ANDREW BARKER

Andrew Dennison Barker

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elected Fellow of the British Academy 2005

by

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Trained as a philosopher, Andrew Barker entered the field of ancient music when it still had very few inhabitants. His translations of ancient theoretical treatises on harmonics made available, for the first time in English, a large number of difficult and demanding texts, but above all he drew out their philosophical implications, showing how they contributed to ancient debates about perception, definition, and scientific methodology. His translations and exegeses both enriched the field and enlarged it, and his collaborations with colleagues—especially in Italy, which became an important part of his life—created and fostered international networks that transformed the study of ancient music.

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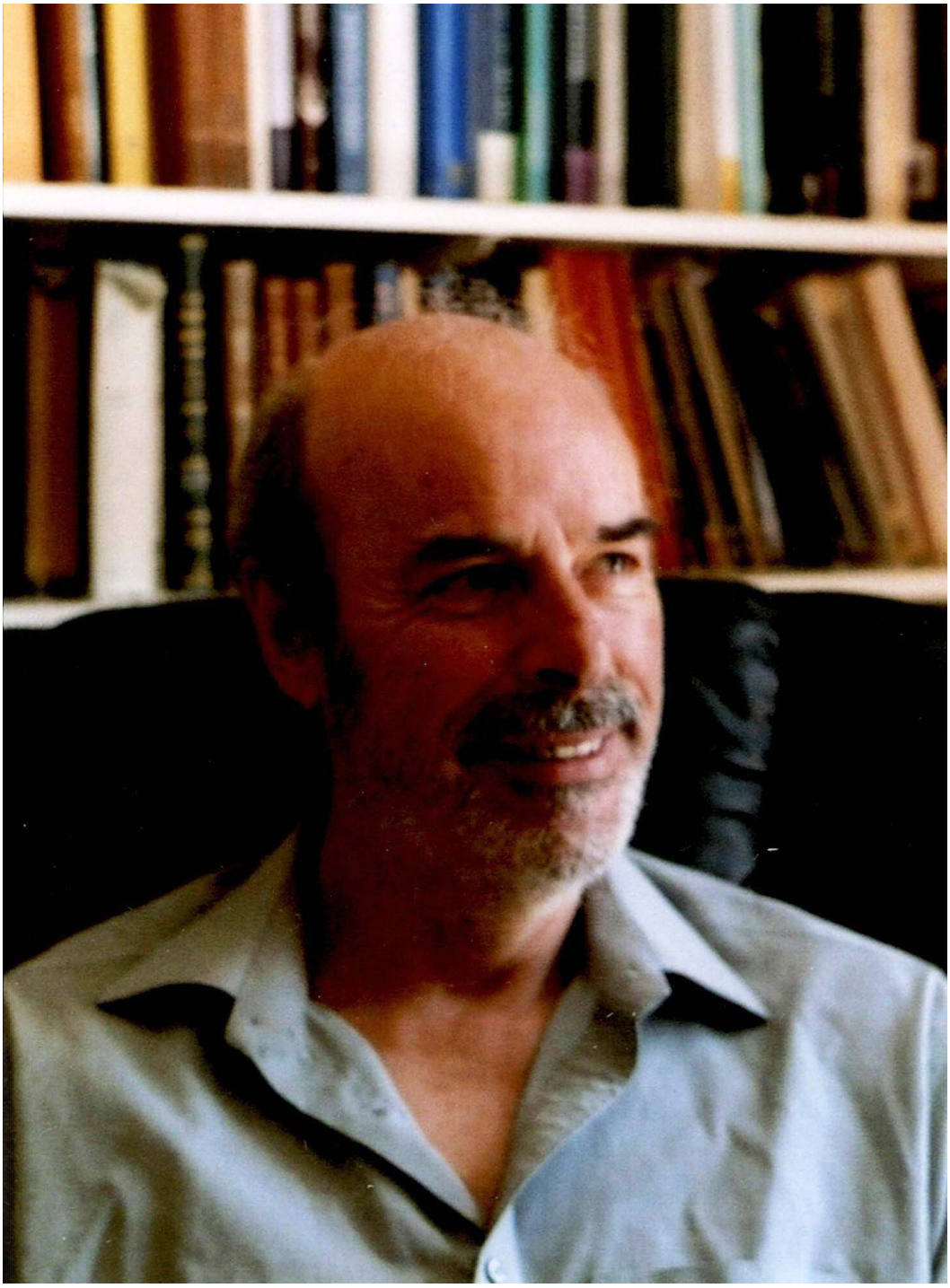

ANDREW BARKER

I

Andrew Barker was born 24 April 1943, in Egginton, South Derbyshire, to Edwin and Nancy Barker (née Daldy). He had an elder brother George, and twin younger sisters, Frances and Judith. His brother (known to close friends and family as Aldus) became a distinguished conservationist, who joined the Nature Conservancy Council, first as Warden of Old Winchester Hill in Hampshire, and eventually the NCC's chief urban expert.

His parents were Low-Church Anglicans. His father held a position in the Church Civil Service and worked for the YMCA. In connection with his job the family moved while Andrew was still an infant to Terwick Rectory, near Rogate, West Sussex, which they rented for a peppercorn. His home life was religious—grace was said before meals—but in later life Barker had no religious faith, and his funeral was conducted by a humanist celebrant. The Rectory's more enduring legacy was its rural location, where Andrew and George collected insects, beetles (the source of George's nickname) and butterflies. One summer they caught an unusual blue butterfly and wrote to the relevant national authority reporting that they had seen a Mazarine Blue. The reply they received was dismissive. The butterfly was on the edge of extinction; they could have seen no such thing. They wrote back with a picture of the distinctive spots they had observed, and received a much more respectful reply. It was never officially confirmed, but this may have been the last ever sighting of a Mazarine Blue in the United Kingdom; they are now considered to have been extinct in the UK for decades.

Nancy put her son forward for a scholarship at Christ's Hospital, which he attended, first the Prep School, then the main school, between 1951 and '62. At school, where he was an exact contemporary of the philosopher Christopher Rowe, nothing spoiled his character as a model pupil—not even a visit to a pub on the edge of the South Downs during an exercise with the Combined Cadet Force which, had it been discovered, would have risked instant expulsion. Butterfly hunting continued—though it was later succeeded by distaste for the sight of beautiful creatures pinned to a board. His teacher in advanced Classics, who coached the sixth form for Oxbridge scholarships, was D.S. Macnutt, who set crossword-puzzles for the *Observer* under the name of the Grand Inquisitor Ximenes, and would compile clues while the boys were working at their Greek and Latin translations. Barker's parents and sisters having moved to Geneva for a few years during his mid teens, he began visiting Italy on family holidays, and he spent some of his extra year in the sixth form, during which he served as Senior Grecian (Head Boy), improving his Italian. This was the beginning of his affection for that country.

He followed his elder brother to The Queen's College Oxford, where he read Literae Humaniores (1962–6). His Mods tutor was J.D.P. Bolton, whose book *Aristeas of Proconnesus* came out in the year Barker came up; his Greats tutors were Fergus Millar

(for both Greek and Roman History),[1] Brian McGuinness (himself a Wittgenstein expert) for Plato and Aristotle, and Jonathan Cohen for logic. This was Millar's first year at Queen's (for the first term he still gave tutorials in All Souls) and, he claimed, the best ever. Contemporaries remember Barker's efficiency in tutorials, how he got to the point. He sang, sometimes, but not as much as he would do later.

In 1966 he was awarded a scholarship to study philosophy at the still-young Australian National University in Canberra. An attempt at self-reinvention underlay the move, apparently, but what that meant in practice was a return to his old love of natural history, with a doctorate entitled 'Evolution and Explanation'. Though he took advice from biologists, and included the occasional empirical illustration (the inevitable fruit-fly), it is very much a philosophical thesis, concerning modes of explanation in a system that is both unfalsifiable and unpredictable; it was supervised by John Passmore, whose wide philosophical interests extended to ecology, and Robert R. Brown, who worked in the social sciences and philosophy of mind, but had competence in natural science. Alongside his academic work, Barker was also pursuing and developing his interests in music. It was through them that, soon after his arrival, he met his first wife, Susan, a talented soprano. He eventually returned to England accompanied by Susan, pregnant with his first son, Jonathan, born in 1970. A second son, Nicholas, followed in 1972.

On his return from Australia in 1970 he joined the School, shortly afterwards renamed Department, of Philosophy in Warwick as its Ancient Greek specialist (the University had only started admitting students five years previously). His appointment was probably connected to a strong commitment to the history of philosophy on the part of the founding Professor of Philosophy, Allen Phillips Griffiths ('Griff'). Indeed, ancient philosophy had enormous coverage on the syllabus at the time, and he had near-complete autonomy over course content. He taught a compulsory course on Ancient Philosophy for single-Honours first years, and popular Honours options on Presocratic Philosophy and Greek Ethics. He also taught across faculties. By the time he arrived, Warwick's Philosophy department had moved from the Arts to the Social Studies Faculty, while the Classics department, which was founded later, was located within Arts. But Barker, who remained with the philosophers, was able to build a good relationship between Philosophy and Classics. He taught students on the Philosophy with Classical Civilisation course and Philosophy and Literature joint degree, the former of which he helped to create, despite a distaste for the administration which the complicated set-up entrained. An acrostic concealed on one year's general essay paper spelled out a word not wholly supportive of the Warwick bureaucracy; as for his attitude to authority, one question asked the students, 'Is the Vice-Chancellor a substance?'

[1] Bowman & Goodman (2021), p. 28 (on Millar and the Queen's years).

The Warwick years were punctuated by a stint teaching ancient philosophy in Cambridge (1976–8). It was a three-year lectureship in the first instance. There was enough of a possibility of renewal to make it worth buying a couple of cottages in Sturton Street and investing some effort in converting them (the first but by no means the largest of his property-conversion projects). But there was also enough chance of *non*-renewal for Warwick to hold his position open—Griff was keen to retain him—and he duly returned when less-than-encouraging noises were made before the expiry of the probationary period. The marriage to Susan having come to an end in 1975, Barker moved to Cambridge with Jill, a friend from Australia who was now in Britain. They married in 1978, and would have three children together: Michael (1977); Kate (1979); Will (1988).

Although it was so short, the move to Cambridge was the very opposite of abortive, for it was during this time that he discovered his vocation. What apparently started it was that G.E.L. Owen invited him to give a talk in his first term at Cambridge's B Club, expecting, presumably, a paper on ancient philosophy. The date happened to be set for St Cecilia's Day. But 22 November drawing closer, and no title being forthcoming, Owen informed the apprehensive invitee that he was going to publish the title as 'Heavenly harmony'—thereby obliging the speaker to learn about the subject whether he liked it or not. He did like it, clearly. These forced beginnings must be what underlie the Preface to the first volume of *Greek Musical Writings* (1984c, p. xi),[2] where he credits Owen with first stimulating his interest in ancient music and encouraging his first investigations. Recollections of that talk are that it was simple, unscripted, and supported by a fairly crude, home-made stringed instrument on which he demonstrated the basics of ancient Greek harmonics, the first but by no means the last of his efforts in this area. When, the following year, on 10 November, he gave a talk on the predecessors of the harmonic theorist Aristoxenus at the Cambridge Philological Society in Michaelmas Term, matters were altogether different. The written-up version, published as 1978a, is a sophisticated piece already with all the historical grasp and theoretical control of the mature Barker.

As his interest in the subject grew, it came to reflect and to be reflected in his undergraduate teaching. In a preface to a later book (2000b, p. vii) he explained that his courses at Warwick had regularly revolved around Platonic and Aristotelian texts on the nature of knowledge and the means of attaining it. The description of the introductory course lays the emphasis on epistemology, metaphysics, and their links to other areas, including the philosophy of science; that on the Presocratics on 'what it is to understand the world's workings, and the methods by which such understanding is to be achieved and its credentials established'. These are exact descriptions of what his musicological writings were working out in a more tightly-bounded domain. He was singing at

[2] For ease of bibliographical referencing, a chronological listing of Andrew Barker's writings is provided at the end of this memoir.

Warwick, too, in the University of Warwick Consort founded by Rowland Cotterill, as well as in local groups in Leamington.[3] But not even a musical setting of Kant's Transcendental Deduction from the *Critique of Pure Reason*, performed by the School of Philosophy Male Voice Choir, could conceal from Barker that the Philosophy Department was no longer the place he wanted to be.

If, to misquote Tolstoy, happy departments are all alike, and every unhappy one unhappy in its own way, this particular one was divided between warring camps of analytic and continental philosophers. There was an early drive to promote the teaching of continental philosophy at undergraduate level, in the days before other universities offered the subject; it was popular, and followed by calls to establish it at graduate level too. But not everyone was happy, or convinced by the subject's credentials. Barker negotiated between the two factions, it is true. The bohemian personal style for which he was well known and, by students, well loved (with goats and hens in the huge garden of the family home in Melton Road) belied considerable political astuteness. He mediated delicately between parties by pointing out classical antecedents for each one, while taking sides with neither. Nevertheless, he wanted to leave, and besides, the joys of first year courses on Platonic epistemology no doubt palled when you actually had to mark their work. He wanted to be a Classicist, and saw his opportunity in a job advert for a position in the Classics department in Otago, which was undergoing an expansion in staffing. It put a perhaps merciful end to a year's tenure as acting Head of Department (1991–2), which he conducted, nevertheless, efficiently and fairly, and with the support of both sides of the ideological divide.

His appointment in Otago as Senior Lecturer, in 1992, followed by promotion to Professor in 1995, brought the complement in the department to nine, higher than at any other time in its history. While in Otago he taught the Greek Philosophy paper (in translation, and hitherto co-taught with the Philosophy Department), plus Greek Music papers newly minted to cater to his specialism. A memorable episode was when he was involved in *The Frogs* in the department's annual drama production in 1993. The original 'Ancient Greek' music was composed by the New Zealand composer Anthony Ritchie. Barker acted as 'technical adviser' and consultant on the lyric metres, with practical suggestions about rendering them in modern English for modern ears. Not only this, but he sang the role of Aeschylus as a counter tenor. (Aeschylus, not Euripides, as the extant programme notes confirm. Aeschylus stands for the machismo of Persian War generation, but the alto register suited his parodies of Euripidean lyric, with all its emotionalism and high camp and outrageous melismata. Besides, a cowboy-booted male alto certainly had impact.) Towards the end of his time at Otago cutbacks on staffing appointments

[3] The Oken Singers; the Circle Singers, which he even conducted for a couple of years.

had started in response to declining domestic student enrolments. So on his departure back to the UK in 1996 his position was not renewed.

It was to Birmingham that he returned, to a small Department of Classics with only four members (Ancient History was separate). The job was advertised at the level of Senior Lecturer, and he was already a professor, but they were successful in upgrading the position, immediately to Reader, and then a couple of years later to Professor. In the 2001 Research Assessment Exercise, which was less than helpful to the rest of the department, he was, much to his embarrassment, flagged as a one-man centre of excellence. He taught part of the core Greek Poetry course, including Greek Lyric, Pindar, and Hellenistic Poetry, but also optional courses including Early Greek Philosophy, Plato, and more specialised modules in Greek Music. Takers were mainly undergraduates but there were small numbers of graduates too. He was not, and never would be, known for his love of administration (a British Academy Research Professorship held 2000–03 saved him from the prolonged horrors of being Head of Department, although when he was elected to the British Academy itself in 2005 he was a good citizen, and during 2007–11 served on the Standing Committee of his Section, writing judicious appraisals of its applicants for Postdoctoral Fellowships). But perhaps his greatest contribution to the department was to build up its graduate community.

Among his students at this period were David Creese (1997–2001), now at Newcastle, and Zacharoula Petraki (Masters 2000; PhD 2005), now at the University of Crete (Rethymno). He also supported the work of two young Italian scholars of Ancient Greek music, Eleonora Rocconi (University of Pavia) and Antonietta Provenza (Università di Palermo), who came to Birmingham as visiting students (respectively in January 1997, 1998, and in 2005). Students recollected the generosity of his supervisions—weekly, sometimes lasting for hours, during the Masters stage—and the speed and efficiency with which work was returned. He continued to supervise throughout the period of his leave, during which he was working on *The Science of Harmonics in Classical Greece* (2007a), of which he even shared drafts with students—obviously for the sake of their content, but partly, too, as a gentle lesson in method (no, your work does *not* have to be perfect; yes, it is *allowed* to be provisional). You would never down a pint with him at the end of a supervision. He was not that sort of supervisor. You would certainly receive full and frank criticism. But it was never meant to hurt, it was supportive, and above all, apart from overseeing their theses and launching their careers, what he passed on to his students was what characterised his own scholarship, a courteous and generous way of proceeding in which mistakes were forthrightly corrected, but polemic for its own sake had no place.

The all-important Italian connection began in 1985, when he attended a conference at Urbino, the occasion of a controversy (described below) from which great things could hardly be augured. In any case, his spell in New Zealand interrupted his interactions

with Europe until his return to Birmingham. It was, however, as a result of Eleonora Rocconi's visit to Birmingham that he was invited back to Urbino by Franca Perusino, head of the Classics Department, for a one week seminar in 1998. A couple of years later he returned to Urbino, and extended the visit to Cremona: *Euterpe* (2002) contains the texts of ten lectures, most of which were given in the course of these visits. A separate connection was formed with Salerno, where he was first invited in 1998 by Angelo Meriani, whom he had met in 1985. Subsequent visits led to the lectures (given in 2001–2) which appeared, translated into Italian, as *La psicomusicologia nella Grecia antica* (2005b).[4] And in the early 2000s Donatella Restani regularly organised a small annual meeting in Ravenna entitled 'Le musiche dei greci' where like-minded scholars could share their interests. These were the first of the annual meetings which were going to become an important part of his professional life.

Meanwhile the Ionian University in Corfu established an International Summer Academy in 2003, and for the 2004 meeting the Pro-Rector and Chair of the Department of Music, Charis Xanthoudakis, on the suggestion of Panagiotis Vlagopoulos, proposed the theme of Ancient Music. Barker was invited to give a seminar on ps.-Aristotle, *Problemata*. Morning seminars were held around the table of the meeting room in the attic of the Villa of Mon Repos, and lectures in the evening in the hall of the Ionian Academy. The Seminars on Ancient Greek and Roman Music would be held, in the same place and format, until the economic crisis brought them to an end in 2011. Several of Barker's later publications were first born as seminar papers given in Corfu,[5] and when the seminars resumed in 2014 in Riva Del Garda, in collaboration with the Arion society co-founded by Tosca Lynch in 2013, other publications arose out of these meetings.[6]

In parallel with all this, during his time in Otago he had founded the International Society for the Study of Greek and Roman Music with its magazine *Skytala Moisan* in 1993. Donatella Restani and Eleonora now suggested to Barker that he should refound this association to draw people together who shared a common interest. It was accordingly established as *The International Society for the Study of Greek and Roman Music and its Cultural Heritage*, subsequently MOISA, in 2006, when Barker was back in Birmingham, and formalised in 2007 as a non-profit cultural association based in Ravenna, in the Department of Cultural Heritage in the University of Bologna. Barker

[4] 2010b, on the music of Pan, arose out of a conversation he had with Roberto Pretagostini also in Salerno, in December 2006.

[5] The 2005 meeting, on ps.-Plutarch, gave rise to 2011a, *via* a later conference in Calabria, and ultimately to 2014b, *via* lectures again in Calabria. 2011b arose from an evening lecture (The Guild of the *Technitai* at Teos) in the 2006 meeting, and 2010c was first given in 2007, when the theme of the meeting was women in music.

[6] 2015b (from the Riva Summer School 2014, on ps.-Aristotle, *Problemata* 19); 2017, already given at the Symposium Cumanum in June 2016, was read again in the Riva Summer School 2018, on Dionysius of Halicarnassus.

was its President and continued in this role until 2012. There were MOISA annual meetings from 2006, the last at which he attended in person being 2017. The executive committee of MOISA in 2012 started to think about establishing a journal. Barker approached Brill, who responded positively, and the result was the journal *Greek and Roman Musical Studies* first published in 2013. Barker served as its editor-in-chief until 2017; the last of his editorials appeared in 2016.

By now several Italian universities had courses on ancient music (Cremona, Ravenna, Lecce), in all of which events occurred under the auspices of MOISA, and in 2015 MOISA became affiliated to the Society for Classical Studies in America, thanks to Pauline LeVen, MOISA member since 2008. The influence of these societies radiated outwards, so that it is in no small part due to Barker's commitment and fame that the discipline has grown from niche to one that is thriving internationally. For instance, a huge conference was organised by a MOISA member in 2019 in Brazil, with the intention of setting up a similar society for students of ancient Greek music in South America.

II

The Cambridge talk in 1976 did not immediately displace his work on Plato (1976, 1977a). A philosopher will call these papers perfectly competent, if not epoch-making. But they are interesting, in the light of what follows, as demonstrating a way of thinking and a method. Both are about philosophical arguments: why Plato deployed them at the points he did, what position the speaker is adopting, what positions he is trying to counter, and how successfully he does so, in other words paying close and scrupulous attention to the purpose and adequacy of an argument in its context. These would always be the questions in his later articles on music: what were the author's motives and rationale, how well-formed or deficient is his argument, what objections could defeat it, whether it answers challenges in terms the opponent would accept. It was always about the stakes of adopting a particular argument or viewpoint. Occasional purely philosophical (i.e. non-musicological) papers follow (1995a, 2006b, both on Plato); at Warwick he jointly edited a collection of papers on Plato (with Martin Warner, 1992), for which he wrote the introduction; and at Birmingham he supervised PhD theses on Plato. But really from that point onwards the attention turns almost exclusively to music, which he finds an immediately fertile subject.

It was clear that he had found his vocation. And it was a bold and independent move, because the field was barely colonised in those days. True, there was Winnington-Ingram, who had written a short, concentrated work on mode in ancient Greek music (1936), and edited the longest work of music theory to survive from antiquity, Aristides Quintilianus'

De musica libri tres (1963).[7] Like Barker, he had come to the subject through philosophy, in his case having been stimulated by an article on the scales of the *Republic*.[8] Barker began to correspond with Winnington-Ingram as soon as his interest in the subject became serious, and paid generous tribute to him, 'the master of those who know' (1984c, p. xi; 1989a, p. vi). But from Winnington-Ingram's more forbiddingly musicological publications it is not immediately obvious what the draw of the subject would be. What could make you throw over Plato for a niche subject full of arid mathematics, childish ratios (2:1 [octave]; 3:2 [fifth]; 4:3 [fourth]; 9:8 [tone]), jejune reductions of a system of music already so 'reduced' (because it lacked harmony) in comparison to our own? For that is what the vast amount of evidence for ancient music consists of—not the stuff itself, and not even analyses of it, but simply theoretical texts about the component parts, scalar structures and intervals. What could keep him returning to the same core of texts for the next forty years and more—mainly, parts of the *Republic* and *Timaeus*, the three books of Aristoxenus' *Harmonics*, the nineteenth book of the ps.-Aristotelian *Problemata*, ps.-Euclid's *Sectio Canonis*, and of course Ptolemy's *Harmonics*, and Porphyry's commentary on that? For even this is a limited selection of what is available. There were other writers—apart from Aristides Quintilianus, there were Cleonides, Bacchius, Gaudentius, and the Anonymi Bellermannii. But Barker had little time for those.[9] The sad truth is that these scholastic little textbooks were *even worse*.

Yet Barker looked into these works and discovered in them a world of possibilities. The name of Martin West will recur a few times in this memoir (whose author is under no illusions that he would have been first choice to write it had he still been alive).[10] The intellectual world which Barker created and into which he drew his readers was more circumscribed than that of West, but it had a comparable richness and coherence. For neither of them was it ever about technicalities, and although Barker spent more time on them than West—invoking his Warwick colleague David Fowler for help with the more austere mathematics—he would sometimes apologise for being obliged to do so, or simplify in the interests of clarity. The intention was never to bamboozle the reader; if anything, there was the contrary risk, that of belabouring simple points. The question was what realities the various ancient theories about music were supposed to model, what one was permitted to infer from them. Everyone agreed that the question was what principles made certain orderings of notes 'harmonious', admissible as music, as opposed

[7] West (1994).
[8] West (1994), p. 581.
[9] 2022a is a translation of and short introduction to Gaudentius, illustrating its derivative character.
[10] Fowler (2018). It was entirely appropriate that Barker should have been asked to give the first Martin West Memorial Lecture in 2017, published as 2018c.

to meaningless noise. But for one school of thought, numerical principles, which said something about the ordering of the cosmos itself, underpinned it, and for the other, music was itself and nothing else.

Barker grasped the implications of Greek music theory immediately. He seems to have conceived the plan of the two volumes of *Greek Musical Writings* (1984c, 1989a) very shortly after developing his interest in the subject. The first volume, which consists of generously-annotated translations of sources on Greek music from Homer to the end of the 4th century, is a useful collection of material in an area that was still relatively unfamiliar. The second, however, which is described more fully below, is a tour-de-force, and makes available for the first time, in collected form, and in English, the core texts whose philosophical ramifications he was the first truly to have grasped. (He may or may not have realised the particular appropriateness of the task in the hands of a Queen's man, for a 17th-century Provost of the college had been instrumental in the very first great edition of ancient music theory by the Danish scholar Marcus Meibom.)[11] After his original insights in Cambridge the next forty years can be seen as an unpacking, with amplifications and increasing momentum—his publications become increasingly copious from the late '80s, and turn into a flood after his return from Otago—but no essential changes of direction.

The first philosophical question is what sound is,[12] and what are the implications of thinking about it in various terms. Barker's first musicological publications go straight to this question, using his characteristic approach of worrying at a short passage to make it meaningful and extract every nuance. In turn he analyses Plato's hard-core stance on Pythagoreans who failed to go far enough (1978b); Theophrastus' attack on the mathematical approach (1977b); and Aristoxenus' counter-position (1978c)—and what, in turn, was wrong with *that* (Aristoxenus' use of arithmetical values—fractions—which the ear can*not* corroborate). This is our first opportunity to discern the pattern that holds good for all his later work, as he returns over and over again to the same material (for instance *Republic* 3 and 7, and the account of the World Soul in *Timaeus* 35 B–37 C), drawing out new implications. The papers become longer and more discursive. For instance, 1991c gives a fuller and richer characterisation of the contrasts between the world-views of Plato and Aristoxenus (a static conception *versus* a dynamic one, in

[11] Gerard Langbaine (1609–58) is credited by Meibom in his *Antiquae Musicae Auctores Septem* (Amsterdam, 1652) with help in collating Oxford manuscripts of several of the authors Barker would translate over three hundred years later (Aristoxenus, Nicomachus, and Aristides Quintilianus), and enlisted the aid of another Queen's man, Richard Rawlinson, a fine mathematician, in transcribing a particularly thorny passage of Ptolemy's *Harmonics* (Poole 2018, pp. 9–10).

[12] That is, musical sound. Sound itself received much less attention from ancient philosophers, though there is a treatise *De audibilibus* which addresses the subject. A number of unpublished talks and papers from the end of Barker's career suggest that he was intending to make a more thorough investigation of what little there was of ancient acoustic science; illness, it seems, put an end to the project.

which notes move in a musical space on trajectories governed by rules that it is the task of harmonic analysis to discover), a more urgent sense of the stakes (a conception of music that roots it, not only in the structure of the cosmos, but also in that of the soul, *versus* one in which musicology is its own field, with no spillover to any other), *and* a sterner look at the limits of both of them. 2005a concentrates specifically on Aristoxenus, and presses harder at his use of the metaphor—if it is metaphor—of the dynamic voice as a traveller through space.

The enterprise is an essentially epistemological one. It is about making sense of what we hear. Barker continues to return to the same passages, teasing out more each time. A good example is the passage where Aristoxenus says the perception of music is a matter of both hearing (*akoe*) and the faculty of thought (*dianoia*) (*El. Harm.* 33.6–11, 38.27–39.3). *Dianoia* has to run hand in hand with sensory experience, which supplies merely quantitative data in need of interpretation. Barker first draws attention to this in 1978c, p. 13, but when he returns to it in 1984a, p. 55, the presentation has become more sophisticated (our perceptions *already* grasp more than quantitative data). Seven years later (1991b, pp. 210–11), still more implications are teased out (perception cannot be limited to pitch, volume and timbre, but must have an element of short-term memory to enable us to grasp relations, and must also be trainable). In 2005a, pp. 164–5 the same passage prompts reflections on the difference between a transient performance and a melody that exists in the abstract (like the Marseillaise); and when he finally returns to the topic (2012b) he continues to worry away at the role that interpretative elements, or *dianoia*, must play alongside the absorption of raw data at the moment of experiencing music, and adds further comparisons with other ancient accounts of the perceptual process.

A series of articles explore ancient theories of perception. Different theorists ask different questions. If, for Aristoxenus, the question was about the respective roles of the sense of hearing and *dianoia*, the Pythagorean / Platonist position invites the question how, if sound really is ratio, we are supposed to register and process that (2010a). And since, for Plato, more is at stake—the attunement of our souls themselves to structures in the cosmos of which music is but one, audible, manifestation—the question becomes how music impinges upon our souls, down to and including the very intimate ways we perceive it in our physiology (2000a). An innovative book entitled *Psicomusicologia* (2005b), the outcome of a series of lectures given in the Department of Classics at the University of Salerno in February 2002, brought together texts that reflect on music and the soul. The word was not Barker's own coinage, but he was the first (as he realised) to bring the evidence of the ancient world to bear under this heading: as far as Classics was concerned, this was new. Of this book it has been commented that it anticipates the growing modern interest in music and the mind. Ancient thinkers innocent of neuroscience could hardly frame questions about the brain's processing of music in terms

available to us, although they *could* sometimes be startlingly penetrating (how is it, wondered Theophrastus, that we can conform our vocal cords to produce a note of just the desired pitch? (1985)). Rather, when they thought about music and the mind, it was in terms of music's supposed moral dimensions and therapeutic possibilities, and what Barker does in this volume is, characteristically, not simply to assemble evidence, but to penetrate to the method of the writers under consideration and to their philosophical and epistemological implications.

Although reviewers had less to say about it, one of the most interesting aspects of the book is arguably the way it circulates around the use of metaphor. It does not present itself as a systematic or summative treatment, but once again Barker is seen elaborating on the concerns of earlier articles and anticipating later ones. We use metaphor without realising it, when we think of pitches going 'up' or 'down' (vertically, or horizontally along a keyboard); was it, therefore, metaphor, when Aristoxenus talked about the 'place' (*topos*) occupied by pitch (2005a, pp. 166, 172)? Again, can technical language ever be free of metaphor, or are words bound to reflect the baggage—the 'penumbra' of surplus meaning—with which they have been invested since their non-technical, often poetic, ultimately Homeric, instantiations (2014a)? And is this a problem? In retrospect these concerns make sense of what otherwise looks like a peculiarly 'literary' article on Pindar's first Pythian Ode (2003b)—although Barker had, of course, been teaching literary courses, including on Greek lyric for Birmingham. What that showed was the *enabling* potential of traditional associations in poetic language in the hands of a creative poet. But when literary language is pressed into services for which it was never intended, what then? Confusions, question-begging, and unwanted associations, are all possible results, explored in the pages of *Psicomusicologia*. So too, it must be conceded, there are potential rhetorical and pedagogical dividends, and even, sometimes, interesting philosophical implications. At least one ancient theorist, Aristides Quintilianus, was perfectly aware of the insinuation or seepage of meaning from *comparans* to *comparandum*, and appropriated Stoic language to describe the pathways by which the listener's mind was affected (1999). 'On metaphor' is the great work that Barker did not write.

Always it is a matter of punching through technicality—explaining it slowly and generously where need be, but never as an end in itself—to get to the underlying philosophical questions: the history and practice of philosophical argumentation itself (1985, p. 290); matters of definition (2006a; 2009b, pp. 412–16); and how ancient musicologists are placed with respect to ongoing debates and controversies in philosophy at large, for instance the application to ancient musicology of the concepts of form and matter (1991c, p. 155), or the *criterion* or canon of judgement (2009a, pp. 181–2), or the respective roles of logically constructed demonstration and of direct observation (2009b, an article which, by proceeding from an apparently

small and footling notice smothered in layers of transmission, to matters of genuine philosophical importance, shows Barker's method at its best). It was Ptolemy in his treatise on *Harmonics* who posed this last question, that of the relative roles of reason and perception, most acutely. Barker first presented a translation of this difficult treatise in the second volume of *Greek Musical Writings* (1989a). The first article devoted to Ptolemy appeared a couple of years later (1991d), but at the same time, he started work on the book that would eventually become *Scientific Method in Ptolemy's Harmonics* (2000b). The intellectual challenge of the *Harmonics* was that Ptolemy had set out to integrate both halves of the project, reason and perception, and had described it in a searching and self-aware way which makes the text a major, if little-studied, text for the philosophy of science. Barker concentrated on its significance for the field of harmonics itself, but showed what was at stake, too, for the *Almagest*, where the issue is precisely the relation between observation and mathematical modelling, and the good faith of the author in the attempt to make recalcitrant real-world data accord with abstract theory.

This was one subject on which, after he had said his say, Barker did not advance in later publications. But he remained fascinated by the instruments with which Ptolemy purports to subject mathematically-constructed systems to empirical proof. He had used some primitive stringed instrument in that fateful Cambridge talk in 1976. 2009c sees him still obsessing over Ptolemy's instruments, and in particular constructing his own version of a device that allows the production of ratios on multiple strings (not just one, as with the monochord) by means of a pivoted bridge. He called it the meta-helikon, after the helikon Ptolemy attributed to earlier theorists. In the article which he devotes to it, he also describes its construction, and if everything so far has sounded so terribly *cerebral*, here you can imagine the fun he had messing about with the glue and drills and plywood and pegs for the gut strings, a mixture of specialist music shops and Home Base, the serious intellectual endeavour of a Fellow of the British Academy and the little boy with a train-set. You can also feel the pride with which he demonstrated it at the Whipple Museum in Cambridge (May 2008) very likely for the first time in 1800 years, imagining, perhaps, Ptolemy's spirit being momentarily distracted from the music of the spheres by the sound of his own instrument.

And again, if it still sounds terribly *philosophical*, there was another aspect to Barker's work, which was its historical dimension—a strand in his work that, if anything, only became stronger over time. You could say that Oxford Greats in his day had twin prongs, philosophy and ancient history (he was taught by Fergus Millar; his tutorial partner was Alan Bowman), and that this was simply the other half of what he had been trained to do. But the truth is that it came out of the same source as the rest of his work. It was driven by the need to find intellectual context—to establish what authors were arguing about, who they were arguing with, what it responded to in the intellectual

climate of their time.[13] It took the form of careful source criticism—the recovery of fragments, in the first place, from the contexts in which they were embedded, and, in the second, the identification of the source's own source. The first volume of *Greek Musical Writings* (1984c) was constructed diachronically, although, as one less charitable review pointed out, the decision not to dislimb later texts that quoted earlier sources disabled the reader who was looking for a systematic chronological account. But it contained ideas about the development of Greek music which Barker did not relinquish and would go on to develop—the challenge, in particular, to the idea that the so-called New Music at the end of the 5th century was actually all that revolutionary, as opposed to the result of a long history of experimentation, especially in the genre of the dithyramb, that had been underway for a century at the very least.

Another longue durée view, which he elaborated and nuanced in many publications, was that the Pythagorean/Platonic and Aristoxenic approaches or schools were only ever polarised in the schemes of ideologues and polemicists, and in reality were blurred—and blurred in ways that shifted and drifted over time. One of his most fascinating pieces—1994b, a gem of an article—concerns one individual who mediated between them, the music theorist Didymus who lived, apparently, in the time of Nero. This man, it seems, set out to revivify the 'music of the golden age', to recast Aristoxenus' analyses in the Pythagorean language which was the approved idiom in his day, and apparently demonstrated his results on a monochord which (by bisecting a string at the bridge, so two notes could be produced instead of one) he utilised in a performance-friendly way. In other words, the enterprise undertaken here is all of a piece with the amateurism, conservatism, and artificiality of the embryonic Second Sophistic movement. This piece sees Barker perform a manoeuvre which he was very good at: that is, showing how music, and musicology, both reflects and is reflected in tastes, fashions, and cultural trends of its time. It is another exercise in historical coherence.

This is one of the themes of his only strictly 'historical' book (2014b), which was born of a series of lectures given at the University of Calabria in 2013, where he had been invited by Antonietta Gostoli. Here, with all the Barker hallmarks of careful source criticism and contextualisation, he set out to collect Greek writings on the history of their own music, the history of ancient musicology, which was effectively to open up a new field. He placed sources in their rhetorical, argumentative, and ideological settings, determining their methods, agendas, and biases. The genre of writing is crucial as well—the comedy which seeks merely to raise laughs, without giving the slightest indication of what the author 'really thought'; the specialist monograph, which positions its subject as

[13] And, in one case, how their observations even reflect contemporary speech-patterns. He notes an apparent change in the prosody of Greek speech between Aristoxenus in the late 4th century and Ptolemy and Porphyry half a millennium and more later, as implied by what they have to say about sound that remains at a continuous pitch (2014a and 2015a, pp. 41–3).

the product of a bygone age; the lexicon; the collection of learned excerpts. But above all, this fairly slim volume constitutes a very major contribution to the history of taste, and an assurance, if we needed one, that Barker was completely aware, over and above any impression that his austerely theoretical publications gave, that music was a living and dynamic thing—and that it engendered strong opinions. There is a lovely cameo of a group of reactionaries around Aristoxenus who gathered in a kind of surly Eisteddfod to mutter darkly about degenerate modern ways.

Commenting on this volume, some scholars regretted that he did not say more about 5th-century 'performance culture'. But that is well-populated territory; besides, he had already written a series of chronological chapters on the technological changes in the wind instrument known as the *aulos*, and the heady musical and cultural developments which it facilitated in the course of the sixth and fifth centuries (2002b). Barker cannot be accused of overlooking the performative dimension of music, heard music, music in the real world (and his supervisees certainly stress that he was interested in performance and in the Greek chorus). On the contrary, visitors to the large family home in St Mary's Road, Leamington, recall a variety of home-made musical instruments, including a lyre made out of chair-legs to which modern guitar strings were attached, and a splendid playable concert kithara which replicates the image on a 4th-century silver tetradrachm of Olynthos, down to the incised decoration and a ribbon attachment.[14] And yet it remains the case that the theoretical treatises that he studied did tend to steer him away from that general dimension. They failed to represent *real* music in at least two major ways. First, they conceptualised intervals as notes heard simultaneously rather than successively—a strange choice in a musical culture that was all about melody and had no concept of harmony at all. Second, their analyses were static, as opposed to dynamic, which is of course how we experience it as performers or listeners. No-one knew this better than Barker, and it was well within his powers to write in a way that corrects these intellectual artifices. There are a few such essays; one is left wanting more.

The pieces that best represent this approach are the last two essays in the 2002b volume, which talk us through a couple of items in the very small corpus of ancient music that does survive. Reviewers of the first volume of *Greek Musical Writings* (1984c) both friendly and less so had noted the absence of anything about the surviving musical fragments. Now at last we receive minute analyses of (part of) the Delphic paean of Athenaeus and Mesomedes' *Hymn to the Sun*. What is interesting here is the method. West[15] had described Greek music as habitually 'in constant, restless motion', with little repetition of phrases. Perhaps it was an aspect of his perpetual quest for intelligibility

[14] Reproduced on the cover of 2007a; for experiments in supporting a kithara during performance, cf. 1984c, pp. 4–14.
[15] West (1992), p. 194.

that led Barker to emphasise, instead, the repetitions of micro-segments in both pieces, or their transformation in recognisable ways, in other words to insist on pattern. In general it was West who sought 'human intelligibility'.[16] But it is Barker here who finds it, and indeed insists that it is still possible to understand the logic of ancient composers' choices, giving unity and coherence to their compositions (2002b, pp. 118, 122).

He has important things to say, too, about ancient performance practice. To return to the point about harmony, while it remains true that it is foreign to ancient music, one of Barker's major contributions was to insist on the practice of *heterophonia*, or accompaniment that did more than simply reduplicate the vocal line.[17] And it is worth mentioning the arcane subject of the *magadis*, because it shows Barker at most tactful—and tenacious. Modern interpretations of the few, opaque, ancient references to this, whatever it is, had tended to take it as an instrument that sounded two notes simultaneously, an octave apart. It was one of Barker's most consistently maintained beliefs[18] that there was no such thing, and even if *magadis* was an instrument name at all, what it and *magadizein* principally referred to was the use of an instrument to 'respond' to a melodic line by way of providing a descant on it (1988a). It was this that ruffled feathers at the Urbino conference of 1985: the author of a recent article on the subject[19] was not best pleased to be told that his instrument never existed, and the conference proceedings tone down what was apparently quite an angry exchange. But Barker not only stuck to his theory; he reinforced it (1995b; 1998), soothing his disputants with civilities as far as he possibly could. He made another intriguing inference (2002b, ch. 6) about ancient performance practice from a passage in Pliny which indicates that ancient auletes could perform the same line in a number of different ways. The Romans codified this in terms of rhetorical style (they *would* ...), but we might see it as more akin to jazz improvisation.

And blind spots? Rhythm was perhaps one. It is true that the vast majority of the music theory that we have is harmonics, and metrics and rhythmics, which are separate branches of music science, are far less well represented. But there is an intriguing excerpt from the second book of Aristoxenus' *Elementa Rhythmica* (translated in 1989a, pp. 185–9), and some chapters in Aristides Quintilianus, and even if Barker did not want to descend to metrical analyses of extracts of Greek lyric or tragedy or comedy, as some reviewers bemoaned, he could still have indulged himself with ratios and laws of combination, perceptible minima and commensurables, rational and irrational sequences, and questions of definition and ontology a-plenty. For whatever reason, he did no such thing. He had hoped for insights from 'the science of ethnomusicology' (1984a, p. 1), but no subsequent publications ever took the comparative turn that is latterly being explored

[16] Lightfoot (2017), p. 288.
[17] 1995b, which contains what is apparently Barker's one and only reference to the *Orestes* fragment (p. 47).
[18] 1982b, p. 268; 1984c, p. 294 n. 169 and p. 295 n. 175.
[19] Comotti (1983).

by ancient musicologists, especially in North America, and with an eye to ancient Mesopotamia.

Despite his interest in the imbrication of music and ethics in ancient thinking, he has little to say about ancient education. Characteristically, what arouses his interest in the subject at all is when it is pitched in the highest of intellectual settings, namely when he reconstructs the context of Porphyry's commentary on Ptolemy's *Harmonics*. This he locates in groups of intellectuals who congregated around a master to hear him expound an acknowledged classic, and perhaps contribute aperçus of their own (2015a, chs 6, 7). (One struggles to banish the thoughts of the students and scholars surrounding Barker in the meeting room in Corfu, expounding texts he knew better than anyone alive. Patience and humility were perhaps less characteristic of Porphyry.) In general, there is a limited interest in social context—but it is largely beside the point to complain when a scholar resolves not to move into an already overpopulated field, especially that of 5th-century performance culture (the symposium gets a mention, but only *apropos* of a discussion of Dicaearchus as musical historian: 2014b, p. 78). Insofar as he wanted to engage with these questions at all, the Corfiote Summer Schools gave him some prompts to do so. Two articles, one on the festivals of Larisa, the other on 2nd-century Teos (2010–11, 2011b) show that he could do Hellenistic epigraphy with the best of them, extracting insights about the place of performers and performance in specific cities, and what it says about their sense of identity and self-promotion. There was little enough to be said, anyway, about the boorish Romans (2002b, chs 6, 7), but there is a surprising, almost antiquarian, article about imperial voice-trainers (2010d).

These contributions are fairly incidental in his larger oeuvre, but they are enough to blunt any criticism that his approach was too 'ideal', too abstract, too intellectual.[20] He had called (2002b, p. 81) for greater integration of the study of music theorists, composers, performers, teachers, instrument-makers, and critics, and he did much, partly through personal example but above all through the facilitating effect of his meetings, summer schools, and conferences, to advance those ends. He well understood that his field was nothing if not multi-disciplinary, and called for an approach which combined linguistic and lexical analysis with historical vision and understanding of the *Realien* of instruments, which includes the evidence of iconography. When Stefan Hagel's *Ancient Greek Music* (Hagel 2009), achieved precisely such a synthesis, uniting 'practical musicianship, historically informed musicology, and sound textual criticism',[21] he read the book in draft and gave high praise even—indeed, especially—to its revisions of Barker's own

[20] The allusion in 2007a, p. 4, to American colleagues who chided him for a 'lack of a properly musicological perspective' looks to Jon Solomon's reviews of 1984c and1989a. But this controversy in fact had its source elsewhere, and Solomon would subsequently acknowledge the unique strengths of Barker's own approach. They are pictured happily together in Pöhlmann (2019), fig. 4.

[21] Mahoney (2010), p. 157.

earlier views. His contributions on the *aulos* stopped short of the instrument's technical structure—though he applied his historical imagination to performance, as in his rather brilliant idea about staging the nightingale in Aristophanes' *Birds* as the official piper of the whole play (2004b, p. 203).[22] But his agenda and method were wholly distinctive and, over the span of his career, undeviating. He firmly placed himself among the musicologists whose interests lay, not primarily in the reconstruction of ancient music-making, but in 'the sciences themselves, considered as modes of intellectual enquiry', where the task lay in seeking 'to extract an intelligible account of the authors' objectives' (2020a, p. 258), one that was both historically grounded and philosophically committed.

His Oxford training had furnished him with the requisite technical skills. In many ways the most impressive of these is the ability to extract sense from ancient prose that technical terms and abstract expressions render opaque to the point of incomprehensibility. In the second volume of *Greek Musical Writings* (1989a) he made many such treatises available in English, several for the first time. He was helped by unpublished materials which Winnington-Ingram, who had planned but never published a translation and commentary on Aristides Quintilianus, had shared with him. But the achievement remains awe-inspiring. Most importantly this volume contained the first complete English translation of the three volumes of Ptolemy's *Harmonics* (there had been a German one by Ingemar Düring in 1934, and there would be another in English by Jon Solomon in 2000). Other English 'firsts' included the surviving fragment of the second book of Aristoxenus' *Elementa Rhythmica*, and musicological extracts from Theon of Smyrna's 'Mathematics useful for reading Plato' (preserving useful excerpts from earlier theorists) and Nicomachus' *Enchiridion*. Aristides Quintilianus was already available, but Barker himself had written a review (1984b) which devastatingly exposed the translation's linguistic failings (this is the most vitriolic thing he ever wrote; apparently he had not foreseen the furore that ensued, but what prompted it was a philological incompetence that was simply beyond the pale). Parts of Porphyry's commentary on Ptolemy already appeared in this volume, but would be superseded in 2015 by a new, complete translation for Cambridge (again, the first complete translation into English—and probably only the second *ever*, after John Wallis' *Porphyrii in Harmonica Ptolemaei commentarius* (1699)).[23] Difficulties with this text go well beyond niceties about the rendering of technical terms. Porphyry's language is compressed and sometimes abstract to the point of impenetrability, and Barker passes over the astonishing feat of rendering

[22] Surprising, but not astonishing, to those who knew him: he was not a great theatre-goer, but did visit Stratford from time to time, including after Finals with friends in the White Elephant, his enormous white Daimler.

[23] Though there was an almost simultaneous Italian one with whose author, Massimo Raffa (2016), he exchanged ideas.

it into intelligible English prose (equipped with generous annotations) with characteristic lack of fanfare.

The translation of Porphyry was accompanied, at the prompting of Michael Sharp at Cambridge University Press, by a text and critical apparatus which included emendations proposed in the scholarly literature since the previous edition (Ingemar Düring, 1932) as well as some of his own. He claimed to lack the expertise to carry out any fresh manuscript collations,[24] although textual coherence was of course essential to his commitment to accuracy and intelligibility. He would probe carefully at individual words to establish possible senses and rule out illegitimate ones. Many of his articles, especially the early ones, take the form of talking the reader through an extract, sometimes breaking it down into a series of lemmata in each of which textual and interpretative problems are discussed, leaving, at the end, a sense of calm and clear rationality (1977b, 1978b, 1981a, 1982b, 1987) and of the intellectual context and philosophical stakes. One article talks us through a difficult papyrus fragment which seems to be discussing modulations, that is, compositional manoeuvres in actual melodies (1994c). We have not seen him in this sub-field before, but no-one should have been surprised that the great-nephew of the papyrologist Arthur Hunt was able to propose such convincing restorations. That relationship, in fact, was the reason for the family's connection with Queen's; and one is rather relieved that family history worked itself out thus, rather than the young Barker succumbing, as his mother had once wished, to the lure of Hunt and Hunt Solicitors, LLP.

Some of these close-focus discussions involve quoted excerpts of earlier authors; in such cases, defining the precise extent of the quotation must precede the elucidation of its context. Careful and rigorous *Quellenforschung* extracted fragments of Archytas from Ptolemy (1994a), data about ancient musicians from Aristides Quintilianus (1982b), Heraclides and Aristoxenus from ps.-Plutarch (2009d, 2012a), and teased apart different sources in the pseudo-Aristotelian *Problemata* through their differing conceptions of pitch (2015b). A *tour de force* of source criticism is to be had in the chapter in *Psicomusicologia* on Aristides Quintilianus (2005b, ch. 8), expounding Aristides' view of the therapeutic possibilities of music through the configuration of our souls themselves. Aristides here pulls together a medley of sources including Pythagorean metaphysics, Platonism, Aristoxenic theory, the contributions of grammarians, and solmisation which probably goes back to the practice of music teachers, all in the service of a poetic conception of the descent of the soul through the cosmos as it becomes embodied in us. Barker rises to the poetry with an address to the reader in the style of a 19th-century novel (pp. 154–5)—one of the rare concessions in his academic prose to

[24] 2015a, p. 56 (unlike his 17th-century Queen's predecessors: see n. 11). Raffa's Teubner edition (2016) offers a fresh study of the manuscript tradition.

the stylistic lusters that he knew well how to conjure outside of it. At the end, though, he steps back and quietly, dispassionately, tells us precisely why, even as a myth, it will not do.

Reviewers comment repeatedly on the clarity of his writing, and students wanted to study with him on account of it. The word describes his whole project, the pains he took to get difficult material to make textual and historical and philosophical sense. But it also applies to a deliberate accessibility of style. He can and does, of course, play the scholarly game, but even when an essay or a book originated in lectures for specialist audiences the eventual publication is designed to be readable by non-specialists; Greek is translated, technical concepts patiently explained. Many pieces are sparsely footnoted, and bear the marks of their oral origin in a chatty style ('we'll come back to it'). But the sparse footnoting also reflects another attitude. Footnotes are often weaponised, and Barker did not do polemic. Or else he simply could not be bothered with the conventional rigmarole, and just wanted to cut straight to the argument (2000b, p. 4).

To repeat: the interests and methods stay constant, and there were certain things he did not change his mind about (such as his low estimation of Aristotle, or at least, of Aristotle's treatment of concordance and dissonance, and why we perceive them both as we do). But on small points, on matters of interpretation, he was extremely ready to change his mind and correct himself. There are countless occasions where he returns to an earlier publication to propose a new translation of difficult Greek, or to disagree with an earlier suggestion, and in one late article (2016a), recanting his earlier view of a difficult passage concerning musical notation, he reflects on the difference between politicians and scholars whose duty to intellectual truth positively requires them to set down their shifts of opinion and correct their errors. The first impression of course is one of intellectual scrupulousness. But equally important is the implication that he conceived of his whole corpus of work as an oeuvre, a single intellectual project which grows and ramifies, but remains 'live' (an interestingly different attitude from that of Martin West, who, with characteristic certitude, said his say, and moved on). And because the work is a corpus that is, as it were, hanging in suspension, always ready to be recrystallised, never definitive, he is characteristically modest in urging his conclusions. These are often provisional, because they have to be. Reviewers were sometimes infuriated by what they saw as hedging (2010b, p. 118: 'Perhaps that is too fragile a hypothesis, and I would not go to the stake for it'; 2012b, p. 311: 'It seems a fairly feeble hypothesis, but I have nothing more illuminating to say about the matter'). But scrupulousness required it, and Barker left posturing and bravado to the politicians.

He was dialoguing with himself and his past views, but also with an increasing number of scholars, continental and transatlantic. The field, he would remark in his later pieces, was much more tenanted than when he had first entered it in the late

1970s,[25] partly with his own students, or younger colleagues whose interests he had fostered. And yet it remains the case even now that there are no Andrew clones. There are ethnomusicologists, organologists, cultural historians, historians of performance, practising performers, and early music specialists aplenty. There are students, too, of ancient harmonics, taking interest in modality and tunings and notation, and there are those who approach the subject from a scientific point of view; and yet the *philosophy* of ancient harmonics, the interface between music theory and epistemology and metaphysics, remains essentially his field. At the same time, he made it all seem so easy, as if, once you have a field and a method, all the rest follows naturally; the absence of anyone to fill his shoes is proof to the contrary. Thought took place at the highest level, was abstract—but never theoretical. He was never waylaid by structuralism, let alone what succeeded it, although at one point he makes an intriguing suggestion that a Vernant-type approach might have some light to shed on the reasons why ancient musicology burgeoned in south Italy, Tarentum in particular (1989b, p. 173).

And despite, or rather because of, the historical contingency of his subject, there is much in his writing that is suggestive about the apprehension of all music, any music. We are so conditioned by the metaphors we use that they seem rooted in reality, but why should music go 'up' or 'down' a scale, or a stave? Our ears are conditioned, too, by the tunings we use; a pianist's ears differ from those of a string or wind player (1984a, p. 61), and, as it happens, equal temperament is the product of a compromise that Aristoxenus could have handled but a Pythagorean would abhor. Aristoxenus—any Greek—would have classified a third as a discord, but we do not, and it turns out, even if only by accident, that Ptolemy's approach to types of ratio involved in concords can handle this better than any other ancient theory (2000b, pp. 81–2). On the other hand, it was Aristoxenus who had the wit to conceive music in a dynamic way; he knew that when we apprehend music it is not as decontextualised sounds in an endless succession of moments, but that we simultaneously process and make sense of it by importing our predictive knowledge of structures and sequences (1984a, p. 62). In the old head-to-head of Aristoxenus and Pythagoras, Barker would not only have resisted taking sides, but would have challenged the dichotomy. His combination, however, of intellectualised music theory with non-standard lifestyle choice—he and Jill did flirt with vegetarianism for a few years, and he once wrote a story for his youngest son about a vegetarian wolf—is suggestive;[26] and Warwick colleagues remember him once winning hands-down a balloon debate in the persona of Pythagoras, complete with home-made kithara.

[25] The first edition of Egert Pöhlmann's collection of documents had appeared at the beginning of the decade (Pöhlmann 1970), but those texts on music theory were still inaccessible to anyone without the requisite command of difficult and very technical Greek.

[26] Thanks to Professor Angie Hobbs for this suggestion.

III

There is an image of Barker early at the breakfast table in Corfu with his Oxford Classical Text, never less than polite but clearly not wanting to be disturbed.[27] It is remarkable that the publications never flagged when his life was so rich in so many other ways, with family and 'grounded' things (a series of dogs, not to mention unruly goats, gardening, (re-)wilding, building, DIY, and a sideline as an effective swing bowler), alongside the world of ideas. He seems to have had a serene ability to ring-fence his time. Mornings of vigorous work on home-improvement with sledgehammers were succeeded by quiet time covering dozens of note-pads in a small hand as he worked late into the night. The serenity and concentration that observers noted translated into quiet certitude and self-belief, whose corollary was total impatience with scholarly inadequacy and false pretension.

Natural history and a love of the natural world did not leave him (he was a member of the Green Party). His children recall trips with him collecting wild plants. He goes on a series of day-trips exploring the country around Dunedin (New Year, 1994–5), clambering over rocks, admiring the geology, leaving a series of meticulous written observations of penguins, seabirds, and seals, recalling his time studying evolutionary biology. Some are recorded in watercolours, too, which capture the motion of the gulls and the sharp edges of their wings against the clouds; he was an accomplished painter, not only of landscape and wildlife, but of human subjects as well. In 2000 he and Jill bought a barn in a rural district in Le Chezeau, in the Département de l'Indre, in central France. Two years later they added the farmhouse cottage next door. Restoring the barn, concreting the floor, fixing the plumbing, installing windows and doors and interior walls, was a major project. It was also a bolt-hole. Looking at his career, one can only wonder how family life, children and a burgeoning tribe of grandchildren, squared with such productivity. The barn was part of the answer, even if, at least in the early days, papers had to be written by gas lamp beset with moths. Solitude came readily to one so independent and self-reliant. He would spend months there at a time, driving down from France for his seminars in southern Europe. He wrote letters back to his family calling it a 'desirable bachelor pad', and describing the surrounding countryside, which was not spectacular, but populated with buzzards, red kites, violets—and butterflies, which he continued to observe and document with a naturalist's eye.[28]

Needing to illustrate the Aristotelian concept of matter as it applies to music (that is, sound in quantitative terms, as opposed to the form which supplies its nature, structure,

[27] Rocconi & Pöhlmann (2022), 9.

[28] Forty-one species, as he informed an old schoolfriend, trouncing the latter's pathetic claim to have spotted a mere eighteen.

and potential to develop)—he uses dandelions (1991c, p. 150), frogs and buttercups (1991c, p. 155), rose-buds, buttercups—and camels (2005a, p. 183). Kangaroos (2000b, p. 7) were perhaps prompted by the view from his window in the University of Queensland, where he was spending a sabbatical term. Just days before he was taken into Warwick hospital—where he died on 22 July 2021 from broncho-pneumonia, his immune system weakened after years of cancer treatment—he was documenting a cylindrical object with a flaky green integument which turned out to be the nesting-tube constructed by a leaf-cutter bee in a rug on the corner of his bed. He wrote occasional verse and prose with a pitch-perfect ear (what else would one expect?) for literary parody—another partial similarity with Martin West.[29] There are poems that bucket along with Belloc. There is a Chaucer skit. There is an astonishingly accomplished Pope pastiche for Griff's 85th birthday, and even better still, Egert Pöhlmann woke up on his 80th birthday to find a tribute in elegiac couplets (ἄνδρα μοι ἔννεπε, MOΙΣA) posted on the MOISA website. There is a brilliant parody in which the Psalmist—Barker, after a bad day in the barn—magnifies the Lord Which hath given us wasps, hornets, brambles, and spared us only Japanese knotweed. Yet he also has a first-person voice of penetrating directness. He contemplates time, old age, and curtailed powers. The poem read out at the funeral consists of a series of plain, sharp observations in free verse concerning the natural world (moths, buzzards, and pelicans), or rather, reflections on seeing it through sharp young eyes and through aged ones.

Above all there was music. He was taught piano by his maternal grandmother, and kept that up in later life. The large Georgian family home in St Mary's Road, Leamington, housed four pianos, a clavichord, and a loaned harpsichord. But he would turn his hand to almost anything capable of producing sound, including bottles and blades of grass.[30] Bagpipes, however—despite a certain transferability between them and the reeded ancient *aulos*—he loathed.

By universal consensus he had a lovely voice, which he first put to good effect in the choir at Christ's Hospital, learning to sing Anglican chant, complete with pointing. He also learned to sight-read, which he did immaculately. Later he recalled with pride how he had progressed through all parts beginning as a treble. Oxford contemporaries recall him singing alto, but it was as a graduate in Canberra that he started to take singing more seriously, both as tenor and alto; his first wife, Susan, herself a fine soprano, coached him on the use of the head voice. During his time in Australia, he and she founded a small *a capella* chamber choir, The University Consort, performing madrigals and mediaeval and Renaissance music. They sang cathedral repertoire in church choirs, and one Good Friday they performed Tallis' Lamentations of Jeremiah during a three-hour vigil at

[29] Lightfoot (2017), pp. 290–1.
[30] Rocconi & Pöhlmann (2022), 10.

St Paul's Church, Manuka, out of sight and on their knees—a memorable occasion. They also provided the chorus for an unabridged performance of Purcell's King Arthur, for which the philosophy department built a lifting platform so that Venus could arise from the waves—but put the gearing in back to front so that frantic efforts were required for Venus to move at all. He also performed Schubert and Schumann Lieder. He entered, and reportedly won, a singing-contest in Canberra, where the adjudicator told him he had an excellent lyric tenor voice and had a great future singing in that style. In later life, however, his voice matured downwards and there is a video clip of him singing the Seikilos song in a distinctly baritone register. In a particular performance of Dichterliebe in middle age in New Zealand, he flunked the high A in *Ich Grolle Nicht*, and took the optional lower line Schumann provides, which he would not have done a few years before. The judge was disappointed, but did still award him and his son Michael first prize.

His musical tastes were broad church. He especially loved Monteverdi (whose madrigals and Vespers he sang with the University of Warwick Consort), Bach, Mozart, and Purcell (whom he also sang, accompanied by Michael). It is no particular surprise that a man who wrote extensively about ancient beliefs that music had a therapeutic function, and simultaneously had a beautiful counter-tenor voice and loved Baroque music, loved, and did a beautiful rendering of, Purcell's Music For A While. But his tastes were more catholic than that suggests, and than might have been suggested by his studies of highly rule-bound ancient theory. Whether it was interesting, performed proficiently, and coherent: those were the essential criteria. In later years he particularly came to love Berlioz, and his LP set of *Les Troyens* was well worn. He was always open to new musical experiences, for which the radio was a good source—and yet was able to pitch his concentration at such a high level that the radio would not distract him while he worked. Or else it gave him ideas. An essay on the *Philebus* takes Lucia Popp, who was singing the Queen of the Night while he was drafting the conclusion, as a figure for Socrates' point about the trained instincts of the professional musician, and the potential to achieve excellence even by stochastic means (1996, p. 161). The opening music of his funeral was the sonata for Viola Da Gamba and Harpsichord, BWV 1029. An alternative choice might have been the Art of Fugue, which Bach wrote in open score, without instrumentation, a construct in the theoretician's head—music almost too pure to be heard.

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