her extensive research into musicians at that time, so the reviewer agrees with her points, except on (p. 48, of FM 3, 2: iii 10–33) a text from Mari describing a ritual in honour of Ištar. If the reviewer understands Pruzsinszky's point correctly, the social status of the artists is equated in that commentary with the one of the 'female sweepers' (kisalluhātum) cleaning the space after the execution of some dances. Following that reasoning, a *torero* and the *areneros* cleaning the sand after a bullfight should have the same prestige, and the same might be said about a piano soloist and those removing the piano from the auditorium after a concerto for piano and orchestra. Things are actually different in both instances, and the same might apply for FM 3, 2: iii 10–33: the female sweepers would have a lower rank than the artists involved. Additionally, a recent monograph proposes that the date of the unpublished text MLC 2607 (see p. 50) would not be Amar-Su'ena 09-03-00, but Sulgi 29-03-00<sup>14</sup>).

In the final section, Pruzsinszky combines approaches from the two previous sections (pp. 50–52). Her most remarkable piece of evidence is the Achaemenid text from Uruk BM 114528, and the author is to be thanked for bringing this text to the archaeomusicological debate. In her view, this text narrates how two female singers from the Eanna temple in Uruk were kicked out of a tavern because they made a racket during the night. When reading the original text, the reviewer finds a more complex picture, however. The 'singers' (zammāri) Rīšāya and Pappasi mentioned in obv. 7–8 would be accompanied, at least, by the people

<sup>6</sup>) See Eichmann, R./M. Howell/G. Lawson (eds.), *Music and Politics in the Ancient World. Exploring Identity, Agency, Stability and Change through the Records of Music Archaeology* (Berlin Studies in the Ancient World 65). Berlin, Topoi, 2019.

<sup>7</sup>) Tonietti, M. V., *Music, a Central Aspect of Religious and Secular Festivals: Information from the Ebla Archives*. *Kaskal*, 15, 2018 (printed in 2020), pp. 160–164.

<sup>8</sup>) Krispijn, T. J. H., *Music in the Syrian city of Ebla in the late third millennium B.C.* In: Dumbrell R. (ed.), *Proceedings of the International Conference of Near Eastern Archaeomusicology ICONEA 2009-2010*. Piscataway (NJ), Gorgias Press, 2012, pp. 55–61.

<sup>9</sup>) All translations of Sumerian, Akkadian, and Hebrew texts are by the reviewer.

<sup>10</sup>) See Shehata, D., *Musiker und ihr vokales Repertoire. Untersuchungen zu Inhalt und Organisation von Musikerberufen und Liedgattungen in altbabylonischer Zeit* (GBAO 3). Göttingen, Universitätsverlag, 2009, pp. 259–262.

<sup>11</sup>) Pruzsinszky, R., *Musicians and Monkeys: Ancient Near Eastern Clay Plaques displaying Musicians and their Socio-Cultural Role*. In: Bellia, A./C. Marconi (eds.), *Representations of Musicians in the Coroplastic Art of the Ancient World: Iconography, Ritual Contexts, and Functions* (Telestes 2). Pisa/Roma, Fabrizio Serra, 2016, pp. 23–34. Pruzsinszky does not explicitly mention this chapter of hers, but she does mention another chapter: Caubet, A., *Terracotta Figurines of Musicians from Mesopotamia and Elam*. In Bellia, A./C. Marconi (eds.), *op. cit.*, pp. 35–43.

<sup>12</sup>) <http://corsair.themorgan.org/vwebv/holdingsInfo?bibId=84140>.

<sup>13</sup>) Porada, E., *Corpus of Ancient Near Eastern Seals in North American Collections, I: The Collection of the Pierpont Morgan Library* (Bollingen Series 14). Washington, Bollinger Foundation, 1948, seal 517.

<sup>14</sup>) Huber Vulliet, F., *Le personnel cultuel à l'époque néo-sumérienne (ca. 2160-2003 av. J.-C.)* (BPOA 14). Madrid, CSIC, 2019, p. 449 n. 1993.

mentioned in lines obv. 6–7: Arad-Anu and Nabû-kāšir, as well as Ša-pî-kalbi, the innkeeper. However, there were many more people inside the tavern that night, since obv. 9–11 says ‘and I could not recognise the numerous people that went out of Ša-pî-kalbi’s house’ ( $u_3$  <sup>lu2</sup>ERIN<sub>2</sub>.ME / *ma-a-du-ti ša<sub>2</sub> it-ti-šu<sub>2</sub>-nu ul-tu* E<sub>2</sub> <sup>dis</sup>Ša<sub>2</sub>-KA-kal-bi *u<sub>2</sub>-šu-u<sub>2</sub>-ma / la a-mur-šu<sub>2</sub>-nu-tu*). One should add, at least, those mentioned by Arad-Anu, when being interrogated about the facts, in obv. 14 – lo. ed. 3: Arad-Nanāya and Nidintu, alongside his son. One might wonder if, after the name of that son, the text (too erased to be readable) referred to more people involved in the commotion. Therefore, even if Pruzsinszky’s vision of this text is appealing, the reviewer prefers to say, as has been said elsewhere<sup>15</sup>), that the text just refers to a general noise-related incident, and not one generated specifically by two songstresses.

All in all, Pruzsinszky offers here a thought-provoking work and a necessary counterpoint to the idea of music as a noble occupation in Antiquity offered in this volume’s introduction.

**Chapter 3:** D. Shehata offers a highly consistent study of singers and vocal performances in the Old Babylonian Period. After assessing the iconographic and textual evidence for singers (pp. 61–68), the author studies the choirs, and notably their spatial distribution (pp. 69–75), a pertinent topic, since it affects the sonority of an ensemble: see, for example, how symphonic orchestras place second violins together, or in front of, the first violins in order to get one or another kind of orchestral sound. The Sumerian literary text *Dumuzi-Inana J*: 24–34 is the most relevant of the excerpts in this section on choirs. Shehata interprets the text as the description of an antiphonal interpretation honouring the dead god Dumuzi. In that performance, the ‘melisma singers’ (ad ša<sub>4</sub>-ša<sub>4</sub>) of Zabalam would sing an ir<sub>2</sub> sem<sub>5</sub>-ma, a sung prayer usually performed alongside the balaĝ psalmodic long prayers. The singers with ‘high voices’ (lit. ‘little chest’, gaba tur-ra) would perform the melody, and those with ‘low voices’ (lit. ‘big chest’, gaba gu-la) would perform a drone. Both groups would face each other, with the low-pitched singers standing, and the high-pitched singers sitting or kneeling. Finally, the ‘song reciters’ (ser<sub>3</sub> du<sub>11</sub>-du<sub>11</sub>) also mentioned in the text are understood by Shehata as those reciting a balaĝ prayer. The idea of singers in an elevated position is supported later (p. 80) by the allusions, in Old Babylonian texts from Mari (FM 9, 17: 17’ and 26: 12’)<sup>16</sup>), to a musical ensemble called *mazzāzum rabûm*, an expression which might mean ‘elevated position’. The term *mazzāzum* is seen as equivalent to ki-gub-ba, a word translated by Shehata in *Dumuzi-Inana J*: 31 as ‘standing position’.

Shehata offers, therefore, an illuminating analysis for this difficult excerpt. Some aspects of her analysis are still open to alternative interpretations, though:

- In big choirs, lower voices are usually placed above, and also behind, the higher-pitched voices. This aids the

projection of all the voices in the choir. In chamber music groups, higher and lower voices usually face each other in order to make possible the dialogue between them. Shehata proposes for this text that lower voices are facing – and also above – the higher voices, however. What may be the (musical) origin of such a setting? How would the higher voices not lose their projection to the detriment of the lower voices and their drone? Also, note that such a disposition stands in contrast with the content of the clay plaque IM 32062 later studied and related to *Dumuzi-Inana J*: 24–34 in this chapter by the author (see *infra*). In that plaque, two singers face each other without any special elevation for one or the other.

- As for the translation of ad-da as ‘elder’ in *Dumuzi-Inana J*: 31 according to Shehata, the word for ‘elder’ in Sumerian is ab-ba, and not ad-da. Both words share the meaning ‘father’, but only ab-ba means ‘elder’ or ‘old (person)’ as well<sup>17</sup>). Moreover, only ab-ba are involved in musical performances, notably those of lamentations<sup>18</sup>). The identity of the ‘elders’ here is ultimately uncertain, as they cannot be easily related to the melisma and song reciters (lines 25–26) or the high- and low-pitched singers (lines 33–34). The reviewer thinks, as Jacobsen already did<sup>19</sup>), that ad-da is an anticipatory genitive of ki-gub-ba, and the whole expression would refer to the place/position<sup>20</sup>) where the singers should be for the vocal performance. Therefore, the full sentence of *Dumuzi-Inana J*: 31 (ad-da ki-gub-ba nu-mu-un-ĝa<sub>2</sub>-ĝa<sub>2</sub>-me-eš) would be translated by the reviewer as ‘they are those who were not placed on the position for singing’ (lit. ‘position of the voice’).
- The Akkadian *mazzāzum rabûm* might bear no particular spatial connotation. In FM 9, 17: 17’, ša i-na ma-za-zi-im ra-bi-im i-za-za (lit. ‘they who stand in the large *mazzāzum*’) just alludes to the belonging of some musicians to the musical ensemble called *mazzāzum rabûm*. As *mazzāzum* means ‘position’ as (social) rank and place (see CAD M1, 234), the expression *mazzāzum rabûm* probably refers, in origin, to the special ranking of the musicians of that group, and not necessarily to an elevated or standing position.

After the analysis of *Dumuzi-Inana J*: 24–34, Shehata expands the conclusions raised by a previous contribution about CT 58, 12 (BM 85206), a nuptial chant with performance instructions<sup>21</sup>). The reviewer agrees with Shehata’s thoughts on this text, and the only regret for this section is about Fig. 3-6, where the colours are not perceivable enough because of the black-and-white printing of the book. The use of different geometrical figures or line styles for each section within might have improved the understanding of that scheme, but, in any case, Shehata probably bears no responsibility in this matter.

<sup>17</sup>) See ePSD2 and Attinger, P., *Glossaire sumérien-français principalement des textes littéraires paléobabyloniens*. Wiesbaden, Harrassowitz, 2021, pp. 130 and 135.

<sup>18</sup>) See, e.g., Shehata, D., *Musiker und ihr vokales Repertoire...*, op. cit., p. 105.

<sup>19</sup>) Bendt Alster, B., Geštinanna as Singer and the Chorus of Uruk and Zabalam: UET 6/1 22. *JCS*, 37(2), 1985, p. 228.

<sup>20</sup>) Sumerian ki-gub(-ba) does not necessarily refer to a standing place, but just a position in general. See ePSD2 and Attinger, P., *Glossaire sumérien-français*, op. cit., pp. 609–610.

<sup>21</sup>) Mirelman, S./W. Sallaberger, The Performance of a Sumerian Wedding Song, CT 58, 12. *ZA*, 100(2), 2010, pp. 177–196.

<sup>15</sup>) Pimgruber, R./S. Tost, Police Forces in First Millennium BCE Babylonia and Beyond. *Kaskal*, 10, 2013, p. 71; Kim, A., *Pratiques administratives et judiciaires des grands organismes institutionnels en Babylonie, du VII<sup>e</sup> au V<sup>e</sup> siècle av. J.-C.* PhD Dissertation, Université Paris I, 2019, p. 147.

<sup>16</sup>) Abbreviations for the names of cuneiform texts follow those available on the abbreviations’ list of the *Reallexikon der Assyriologie* (<https://rla.baw.de/reallexikon/abkuerzungslisten.html>).



The final section of the chapter brings together all the previous sections of her chapter in order to propose an interesting 3D approach for the plaque IM 32062, where two singers face each other while surrounded by several monkeys and dancing lute-players (pp. 81–87). This is another example of the potential of 3D approaches to Mesopotamian depictions, only recently explored<sup>22</sup>). The reviewer may wonder if a fourth monkey ‘in front’ of the lutist should be imagined as well.

### Ancient Egypt and Israel (Chapters 4–5)

**Chapter 4:** H. Köpp-Junk deals with ancient Egyptian music. The most important textual, iconographic, and archaeological evidence for the study of its instruments and musicians (pp. 93–98), lyrics (pp. 98–99), a possible musical notation (pp. 99–100), and scenes of musical performances (pp. 100–104) are excellently presented. The reviewer has only two minor remarks for this exposition.

Firstly, the label ‘double oboe’ is common in Egyptology<sup>23</sup>), and the author employs it accordingly (see pp. 94–95, 101). Those Egyptian instruments cannot be actually seen as oboes, however. Oboes and similar instruments, such as the *zurna* of the modern Islamic world, have a conic bore, whilst examples and representations of the Egyptian *wḏny* reveal an instrument with a rather cylindrical bore. Although the *wḏny* could have double reeds as oboes, cylindrical bores are actually typical on clarinets. They look, thus, very much like Greek *auloi*<sup>24</sup>). Therefore, if the Egyptian *wḏny* is seen as too technical for describing those Egyptian instruments, something like ‘double pipe’ or ‘*aulos*’ would be organologically more suitable.

The second remark concerns the text of an Osirian liturgy preserved on the papyrus pCarlsberg 589 + PSI inv. I 104 + pBerlin 29022 (2<sup>nd</sup>–1<sup>st</sup> century BCE; pCarlsberg 589+ henceforth) from Tebtunis published by A. von Lieven<sup>25</sup>), and commented on by Köpp-Junk on p. 99. Following the observations of von Lieven on this text, the red dots and crosses over the text on that papyrus are presented by Köpp-Junk as indicating the rhythm of a drum accompanying the recitation of the text. That interpretation is based upon the initial conclusions of von Lieven. However, more recent research by F. Hoffmann found that dots sit in metrically significant places within the text, claiming that they actually constituted verse, not musical, points, although they still might have constituted a base for a drum rhythm<sup>26</sup>). His conclusions

have been since supported by other authors<sup>27</sup>). S. Izre’el<sup>28</sup>) arrived at similar conclusions with the cuneiform tablets EA 356<sup>29</sup>), 357<sup>30</sup>), and 372<sup>31</sup>), whose texts have tinted red points at specific intervals corresponding to metremes. For that author, however, those points bear no musical inner meaning, but they consist of an attempt by an Egyptian reader to adapt the meter of these Akkadian literary texts to an ‘Egyptian’ style. Possibly, the notation on the Egyptian papyrus did not have a musical meaning either, but both research lines have not been combined yet. Whereas Hoffmann did not cite Izre’el’s work and von Lieven has only done it so briefly<sup>32</sup>), Izre’el published all his considerations before the earliest publication of pCarlsberg 589+. A comparison of pCarlsberg 589+ with that of EA 356, 357, and 372 (considering the latest advances in research on Akkadian metre<sup>33</sup>) goes beyond the scope of this review article, so such a study and possibility of finding a common framework for understanding them should be conducted in the future.

The rest of Köpp-Junk’s chapter deals with the question of how experimentation elucidates the (un)documented aspects of Egyptian music. The author discusses her own performances of New Kingdom love songs and their reception by the public. Different procedures involved in those performances are critically assessed by the author, the most relevant one being the singing of the lyrics (the melodies having been composed by the author) with the accompaniment of a replica of an Egyptian New-Kingdom lute. The reviewer congratulates the author for this ground-breaking research, unparalleled for many other ancient musical traditions.

**Chapter 5:** T. W. Burgh proposes the existence of two techniques for making music in Ancient Israel according to Classical Hebrew textual evidence, clearly reflecting the author’s experience as a jazz flautist as well as a biblical scholar.

The first assessed technique is circular breathing (pp. 122–127). The existence of such a technique is proposed according to I Chr. 16: 4–6, where the trumpeters are supposed to play continuously before the Ark. This is, therefore, a highly welcome contribution, as it brings out additional evidence for the study of such a practice beyond the usually commented use of a band covering the cheeks of the performer in order

<sup>22</sup>) Delnero, P., A Land with No Borders: A New Interpretation of the Babylonian “Map of the World”. *JANEH*, 4(1-2), 2017, pp. 19–37.

<sup>23</sup>) See, e.g., Emerit, S., À propos de l’origine des interdits musicaux dans l’Égypte ancienne. *BIFAQ*, 102, 2002, pp. 198–200. See also Böckler, N., *Die Flöte im Alten Ägypten*. Hamburg, Verlag Dr. Kovač, 2016, pp. 13–14.

<sup>24</sup>) Psaroudakēs, S., The *Auloi* of Pydna. In: Both, A. A./R. Eichmann/E. Hickmann/L.-Ch. Koch (eds.), *Challenges and Objectives in Music Archaeology* (Studien zur Musik-Archäologie 6 = OrA 22). Rahden, Marie Leidorf, 2008, p. 197.

<sup>25</sup>) Von Lieven, A., Eine punktierte Osirisliturgie (pCarlsberg 589 + PSI inv. I 104 + pBerlin 29022). In: Ryholt, K. (ed.), *Hieratic Texts from the Collection* (The Carlsberg Papyrus 7 = Carsten Niebuhr Institute Publications 30). Copenhagen, Museum Tusculum, 2006, p. 9–38, with previous works in p. 9.

<sup>26</sup>) Hoffmann, F., Zur angeblichen musikalischen Notation in einer ägyptischen Osirisliturgie, in: B. Rothöhler/A. Manisali (eds.), *Mythos & Ritual. Festschrift für Jan Assmann zum 70. Geburtstag* (Religionswissen-

schaft: Forschung und Wissenschaft 5). Berlin, LIT Verlag, 2008, pp. 71–76. The reviewer owes this reference to A. von Lieven.

<sup>27</sup>) Manassa, C., Soundscapes in Ancient Egyptian Literature and Religion. In: Meyer-Dietrich, E. (ed.), *Laut und Leise. Der Gebrauch von Stimme und Klang in historischen Kulturen* (Mainzer Historische Kulturwissenschaften 7). Bielefeld, Transcript Verlag, 2011, p. 149 n. 12.

<sup>28</sup>) The last case, Izre’el, S., *Adapa and the South Wind. Language Has the Power of Life and Death* (MC 10). Winona Lake (IN), Eisenbrauns, pp. 81–106.

<sup>29</sup>) VAT 348; Adapa’s myth, fragment B.

<sup>30</sup>) BM 29865 (Egypt) + VAT 1611 + VAT 1613 + VAT 1614 + VAT 2710. Amarna recension of Nergal and Ereškigal’s myth.

<sup>31</sup>) BM 134872 (Egypt). A fragment of an unknown literary text.

<sup>32</sup>) Von Lieven, A., Musical notation in Roman Period Egypt. In: Hickmann, E./A. D. Kilmer/R. Eichmann (eds.), *Archäologie früher Klangerzeugung und Tonordnung. Vorträge des 2. Symposiums der Internationalen Studiengruppe Musikarchäologie im Kloster Michaelstein, 17.–23. September 2000* (Studien zur Musikarchäologie 3 = OrA 10). Rahden, Leidorf, 2002, p. 498 n. 9.

<sup>33</sup>) Aguilera Puentes, F., *Aproximació a la mètrica accàdia*. Master’s Thesis. Barcelona, Universitat de Barcelona, 2016 (with previous literature).

to maintain the continuous blowing (the Greek *φορβεία*)<sup>34</sup>). The chapter could have benefitted from a link to a video showing a brass player using this technique, such as <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hVAWwWi0DbE>, which shows the trombonist John Kenny playing a replica of an ancient Celtic *karnyx*.

The second assessed technique is improvisation (pp. 127–132), another understudied aspect of ancient music<sup>35</sup>), notably because its existence is normally based on the absence of written music and precise performance indications rather than on substantive evidence, hence this welcome study. When conceptually defining musical improvisation, the author emphasises the notions of borrowing and adapting ideas from other musicians as relevant elements (p. 127), leading the author later to consider the foreign innovations in ancient Israelite material culture as ‘improvisation’ (pp. 128–129). Borrowing and adapting are relevant, however, for musical composition and interpretation in general, not only for improvisation. As far as the reviewer knows, improvisation is actually differentiated from composition only in how much of a piece of music has been written down before its performance.

The key moment in this study on improvisation arrives when dealing with Amos 6:5, where the Classical Hebrew *kēDāvid hāšbū lāhem kēlē-šir* (כְּדָוִיד הָשְׁבּוּ לָהֶם כְּלֵי-שִׁיר) is translated as ‘like David they improvise on instruments of music’ instead of the expected ‘like David, they devised musical instruments for themselves’ according to the usual meanings of the Hebrew *hāšab* (הָשַׁב) ‘to devise’, ‘to think’, or ‘to account’<sup>36</sup>). Such an interpretation is very similar to that of an article by the late D. N. Freedman (1922–2008) not cited by Burgh<sup>37</sup>), which might have supplied some extra arguments, especially concerning ellipsis (notably prepositions) in Classical Hebrew, an aspect in any case to be completed with later literature<sup>38</sup>). Other recent interpretations for this excerpt currently exist; a Polish contribution saw ‘improvisation’ not on the verb *hāšab* (הָשַׁב), but on the *pārāṭ* (פָּרַט) employed in the first part of Amos 6:5 (*hapōrēṭīm ‘al pī hannābel* הַפֹּרְטִים עַל-פִּי הַנָּבֵל, ‘they idle songs on the harp’)<sup>39</sup>). This excerpt will probably still create some debates in the future. Other remarks on improvisation in the Hebrew Bible (notably its use within prophetic contexts) within this chapter

are not based upon Amos 6:5, and they may be retained as such according to the reviewer. They might have been complemented by a discussion about the possible existence of improvisation in the ‘popular’ music of the Israelites.

A ‘Summary/Conclusion’ (pp. 132–133) refers to the earliest stages of an intriguing project where, combining Digital Humanities and experimentation, the author is going to explore the performance of musical instruments in ancient Israel. The reviewer has found no new publication dealing with that project, but he is looking forward to reading more about it.

### The Mediterranean World in Pre-Roman times (Chapters 6–8)

**Chapter 6:** D. F. Maras addresses a very interesting point: the message of musical and dance performances. Music is, after all, a way of communication. This chapter reflects on dances conveying a mythical message in Ancient Greece, which were later exported to Etruria, according to the author. Such dances are explicitly known in Greek sources only from the 4<sup>th</sup> century BCE onwards, as the author indicates (pp. 138–140). This is much later than Greek contacts with Etruria, but the author thinks that dances with mythological content already existed in Greece by the time of those contacts, upon several arguments. One of them does not sufficiently convince the reviewer, not being an expert on the topic in any case: the connection between dance exhibitions and symposia. Perhaps such spectacles took place within symposia, but their programmatic content might have not been exclusively mythological, but also about humans in their daily life. One might still agree with Maras’s hypothesis, as he correctly identifies motifs with a possible Greek origin in various Etruscan and Early Latin depictions (pp. 140–148). Greek mythological motifs are also traced in multiple dance movements and stances (*schemata*) in Italic iconography (pp. 148–149). Eventually, these dances and movements on Greek coinage are situated within the different oral, written, and visual mechanisms of Greek influence over the Etruscan and Early Latin world during the ‘Orientalising’ period (p. 150).

**Chapter 7:** Authored by A. Bellia, it approaches the musical performances in the so-called Greek cultic theatres. The chapter starts with an architectural categorisation of those buildings (pp. 155–156), followed by some thoughtful considerations on the nature of musical performances and dances within cultic theatres in Western Greece (pp. 156–160). The author then focuses on the material evidence (real instruments, iconography, and architecture) for the study of those musical performances in two cultic theatres from Sicily (Selinunte and Syracuse) and the theatre of Metaponto in the Tarentum Gulf of the Italic Peninsula (pp. 160–168). The reviewer cannot explain the author’s choice of dataset – across a relatively large geographical area –. The sources for studying musical performances in those theatres are described and contextualised with the writings of different Greek authors (Pausanias, Diodorus, etc.), filling the gaps in the material evidence. Among the sources assessed, the most relevant one is the fragmented *aulós* found at Temple R in Selinunte, the first real instrument studied in the reviewed volume. Bellia’s conclusions reflect on the social impact of cultic theatres, fascinatingly showing how they played a key role in the acculturation of local people (pp. 167–168).

<sup>34</sup>) For recent considerations on this topic, see Dolazza, A., *Il corpo dell’auleta. Produzione, percezione e visualizzazione del suono. Greek and Roman Musical Studies*, 4, 2016, pp. 295–297. Despite the publication of this article, and other studies related to the topic cited by Dolazza, Burgh has cited none for his chapter in the reviewed book, however.

<sup>35</sup>) The reviewer only remembers one previous study (unfortunately, not found in Burgh’s chapter) about improvisation: Volk, K., *Improvisierte Musik im Alten Mesopotamien?* In: Fähndrich, W. (ed.), *Improvisation II*. Winterthur, Amadeus Verlag, 1994, pp. 160–202.

<sup>36</sup>) The reviewer owes to David Danzig his assistance with the Classical Hebrew.

<sup>37</sup>) Freedman, D. N., *But Did King David Invent Musical Instruments?* *BRRev.* 1(2), 1985, pp. 48–51.

<sup>38</sup>) As an example of something written later than Freedman’s article, but before Burgh’s chapter, see Miller, C. L., *A Linguistic Approach to Ellipsis in Biblical Poetry (Or, What to Do When Exegesis of What Is There Depends on What Isn’t)*. *Bulleting for Biblical Research*, 13(2), pp. 251–270. About ellipsis in Classical Hebrew nowadays, see Holmstedt, R. D., *Investigating Ellipsis in Biblical Hebrew*. In: Holmstedt, R. (ed.), *Linguistic Studies on Biblical Hebrew* (Studies in Semitic Languages and Linguistics 102). Leiden, Brill, 2021, pp. 84–102.

<sup>39</sup>) Kubies, Gr., *Instrumenty muzyczne w Księdze Amosa*. *BibAn*, 5, 2015, p. 90.

**Chapter 8:** R. Jiménez Pasalodos and P. Holmes here discuss music in ancient Iberia (southeastern and eastern Spain) in the fourth to first centuries BCE, for which the only available indigenous sources are iconographical (pp. 173–174). As they are abundant, only those depicting *aulói* and trumpets/horns are studied here. The first section (pp. 175–178) assesses the aspect of these instruments to the extent allowed by the depictions. Images of all the depictions to be analysed are provided (pp. 177–178), but many of them are too small to distinguish their details. Their distribution through more pages, and in a larger size, would have helped the reader to appreciate them better. In any case, this is probably not the authors' fault. The scenes where they appear are later described (pp. 179–182) and interpreted (pp. 183–188). The authors show that trumpets are played by men and *aulói* mostly by women. Female musicians take part even in celebrations of the Iberian ideal of masculinity, and the authors offer some solutions for this. They firstly suggest that they symbolically represent the 'two highest ideals of gender roles, the mother and the warrior, ensuring the social cohesion, sexual and social reproduction, the transmission and perpetuation of cultural values and the legitimisation of the ruling elites'. This is supported by an insightful analogy with the role of women wailing the death of warriors among the Nyakyusa, a modern Bantu population from southern Tanzania. Nonetheless, an analogy from the ancient Mediterranean might have been more appropriate, or at least an explanation for the lack of such an analogy. Alternative solutions for this female presence in rituals about the Iberian ideal of masculinity are later proposed. They ultimately argue that these women worked as priestesses for the cult of the Mother-Goddess (pp. 192–194), and they might have represented the goddess as symbolically united with the warrior in a convergence of the two axes of the ideal world: the masculine and the feminine (p. 200). Besides some redundant capitalizations ('to be a likely inference Performing together with...' on p. 194, and 'However, one Century before this time', on p. 195), the reviewer finds their arguments convincing. Moreover, the reviewer thinks that, if those women were priestesses, they would have enjoyed an elevated social status, which would also allow them to take part in those rituals. After all, warrior also belonged to the Iberian elite.

### The Roman and Late Antique World (Chapters 9–11)

**Chapter 9:** The soundscapes of the Vesubian region (Pompeii and Herculaneum) in Roman times occupy the ninth chapter, authored by M. Mungari. The history of previous research (pp. 209–212) is explained in detail. Certainly, as the author writes later in his conclusions (p. 224), 'the most insidious challenge is to consider Pompeii and Herculaneum not like a Polaroid shoot of Roman daily life, rather like a glance through a frosted glass: each object, building, structure, data, has to be carefully contextualised through its recent history, to be correctly evaluated and interpreted'. This critical perspective helps to understand much better the Vesubian musical evidence, thanks in particular to the use of some unpublished works by the late Prof Roberto Melini (1960–2013), consulted by the author with the support of Melini's family. The musical evidence is categorised into real instruments (pp. 212–214), buildings (pp. 214–221), and iconography (pp. 221–223). This excellent study tries to encompass, thus, all the available bibliography, including

Melini's relevant unpublished works, and urges us to take more account of the context of ancient musical evidence in order to analyse it critically. Missing from the relevant bibliography for the study of the music in the *munera gladiatoria* (p. 217 n. 20) is the section about that topic in Vincent's revised PhD Dissertation<sup>40</sup>).

**Chapter 10:** K. Wystucha's chapter is about the Latin *tibia multifora* ('many-holed *tibia*'). One of her introductory remarks (pp. 227–230) should catch the reader's attention: the ambiguity of literary texts as sources for the study of musical culture (p. 228). Despite its incontestable validity, this notion is still absent from many studies about the musical vocabulary of literary authors and texts. The Greek equivalents for *tibia multifora* are observed first: *πολύχορδος* (lit. 'many-stringed', 'polymodal'; pp. 230–232) and *πολύτρητος* ('many-holed', 'much pierced'; pp. 232–234). The allusions to *tibia multifora* are then individually assessed, starting with Ovid (43 BCE–17 CE) *Met.* 12: 157–163 (pp. 234–237) in a much-needed evaluation, given the omission of this excerpt in an earlier study of music in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*<sup>41</sup>). The other excerpts with *tibia multifora* are Seneca (4 BCE–65 CE) *Ag.* 358–367, and Apuleius (ca. 123–170 CE) *Met.* 10.32.12–19 and *Florida* 3.1–2. As each of them has a different vision of *tibia multifora*, it is reasonably proposed in the chapter that no single definition for this expression is possible. This is seen as 'an adequate example of the diversity of interpretations a musical motif can entail' (p. 243). The reader might wonder, however, to what extent this is actually the case of a single *topós* evolving throughout the history of Roman literature. This is an excellent contribution, drawing on the author's expertise as a classical philologist, as well as an *aulós* and bassoon player. The chapter would have benefitted from engaging with the scholarship of these two Spanish authors on *tibia multifora* in Seneca and Apuleius:

- Fuentes Moreno, F., *La música en la obra de Apuleyo. Florentia Iliberritana*, 16, 2005, p. 87.
- Luque Moreno, J., *Seneca Mvscus*. In: Rodríguez Pantoja, M. (ed.), *Séneca, dos Mil Años Después. Actas del Congreso Internacional Conmemorativo del Bimilenario de su Nacimiento (Córdoba, 24 a 27 de Septiembre de 1996)*. Universidad de Córdoba and Obra Social y Cultural Cajasur, 1997, p. 84.

**Chapter 11:** In the last chapter, C. Tavorieri discusses the musical world of Syriac communities (4<sup>th</sup>–8<sup>th</sup> centuries CE) through textual and iconographic sources, a warmly welcome contribution in view of the paucity of research on how much of ancient southwest Asian musical traditions were later inherited by Arab and other communities<sup>42</sup>). According to the author, the evidence studied here derives from the

<sup>40</sup>) Vincent, A., *Jouer pour la cité: une histoire sociale et politique des musiciens professionnels de l'Occident romain* (Bibliothèque des Écoles Françaises d'Athènes et de Rome 371). Rome, École Française de Rome, 2016, pp. 189–199.

<sup>41</sup>) Von Albrecht, M., Ovid und die Musik. *Scripta Classica Israelica*, 15, 1996, p. 177.

<sup>42</sup>) Until now, R. J. Dumbrill has tried to connect the Babylonian music theory system with the Arabic *maqāmāt* (see, e.g., Dumbrill, R. J., *The Birth of Music Theory. Universalism and Relativism in Sumerian-Babylonian Musicology*. London, ICONEA, 2020). That author has never paid attention, however, to the process explaining how the first system survived into the second one, but he just tries to equal both systems. In that way, he supposes an unlikely continuity of, at least, a millennium between both musical traditions.



development of the Syriac Christian groups and the influence of Greco-Roman and Mesopotamian musical traditions (pp. 248–250). This is a notable point which supports a relationship of the first-millennium Akkadian *balaggu(m)* ‘drum’ with the Syriac *plaggā* (ܩܠܥܐ) ‘drum’<sup>43</sup>, which could have been revisited by Tavolieri in this chapter. The Syriac literary sources are assessed first (pp. 250–255). Singing is described by them as a potentially dangerous practice needing some control, a similar description to that applied to women. Both are considered in Syriac texts as agents that may avert the devotee from the duty of cultivating the spirit by appealing to pleasurable sensations. Several excerpts with a text in Syriac script, English translation, and Greek parallels are provided here in order to illustrate this. The inclusion of an extra alphabetic transliteration might have helped the non-specialist in the closer examination of those excerpts.

The image of music displayed by the textual evidence finds some parallels in iconography, commented on in a specific section (pp. 255–256), but some drawings and photos of those depictions would have been desirable, even if some of them are relatively well-known, such as the 4<sup>th</sup>-century CE mosaic from Homs depicting a group of female musicians<sup>44</sup>. On this example, the author draws a comparison with professional female musicians from Old Babylonian Mari. The reviewer would have found more pertinent, however, a comparison with later texts, such as the allusion to 61 female musicians in the Neo-Assyrian list of cultic personnel SAA 7, 24: obv. 20–lo. e. 2<sup>45</sup>). After all, the latest stages of Mesopotamian music should be privileged in the study of its aftermaths in Late Antique and Early Islamic times.

### Conclusions & Research Proposals for the Future

Despite his points of criticism, the reviewer congratulates the editors and authors for this excellent and well-presented book, which has created a starting-point for the study of two mostly overlooked, but very important, aspects of music in the ancient world: the interpretation and staging of music. This book is already required reading for anyone interested in ancient music. It is a pity, in that sense, that later collective volumes on different ancient musical traditions have not continued the paths proposed by this book, dealing instead with topics such as the role of music in politics<sup>46</sup> or ancient percussions<sup>47</sup>. The exception comes from Bellia, who has tried to expand her work in Chapter 7 of this volume about music in the cultic theatres with an edited volume about spaces of musical performance in the ancient world<sup>48</sup>. An apt sequel to that volume might encompass other cultures

beyond the Mesopotamian and Greek cultures studied in that volume.

Some topics in this book need to be expanded in future studies, such as interpretation techniques (see Burgh in Chapter 5) and spatial settings (see Shehata in Chapter 4). Lexicographers usually pay attention to the terms for musical instruments in order to offer suitable identifications for them according to the available textual, archaeological, and iconographic evidence, such as in Wysłucha’s chapter. Nouns and verbs describing the sound production of those instruments are useful for identifying them, but they are typically overlooked by lexicographers<sup>49</sup>, and need to be studied in their own right. Another fertile topic related to musical performance as ‘interpretation’ is the one covered by Köpp-Junk in Chapter 4: the study of the performance of the few extant melodies from Antiquity, and of texts whose musical interpretation can be indicated. Some researchers have dealt with ancient extant melodies from both a theoretical and a practical perspective, performing their reconstructions with replicas of ancient instruments and recording the results on sound storage media, as with A. D. Kilmer<sup>50</sup> and T. J. H. Krispijn<sup>51</sup> for Mesopotamia and, among others, A. Bélis with her *Ensemble Kérylos*<sup>52</sup> and the participants in the CD accompanying the volume *Ancient Greek Music in Performance*<sup>53</sup> for Ancient Greece. However, there has been no reflection on how the practical performance of those excerpts helps us to understand their content, or on how are they to be reconstructed, in the case of the Mesopotamian excerpts. Studies in this line need to establish a dialogue with musicologists dealing with the performance of music in later periods of music history, and how they explore the sources in order to propose a given interpretation technique for a piece of music<sup>54</sup>.

Finally, another aspect of ancient musical performance as staging not treated by this volume, but still relevant from a global musicological perspective, should be studied in the future: how ancient are ‘recitals’ and ‘concerts’, that is, the events where one or more musicians perform before an audience, and are not merely accompanying other events (banquets, processions, etc.)? While musicology has traditionally held that concerts are historically recent<sup>55</sup>, some terms and musical depictions from different ancient cultures

<sup>43</sup>) Gabbay, U., The Balaḡ Instrument and Its Role in the Cult of Ancient Mesopotamia. In: Westenholz, J. G./Y. Maurey/E. Seroussi (eds.), *Music in Antiquity: the Near East and the Mediterranean* (Yuval 8). Boston/Berlin, De Gruyter, 2014, p. 138.

<sup>44</sup>) See: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Mosaic\\_of\\_the\\_Female\\_Musicians.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Mosaic_of_the_Female_Musicians.jpg).

<sup>45</sup>) See an edition <http://oracc.iaas.upenn.edu/saao/saa07/P335671/html> to be consulted alongside with the suggestions from Peled, I., *assinnu* and *kurgarrû* revisited. *JNES*, 73(2), 2014, p. 287.

<sup>46</sup>) Eichmann, R./M. Howell/G. Lawson (eds.) ..., *op. cit.*, *passim*.

<sup>47</sup>) The monographic number *Percussions Antiques. Organologie – Perceptions – Polyvalence* published within the journal *Pallas*, 115, 2021, coordinated by A. Saura-Ziegelmeier.

<sup>48</sup>) Bellia, A. (ed.), *Musical and Choral Performance Spaces in the Ancient World* (Telestes 5). Pisa/Roma, Fabrizio Serra, 2020.

<sup>49</sup>) A recent attempt to challenge this situation is Molina Muga, G., *Music terminology in Ancient Egypt. A lexicographic study of verbal expressions concerning the playing of instruments*. Bachelor Thesis. Uppsala, Universitet Uppsala, 2019.

<sup>50</sup>) Kilmer, A. D./Crocker, R. L. (eds.), *Sounds from Silence: Recent Discoveries in Ancient Near Eastern Music*. Berkeley (CA), Bit Enki Records, 1976 contains sound reconstructions accompanied by an overview of research on Mesopotamian music theory until that moment, notably according to A. D. Kilmer’s research.

<sup>51</sup>) Krispijn T. J. H., Musik in Keilschrift. Beiträge zur altorientalischen Musikforschung 2. In: Hickmann E./A. D. Kilmer/R. Eichmann (eds.), *Studien zur Musik Archäologie 3*. Rahden/Westfalen, Verlag Marie Leidorf, 2003, pp. 465–479. Listen here <https://youtu.be/3HK1MX9CyMM> to some of his reconstructions.

<sup>52</sup>) See <https://www.kerylos.fr/#> for the discography of this ensemble, and Bélis, A., Théories musicales grèques. In: Leclant, J. (ed.), *Dictionnaire de l’Antiquité*. Paris, PUF, 2005, pp. 1475–1480, for an example of her contributions to this field.

<sup>53</sup>) Hagel, S./Harrauer, C. (eds.) ..., *op. cit.*, *passim*.

<sup>54</sup>) See, e.g., Lawson, C./R. Stowell, *The Historical Performance of Music: An Introduction*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1999, notably the Chapter 2 ‘The application of primary sources’.

<sup>55</sup>) Weber, W., Concert (ii). *Grove Music Online*, 2001; Ledent, D., L’institutionnalisation des concerts publics. Enjeux politiques et esthé-

have been seen by the specialists in those cultures as ‘concerts’. Thus, the Akkadian *zamīrum*, which designates an event (a festival?) involving singers and musical instruments in the Old Babylonian texts from Mari<sup>56</sup>), has sometimes been translated as a ‘concert’<sup>57</sup>). As for other regions in southwestern Asia, Joachim Braun refers several times to concerts or instruments suitable for concerts in ancient Israel<sup>58</sup>). In the same way, some ancient Egyptian depictions have already been considered to be examples of a ‘private chamber music concert’<sup>59</sup>).

Scholars have also found in Greco-Roman Antiquity different forms of evidence for concerts. The Greek συναυλία is usually translated as ‘(instrumental) concert’<sup>60</sup>). Concerts have also been seen in the Roman world, among others<sup>61</sup>), within the musical events organised by the elites for the pleasure of the rest of the population: for instance, the one involving the ‘horns’ (*cornua*) in Petronius, *Sat.* 78. Finally, Greco-Roman odeons are understood by scholars as spaces hosting musical performances and poetry recitals comparable to our modern concerts, such as that of Mungari in Chapter 9 within the reviewed volume (p. 216)<sup>62</sup>). Researchers of ancient musical cultures outside the Mediterranean have also found ancient evidence for concerts: for example, the Andhra Pradesh (southeastern Indian) footed bowl on copper alloy from the MET Museum (inventory number: 1975.419; ca. 5<sup>th</sup>–6<sup>th</sup> centuries CE)<sup>63</sup>), which depicts what is considered a concert as a part of multiple scenes dealing with palace life<sup>64</sup>). Because of this apparent global and transcultural character of concerts, scholars of the ancient world and musicologists, especially those working in Concert Studies<sup>65</sup>), should work together in order to solve two key questions.

The first question is to what extent the aforementioned words and scenes should actually be understood as ‘concerts’ also from a musicological perspective? Scholars need to work on proposing more suitable translations or descriptions for the supposed concerts in musicological terms, specially when there is ancient evidence suggesting a different translation for them. The reviewer wonders, for instance, if the Akkadian *zamīrum* might be compared to the IZIN NAM.NAR (‘music festival’) mentioned in Reynolds, *Babylon Calendar*

*Treatise*, 2019: §13 iv 26 (see p. 208–209, 224, 384–385) and, therefore, be translated as ‘music festival’. The second question would be to what degree can these ancient concerts redefine the history and character of concerts in general? Ancient world studies must contribute to critical reflection on our current society in its different facets, by introducing and discussing similar phenomena from Antiquity.

Granada, November 2021

tiques, *Appareil*, 3 (*Concerts publics et formes de la sensibilité musicale*), 2009, p. 1.

<sup>56</sup>) See evidence for this event in Jaquet, A., *Documents relatifs aux dépenses pour le culte* (FM 12). Paris, Société pour l’Étude du Proche-Orient Ancien, 2011, pp. 66–67.

<sup>57</sup>) Ziegler, N., *Les musiciens et la musique d’après les archives de Mari* (FM 9). Paris, Société pour l’Étude du Proche-Orient Ancien, 2007, pp. 18–19 (with previous bibliography).

<sup>58</sup>) Braun, J., *Music in Ancient Israel/Palestine. Archaeological, Written, and Comparative Sources*. Grand Rapids (MI) & Cambridge (UK), William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2002, pp. 194, 244, 247, 271, 286.

<sup>59</sup>) Köpp-Junk, H., The Artists behind the Ancient Egyptian Love Songs: Performance and Technique. In: Navrátilová, H./R. Landgráfová (eds.), *Sex and the Golden Goddess II. World of the Love of Songs*. Prague, Charles University in Prague, 2015, p. 48.

<sup>60</sup>) Grandolini, S., *Sulla synaulia. Nova tellus*, 25(2), 2007, p. 144, 147.

<sup>61</sup>) Pécché, V./C. Vendries, *Musique et spectacles dans la Rome antique et dans l’Occident romain*. Paris, Éditions Errance, pp. 29, 52, 59, 68, 73.

<sup>62</sup>) See also Pécché, V./C. Vendries, *op. cit.*, pp. 65–75.

<sup>63</sup>) <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/39163>.

<sup>64</sup>) Zin, M., Die altindischen *vinās*. In: Hickmann, E./R. Eichmann (ed.), *Musikarchäologie IV* (OrA 15). Rahden, Verlag Marie Leidorf, 2004, p. 327 n. 77.

<sup>65</sup>) See, e.g., Tröndle, M., *Classical Concert Studies. A Companion to Contemporary Research and Performance*. New York, Routledge, 2020.