

Thoughts on the music in Aristophanes' plays

The issues concerning the way music in Aristophanes' comedies is treated are clearer compared to those concerning the tragedy. The very nature of comedy and its diachronic "recipes" are factors that force clean-cut ways on the composers, which are easily recognizable in every era. Every era craves to see its own face in a mirror through comedy, much more often than through tragedy. Therefore analogy and consonance are achieved instantly, but also comparisons and anachronisms occur, alluring thus the audience to the comical element and indulging them to the euphoria of laughter. The music follows these rules. The basic forms, such as singing and dancing, while serving the scope of comedy they find through the plethora of rhythms and colours as well as through the melodic line of the era the path to contact the audience directly.

It would be wonderful if we had more information on the music composed in the beginning of the 20th century, such as *Ecclesiazusae* by Sakellariadis (1904) or the *Birds* by Varvoglis (1929). Unfortunately the sources are miniscule and to seek after them needs a great deal of effort. A simple comment would be that the most important composers of the 20th century passed by comedy, but spent a great deal of paper and ink for the sake of tragedy. By studying, for instance, the subsequent

The Clouds by Kazasoglou (1952) we realize the literary origin of the melodic inspirations that spring from the ancient Greek ways. The orchestration of the play, where the harp and flutes are dominant, serves the same aesthetics.

Having left 20th century behind, we can now clearly see the basic aesthetic directions that are indisputably two: the direction of Hadjidakis, lyrical, sentimental and often nostalgic, with bourgeois characteristics, which are highlighted by the harmony, the poetry and the beauty that are solemnly present in the structure of the unique melodic inspiration of Hadjidakis. The second is the direction of Leontis. It is folk, filled with atavistic elements, seemingly rough and thick, far away from any eloquence, that aims to the delight that derives from the truth. They identify totally as to their basic choice that songs must emerge from the text. As simple as it may sound, this is not self-evident. Moreover, another common element is their Greekness and the devoted, complex-free search thereof. This Greekness is expressed spontaneously in the use of instruments, rhythms or even more specifically in the integration of whole and well known traditional musical forms. Musicologists and ethnologists of today discover elements of ancient Greek comedy in the melodic lines of traditional music. It is, as ever, an interesting fact that the instinct of the creator always comes blatantly before the well-found-