

# MUSIC EVOLUTION IN ANCIENT GREECE AND THE VALUE OF MUSIC EDUCATION IN PSEUDO-PLUTARCH'S *DE MUSICA*

ATHENA SALAPPA-ELIOPOULOU  
Polytechnic School, University of Patras  
[ksatriya@tri.forthnet.gr](mailto:ksatriya@tri.forthnet.gr)

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ABSTRACT: A treatise *De musica*, ascribed to Plutarch (the 2nd c. AD), reflects the music evolution from the beginning of this art in archaic Greece until the early Hellenistic period. Initially, within the spiritual life and the education of the citizens the importance of music education was extremely high. Gradually, during the years, and even since the last part of the 5th c. BC, music, after centuries of dominance, appeared in the spiritual life of the Greeks not as a prevailing feature but as a subsiding one. It was even difficult to maintain its position in the educational system. The participants of the dialogue (the rich host Onesicrates, a musician Lysias and an educated man Soterichus) have been gathered to discuss, investigate and highlight the reasons why this decadence of the role of music has happened, by citing the musicians and recollecting the innovations they brought in the musical practise since the beginning of its history. In the book, apart from the list of musicians and the technical developments they invented, we find information about the views of Pythagoras, Plato, Aristotle and others about the value that music used to have in ancient Greece. The paideutic and moral value of music was the reason why it played a very important role in the education and the three men adopt the most traditionalistic approach and conclude that the technical improvements made it lost ground in favor of the literary studies.

KEYWORDS: Ancient musical theory, the musicians, education, tradition and innovation

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The authorship of the book *De Musica* is an unsolved, until now, problem; it is believed, however, that it is a compilation of texts from different ancient sources. The unknown author of the compilation is alleged to have used texts by Dionysius of Halicarnassus the younger who has compiled them after Plutarch's death in the times of the Roman Emperor Hadrian (117–138 AD). Consequently, it can be safely concluded that Plutarch is not the author of the *De Musica*.

The debate between the good music of the archaic period and the bad new one is widely discussed in the dialogue of this book. We are going to present it in our arti-

cle, in order to investigate the reasons for the decline of music in education after centuries of dominance in the spiritual and the every day life of the ancient Greeks.

The book reflects the music evolution since the beginning of this art in ancient Greece not until the early Hellenistic period in which it was written, but until around the 5th c. BC. For the spiritual life of the citizens the importance of music education was extremely high. In the books of the philosophers like Plato, Aristotle, and others, we read that male children used to go to school where they were taught grammar, drawing, music, and they used to train their bodies, so they could be healthy and strong. They were taking care not only of their mind and soul but of their body too. Gradually, during the years, and even since the last part of the 5th c. BC, music, after centuries of dominance, appeared in the spiritual life of the Greeks not as a prevailing feature anymore but as a subsiding one. It was even difficult to maintain its position in the educational system. Music and gymnastics lost ground in favour of the grammatical studies and this phenomenon occurred on a large scale round the 2<sup>nd</sup> c. BC. The decline of music education and the gradual loss of the moral *paideutic* role it used to play mainly happened because of the technical innovations that took music away from its initial goal, which was the spiritual lift of the citizens and therefore their *eudemonia* and the *eudemonia* of the State as a whole.<sup>1</sup>

In the brief and plain preamble of the *De Musica* the importance of the issue of education and especially music education that the speakers of the symposium are going to develop are emphasized and the usefulness of education is compared with that of the martial arts. The martial arts, the author claims, become savior to a few soldiers, a city or a nation, that means to a limited number of people, while education, as a necessary substance of *eudemonia*, is useful for all mankind.<sup>2</sup> The discussion takes place in the house of a rich man, Onesicrates, on the second day of the celebration of Kronia.<sup>3</sup> He has invited to his place, in order to discuss the issue of music, the musician Lysias who works for him and a wise man from Alexandria, Soterichus.<sup>4</sup> Music and religion

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<sup>1</sup> Aristotle, *Politics* VIII, 1–10.

<sup>2</sup> *De Musica* 1131C. In the preamble also, the author of the compilation tries for the first time to connect it with Plutarch; and specifically, with the demonstrably authentic Plutarch's work, *Phocion*. From this book, he copies the beginning, where Phocion's wife proudly says that her husband, who had been an Athenian general for twenty years, has always been her only ornament. The narrator opposes to her words, saying that his own jewel is the love that his teacher nourished for study and science.

<sup>3</sup> The symposium takes place on the second day of the Kronia, a festival in honour of Kronos, beginning at the 17th of December. See Burkert 1985, 231: "At this festival the fixed order of society is suspended, but the reversal is of different kind...; the slaves, otherwise without rights, oppressed and ill-treated, are now invited by their masters to join in a luxurious banquet; they are also permitted to run riot through the city, shouting and making a noise".

<sup>4</sup> At this point, the author of the compilation tried to connect it with Plutarch in the following way: in Plutarch's *Table Talks*, the philosopher from Haeroneia refers to a doctor

were very closely connected, so it is Onesicrates<sup>5</sup> who opens the discussion expressing the view that it is fundamental and customary for men to praise the gods with hymns, as the Homeric and then the Platonic tradition set, and this is valid until the days the dialogue takes place. He, then, defines the topic of the discussion and divides it into sub-questions: who are the first inventors of music, what progress the music has succeeded over the years, what the most important musicians and inventors of music are, and, finally, what is the benefit people gained from their involvement with music. Despite the fact that half of the dialogue highlights the musicians and the articular innovations that they have brought to their art, the purpose of the author, even without having been mentioned, is to investigate and to bring into the limelight the reasons for the decline of music in education, although this has not been one of the sub-questions set in the preamble and although, in our opinion, it is exactly the reason why the book has been written. The other purpose of the writer is also to remind the public of the value and the importance of music. Although at the time the book was compiled music had lost much of its influence which it used to exert on a person's soul and character, as it is reflected in Plato and Aristotle's works, the men in the symposium share the same ideas about the issue and the unknown author of the compilation demonstrates his ideas about the 'good old music of the old Greeks' against the 'bad music' of their contemporaries.

At the period of time the speakers discuss, music was abandoned to the hands of the professional musicians who work for opulent people, like Lysias employed by the rich Onesicrates. As it has always been customary for the rich people even if not educated themselves, they used to seek the company of educated persons, that gave them glamour and prestige. Aristotle confirms that the professional musicians were admired for their charismas and abilities but on the other hand they were 'silently' distinguished from the other educated people and they were not respected in the same way.<sup>6</sup> Although Lysias was not treated with scorn by the guests at the symposium he was not treated with respect either. His role was merely to speak about the lower and technical issues of music, such as the chronological order of the musicians and their innovations. The higher spiritual matters were left to the educated man, Soterichus, who at the beginning of his speech does not hesitate to correct quite rudely some of Lysias' words, although not on technical matters.

Lysias, in order to make his speech "scientific", following the Aristotelian format, argues that music creation followed the theory of evolution that Aristotle and

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called Onesicrates, who has invited a few famous men for a symposium at his house in honour of Plutarch, who had just returned from Egypt.

<sup>5</sup> Mathiesen 1999, 32–33: "Onesicrates, the preceptor of the dialogue, echoes Plato's *Republic* 10 (607a) when he observes that it is a principal occupation of men to sing hymns to the gods (ὑμνεῖν θεούς)..."

<sup>6</sup> Aristotle, *Politics* VIII.

the Peripatetics had taught.<sup>7</sup> The musician applies information for the ‘citharodia’ (art of the guitar-playing accompanied with song)<sup>8</sup> and the ‘aulodia’ (art of the aulos-playing accompanied with song). He also mentions many great and famous musicians from the origins of the history of music, such as Amphion<sup>9</sup> who invented citharodia, Terpander,<sup>10</sup> the establisher of the formal names of the ‘citharodic nomoi’<sup>11</sup> (nomos=musical law, nomos=law in Greek), Klonas of Tegea who was considered to be the inventor of the ‘auloedic nomoi’, Hyagnis<sup>12</sup> who invented the instrument aulos (it is often referred to as a kind of flute but this is not correct; in fact it was more a kind of oboe) and Olympus, the first man who brought to Athens the solo aulos-playing from Phrygia.<sup>13</sup> Apart from the list of the musicians, a reference is made about the types of measures that the citharodic and auloedic nomoi consisted

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<sup>7</sup> See an introductory note to Aristotle’s *Poetics* (Longman Study Edition, Penguin Books 2007, p. xlv): “As we have seen before, Aristotle is assuming some kind of evolutionary pattern in the evolution of literary forms”.

<sup>8</sup> For more details on aulodia and citharodia see:

[http://www.psaradelli.gr/education/epim/letters/let\\_alfa.htm](http://www.psaradelli.gr/education/epim/letters/let_alfa.htm).

According to Heraclides Ponticus (*De musica*, 1131F3), “Amphion, the son of Zeus and Andiope, was the inventor of citharodia and of the citharodic poetry”.

<sup>9</sup> West 1992, 33, 347, 351.

<sup>10</sup> Mathiesen 1999, 59–60, n. 61: “Terpander (born ca. 710 BC) flourished in the first third of the seventh century B.C. Athenaeus in *Deipnosophistae* 14.37 (635e) attests that he won the Carnean musical contests in 676 and 673, and the *De musica* states that he won four successive victories at the Pythian games (1132e [Ziegler 4.23–24]) and was responsible for the organization of music at Sparta (1134b [Ziegler 8, 9–11]). Terpander is rumoured to have died by choking on a fig when the fruit was thrown to him in appreciation of one of his performances by a spectator”.

<sup>11</sup> Nomoi (music laws) were extended compositions, organized in several sections. See John Gray Landels (1999, 5): “The compositions they wrote and performed were called ‘kithara-singers’ *nomoi*’; this was the genre in which the most famous innovators made their mark, and to excel in it was their ultimate ambition”. “The woodwind players were not left out either; they performed solos which were known as ‘Aulis-players’ *nomoi*’-extended instrumental pieces with a number of ‘movements’, some of which seem to have been in the nature of programmatic music. One famous example told, in five sections, the story of the victory of Apollo over the mythical monster called the Python at Delphi – a very suitable subject for the venue”. See also Mathiesen 1999, 58–71.

<sup>12</sup> Landels (1999, 153) notes: “The first strand involves three characters on the borderline between myth and dimly remembered history – Hyagnis, Marsyas and Olympos. Hyagnis is a very shadowy figure – a Phrygian, in some version the father of Marsyas, the inventor of the aulos and the composer of the oldest known piece for that instrument, the ‘Great Mother’s aulos tune’ (*Metreon aulema*). He lived in Celaenae, a town in Phrygia where there was a cult of the Great Mother (Cybele) whose worship was of an orgiastic character, accompanied by aulos music”.

<sup>13</sup> Landels 1999, 153: “And though Orpheus, despite his birthplace, was entirely Greek, Marsyas hailed from a ‘barbarian’ land (meaning one where Greek was not spoken) – namely central Asia Minor, now Turkey but then called Phrygia”.

of. A special reference is made on Polykephalos nomos (many-headed nomos),<sup>14</sup> a nomos that was in honor of Apollo,<sup>15</sup> and on the Harmateios nomos ('chariot'),<sup>16</sup> a nomos that was the invention of the first Olympus, the younger. Lysias praises Sacadas<sup>17</sup> of Argos who, apart from being a famous and very skilled aulos-player, was also a composer who brought many innovations to music while he won at the Pythian Games in Delphi, with his Pythic Nomos<sup>18</sup> that he himself created. The Pythic nomos has been the first known species of programme music (music that describes-descriptive music) in antiquity and its purpose was to describe the struggle of Apollo with the dragon Python.<sup>19</sup> Lysias brings into the limelight of the discussion the 'old music' and he refers to the two music schools of Sparta, the 'first and the second situation', as they were called. The 'first situation' was connected with the establishment of the Festival of Carneia,<sup>20</sup> that was held in Sparta and it was dedicated to the god Apollo. In the first celebration of the Carneia the winner was Terpander.

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<sup>14</sup> Martin West (1992, 214) writes: "Another auletic repertory item was the 'Polykephalos nomos' (many-headed nome). This again involved imitation of hissing serpents, the ones that grew from the scalp of the Gorgon Euryale; the hissing was a lament over the killing of her sister Medusa by Perseus. Midas of Acragas played this piece when he won the Pythian contest in 490". See also Mathiesen 1999, 64, 178.

<sup>15</sup> The Polykephalos nomos was attributed to either the goddess Athena or to Olympus, to Crates, or to the first Olympus (see Mathiesen 1999, 64, 178).

<sup>16</sup> The Harmateios nomos (Chariot nomos) used to be played in battles with chariots or in chariot races, in order to inspire enthusiasm to those who took part in them. It is said that it was established by the first Olympus whose teacher was Marsyas.

<sup>17</sup> Mathiesen 1999, 59–60, n. 62: "The Pythian Festival had been held every eight years at Delphi until it was transformed into a Panhellenic festival as part of the Olympiad. Echembrotus won the contest for singing to the aulos, while Sacadas won for solo aulos playing. Sacadas also won victories at the next two festivals (cf. Plutarch, *De musica* 1134a [Ziegler 7.23–26]. Sacadas is credited with the composition of the Pythic Nomos in Pollux *Onomastikon* 4.78 (but cf. Strabo *Geographica* 9.3.10). Auloedic nomoi were apparently dropped from the Pythian Games beginning with the second festival. Some of the figures named by Lysias are also named by other writers, and some fragments of their poetry survive".

<sup>18</sup> Mathiesen 1999, 59: "Nomoi for solo instruments were a later development, undoubtedly reflecting the rising prominence of a professional class of artists. The Pythic Nomos ... is an example of the third type, the auletic nomos, an extended composition for solo aulos in which the music itself is highly descriptive or evocative. Auletic nomoi and a fourth type, the kitharistic nomos, were introduced at the Pythian Games in 586 and 558 BCE.". Also in p. 63: "Strabo's *Geographica*, ... names five parts in the Pythic Nomos".

<sup>19</sup> There is an extended description of the Nomos in Mathiesen 1999, 24–25: "To those who sang with the kithara...with its final whistlings".

<sup>20</sup> Perry L. Westmoreland (2006, 138): "When the Peloponnesians denounced Apollo seer Carnus as being a spy, Hippotes killed him. However this idea was not unanimously shared. Crius was a seer from Sparta, and in his home Carnus was even worshipped. As a result of the murder, the Spartans suffered a pestilence that only ended after the national festival of carneia was founded in honor of Apollo to commemorate the death of Carnus".

The 'second situation' was associated with the gymnopaedies<sup>21</sup> in honor of Apollo, too, during which a musical contest was held.<sup>22</sup> Lysias within the framework of his role as a professional musician becomes much more technical as regards the tonal scales (harmonics) and the way they have been developed historically and he also does a less extensive report 'on rhythms'.<sup>23</sup> The poets and composers who are presented in the *De Musica* were from the 8th to the 5th century BC. This fact implies that the history of the Greek music has been completed around 400 BC; something that is not historically proved to be correct: there is a range of musical documents found that are dated anytime between the 5th c. BC and the 3th c. AD.<sup>24</sup> This fact alone proves that the collocutors of the symposium and hence the author of the book do not consider the contemporary musicians or the music they produced worth mentioning or having any artistic or moral value; plus the fact that the author probably was not a musician himself so he had already lost his connection with music, its technical improvement and development that all the cultivated men in the archaic period used to have. At the time Pseudo-Plutarch made his compilation, the writers of the imperial period were used to making frequent references to and comparisons between the old good music and the contemporary bad one and tended to praise the music of 'the old Greeks' as they called them. In his whole monologue the professional musician Lysias emphasizes and approves of the lack of considerable changes in the harmonics<sup>25</sup> and the rhythms of the old Greeks.<sup>26</sup> Reflecting "the whole body of doctrines" that were strongly believed during the archaic period "about the different emotional and moral values, the *ethos*, of the various modes"<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Revista "Stinta Sportului" 2005, webpage:

[http://www.sportscience.ro/html/reviste\\_2005\\_46-1.html](http://www.sportscience.ro/html/reviste_2005_46-1.html) [December 16, 2011]: "Gymnopaedies was the annual ten-day ceremony or festival held in Sparta to honor Apollo. It was originally dedicated to the memory of the Spartans who died in the battle of Thyrea. During the ceremony, naked adolescents and boys performed physical exercises and dances around the statues of Apollo, Artemis and Leto; their movements imitated wrestling and 'pankratio' (pankratio=pancratium, which includes wrestling and boxing). The music and lyrics were written by famous writers of that time like Thalitis and Alkmanas. The nature of the dances and festival was particularly solemn, dignified and glorious. 'Gymnopaedies' was of such significance in Sparta that men who were not married could not attend it, as a kind of punishment".

<sup>22</sup> Richard Balthazar 2004.

<sup>23</sup> 1135B.

<sup>24</sup> Only until today almost 60 musical documents have been preserved, so the music history by no means ends at the 5th c. BC. The music evolution was continued until the Greek music was transformed to Greek-Roman through the transitive period of the later Greek period which both the two Delphic hymns by Athenaeus and Limenius belong in. See West 1992, 375; the edition in Pöhlmann and West (2001) and, most recently, Hagel 2010.

<sup>25</sup> West 1992, 5: "Harmonics', in ancient terminology, is the science dealing with the ordered arrangement of notes in scales and the relationships between scales. It was not concerned like modern harmonic theory with chords and chord-successions".

<sup>26</sup> 1133BC

<sup>27</sup> Henri Irénée Marrou (1956, 140).

he concludes that it is thanks to the inviolable rules, in which melodies-harmonics<sup>28</sup> and rhythms were structured, that they are suitable for celebrations in honor of the gods and for the shaping of the young men's soul and character. Despite the fact that he sharply criticizes the innovations of various musicians as responsible for the imbalance between music evolution and cultural life, he does not condemn them. He criticizes them only in the case when they do not expel 'the good type', that is the good ethos of music, as he states.<sup>29</sup> The criticism of the music innovations of the new era, and that is from the middle of the 5th c. BC, that altered its character, leads him to speak extensively of Crexus, Timotheus of Miletus and Philoxenus,<sup>30</sup> all of them dithyrambists and great musicians; their bold musical innovations provoked intense and contradictory reviews,<sup>31</sup> and he accuses them for preferring 'the style of now called popular and profitable'.<sup>32</sup> Until the middle of the 5th c., music had rather poor expressive elements and it was plain and grave but with Melanippides, Cinesias, Phrynis and Timotheus music was technically developed as they brought to it many complicated rhythms, harmony and therefore complicated instruments. So, music became more complex and the object of specialist performance, while the common people could not follow the changes in technical and moral developments.<sup>33</sup>

In order to prove the abuse that music suffered by the innovative musicians of the 5th c. BC (i.e. by Melanippides<sup>34</sup> of Melos, Cinesias, Phrynis and Timotheus of Milesia) the compiler of the *De musica* cites an interesting excerpt from the comedy *Chiron* written by Pherecrates, whom, his contemporary Aristophanes, involves among the

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<sup>28</sup> Warren D. Anderson (1966, *passim*).

<sup>29</sup> 1135C

<sup>30</sup> West 1992, 349–350: "In the second half of the fifth century there were, among others, Melanippides of Melos, Timotheus of Miletus, Telestes of Selinus, and Philoxenus of Cythera, while the only native Athenian dithyrambist of note is Cinesias. These, together with the Lesbian citharode Phrynis, stand out as the principal representatives of the so-called new Music that we find unfavourably contrasted with the old by comedians and philosophers".

<sup>31</sup> West 1992, 359: "Crexus is credited with introducing into dithyramb a form of combination of singing with instrumentally accompanied spoken delivery (κροῦσιν ὑπὸ τὴν ψῆδῆν)... and with the invention of heterophonic accompaniment of vocal music". Timotheus of Miletus added the eleventh and twelfth string to kithara and made a lot of changes in modes and genus. When he took part to the Carnea one of the Spartans cut the strings of his kithara that were more than seven. But, in Aristotle's opinion (*Metaph.* 993B 15): "If Timotheus had not been born, there is a lot of music that we would not have, yet if Phrynis had not existed, there would not have been a Timotheus". As far as Philoxenus is concerned he has been judged for his harmonic variety, change of mode and genus, and for his bold compositions. See also West 1992, 364–366.

<sup>32</sup> 1135D.

<sup>33</sup> Marrou 1956, 138–139.

<sup>34</sup> West 1992, 358: "What Pherecrates says of him is that he undid Music and slackened her with his dozen *chordai*. We can infer at last that he used extra notes besides those of the plain old scales, and probably that he favoured a mode or modes of the category called 'slack'".

‘vicious’ ones, that means one of the modern writers and composers. In the passage from the comedy, Music appeared on stage as an abused woman while Justice, another woman, was interested to know what happened to her. Music, then, being in pain and suffering, gradually indicated her four rapists and torturers plus the injuries that these brought to her body with their innovations, of course with a dose of profanity and wicked insinuations, as accustomed in the Attic Comedy: Melanippides loosed and humiliated her with his twelve chords, the malicious Cinesias “‘making exharmonic bends in his strophes’ so that his dithyrambs appear the wrong way round<sup>35</sup>” ruined her order and balance, Phrynus, with the tuner that he invented brought about changes in the tones, and the worst of all, Timotheus of Miletus, put such many notes coming and going like ants.<sup>36</sup> Of course, the purpose of the comedy was not to provide an objective historical source, but to ridicule and criticize the wrongs of society; therefore, we can not be sure for all the things that Pherecrates claimed; still, they remain indicative of the tendency of the prevailing views in his time.

The important part of the talk of a well-educated Soterichus reflects the views of Plato on music and deals with the criticism that the Philosopher did on the rhythms and the harmonics in his third book of the *Republic*. For the preparation of the guardians to play their role in the State, Plato suggested a complete system of education which allowed poetic texts and myths that only described justice, beauty, morality, valor, and all virtues that teach the proper control of emotions. By following them practically in our life the development of virtues is achieved. As regards the harmonics (modes) Plato sides with the widely attested ancient Greek theory of the ‘ethos of the modes’ by characterizing them in turn and on the basis of a single criterion – the way they influence the soul. For instance, the Mixolydian<sup>37</sup> and the Tense Lydian modes were characterized as plaintive and consequently not suitable for the music education.<sup>38</sup> The modes Ionian and Lydian were loose, soft and symposiastic; hence, they were inappropriate for the training of the warriors. Only two modes (harmonics) were allowed, the Dorian and the Phrygian. By allowing only two of them, Plato concluded that the instruments with many strings were not necessary, especially the ‘multi-chord’<sup>39</sup> (as he named it) aulos. Music, according to Plato, influenced and shaped the soul and ordered it in a harmonious way while supreme music, clarity and purity were identical to philosophy itself. Plato, as Soterichus claims, rejected the other music styles neither out of ignorance nor out of inexperience; he did it because they did not match with the State he had in mind.<sup>40</sup> Plato did not only

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<sup>35</sup> West 1992, 359.

<sup>36</sup> West 1992, 362: “He leads her through amazing ant-hills, and if he catches her on her own – does this mean when the instrument plays solo? – he pulls her clothes off and untunes her with his dozen strings”.

<sup>37</sup> West 1992, 174, 175, 333, 352.

<sup>38</sup> West 1992, 179.

<sup>39</sup> Plato, *Republic* 399d.

<sup>40</sup> 1138C.



have a wide knowledge of music theory and practice (as all free men at his time) but also a profound knowledge of the musical harmony and even of the mathematical theory of music, as shown in the excerpt of *Timaeus*,<sup>41</sup> which refers to the generation of the soul (ψυχογονία).<sup>42</sup> Unlike the Peripatetic Aristoxenus, Pythagoras used to disapprove of hearing as a means of perception of music and taught that music should be perceived by the mind and through the proportional harmony. However, the contemporaries of Soterichus had abandoned this teaching and were using the 'unreasonable' (*alogoi*) musical intervals, those that cannot be expressed as integers or as fractions (the traditional ancient Greek musical intervals of the eighth, the fourth and the fifth are expressed as fractions, therefore they are not characterized as 'unreasonable') and this practice resulted to the distortion and the misuse of the musical innovations, as they were accused of moving music away from the correct moral ethos. Soterichus then turns to Aristotle, who was occupied with 'mesotis', the numerical and the harmonious ratio. Aristotle, he concludes, was aware of the relevant text of Plato's *Timaeus*: "Harmony is celestial and its nature is divine...it has also two kinds of middle ratio: the numerical and the harmonious one...".<sup>43</sup>

After Aristotle, his student Aristoxenus moved the music theory further than his teacher and spread the view that the ultimate judge for music was the ear and the ear only, a very radical idea that moved the theories of the ethos of the modes even more further away, as then, it was not the influence that music had on the soul that judged and distinguished music into 'good' or 'bad', anymore. Soterichus insightfully observes that hearing, along with sight, are the senses that bring us into contact and union with the divine, implying that music itself is divine as invented by the god Apollo.

An extended part of the discussion is dedicated to the gravity and importance that music had in the education of the old Greeks. In the Greek education music played a significant role: the young Athenians used to play both lyre and aulos but later aulos was abandoned as not suitable for them and only the five-chord lyre of Terpander was allowed, as Aristotle taught. Aristotle devoted a whole book of *Politics* (VIII) trying to give answers to the problem that had emerged from the technical progress of music: should music continue to be taught to the young people within the framework of their basic education in order for them to form their character and ethos and to make them active persons in the Greek cultural life and if yes, what kind

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<sup>41</sup> Plato, *Timaeus* 35c–36a.

<sup>42</sup> Plutarch is particularly interested in the generation of the soul, and he devotes an entire treatise *On the Generation of Soul in the Timaeus* to discussing one short passage of the *Timaeus* 35b–36b. Plutarch endorses the idea suggested in the *Timaeus* that the universe is a unified whole with the human being an integral part of this unity, which means that both the physical world and natural phenomena as well as human beings and human society should be approached from a cosmic/metaphysical point of view. See Stanford Encyclopedia: <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/plutarch/> [June 18, 2011].

<sup>43</sup> 1139B.

of music should this be? He tried to solve this problem by distinguishing: a) music suitable for education (like Plato in the *Republic*, he followed the old tradition of the paideutic ethos of the harmonics but even more strictly than him) and b) music for other purposes of the cultural life. The pupils were not supposed to go into great depths of mastery as regards technique (as their aim was not to become professionals) but they were trained to develop their taste yet remaining amateurs.<sup>44</sup> Soterichus, reflecting Aristotle's theory on the subject, speaks about the musical education, in combination with the hearing and taste training, and claimed that the knowledge of the harmonics suitable to express a specific moral character were the most important requisite for the musically educated person.

Finally, the wise man of Alexandria refers to the usefulness of music not only for educational purposes but also for the intellectual goods that music offers to people such as the spiritual uplift, encouragement to the difficulties, avoidance of evil, and caps the dialogue on the Pythagorean mode with these words: "The first and best service that music offers to men is the reciprocation of gratitude to the gods while the second one is that through music the human soul is ordered in purity, musicality and harmony".<sup>45</sup>

We have seen therefore that in the whole dialogue of the *De Musica*, the debate between philosophers concerning music and its position in the educational system of ancient Greece is clearly presented through the citing of the musicians and of the artistic and technical innovations they brought to music from the start of its history until the middle of the 5th c. BC. The collocutors of the symposium gathered to investigate and highlight the reasons why music declined and lost ground in the educational curriculum of the Greeks and concluded that this happened because of the technical innovations that moved music away from its initial purpose, which was the spiritual elevation of the citizens and therefore their *eudemonia* and the *eudemonia* of the State as a whole. The *De Musica* is also a rich historical source on the history of music, the musicians and some philosophical aspects of musical theory, despite the fact that it does not cover the centuries from the 5th c. BC until the time of its composition in the 2nd c. AD. The reason for that, as already mentioned before, proves that the author, through the three men who discuss, actually upholds his idea that, after the 5th c., music became very complicated and suitable for specialists only and, therefore, was not good enough to be mentioned. Another major contribution is that the dialogue critically reflects the Platonic and Aristotelian views concerning the value and the utility that music had in men's lives.

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<sup>44</sup> Marrou 1956, 139: "This shows considerable insight, and many musicians would readily agree with it today, for the genuine amateur is the person who not only goes to concerts and listens to the radio or the gramophone but actually makes music by playing the piano or the violin- even though he never becomes a virtuoso".

<sup>45</sup> 1146D.

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