

Doctrine Of Ethos

Music in Ancient Greece

Doctrine of Ethos

- Claims that Music has ethical powers and can affect character

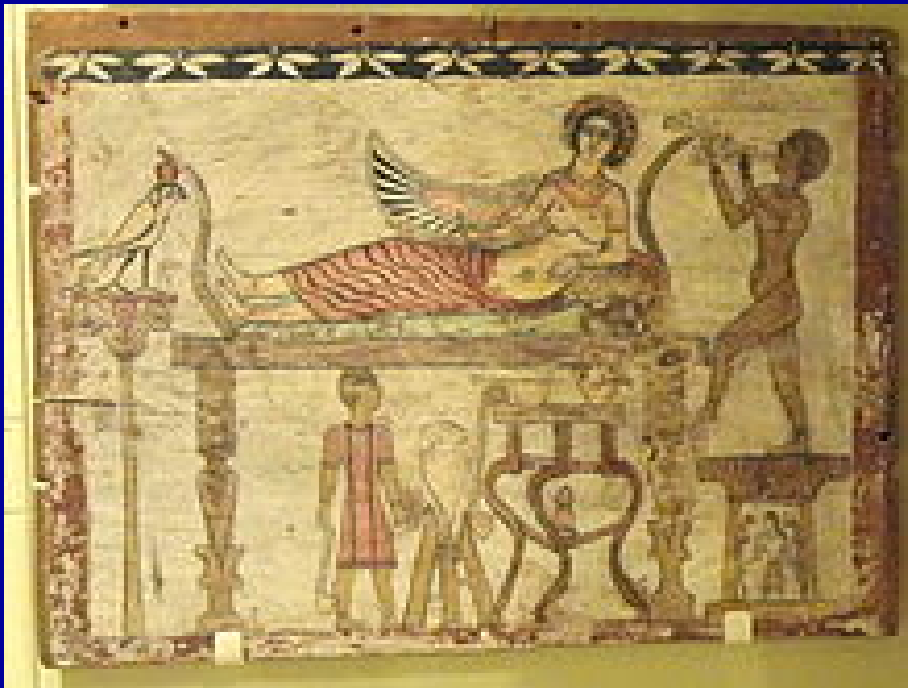
Music in Ancient Greece

- Music was an integral part of everyday life
- Functioned much like it does in our culture today: Religious Ceremonies, Wedding ceremonies and receptions, drinking songs, public theatre/concerts, athletic events etc.

Music in Ancient Greece

- Poetry and Music were intertwined
 - True music had words/poetry set to it
- Music was a prominent part of education
- They believed that even their Gods played music

Aulos



Lyre



Music Of Ancient Greece

- Seikolos Epitaph
 - Oldest surviving composition, dated 200 B.C. to 100 A.D.
 - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seikilos_epitaph

Doctrine of Ethos

- Philosophers recognized the effect music had on individuals as well as society
- Most philosophers agreed that music had powers that could effect mood and characters, or your *Ethos*
 - Greek word meaning 'character'

Imitation

- Your *Ethos* is a product of the environment around you
- *“Liberal and beautiful music will create a similar [liberal and beautiful] kind of soul”*
- Your soul, or ethos, or character imitates the music that is around it
- Greeks had specific ‘Modes’ (scales)

Plato

- Believed in imitation so strongly that he thought music should be regulated
- Imitation was for good or for evil, sought regulation as not to awaken the wrong ethos
- Thought Virtue was simple, therefore was portrayed by simple music

Plato cont.

- Dismissed instrumental music and virtuosity.
- Strongly against complex music and innovation
- “For the introduction of a new kind of music must be shunned as imperiling the whole state; since styles of music are never disturbed without affecting the most important political institutions.
- These only obscured the imitation of virtue
- “Music is the movement of sound to reach the soul for the education of its virtue.”

Aristotle

- Student of Plato
- Agreed with the theory of imitation saying *“like attitudes arise from like activities”*
- Disagreed on other planes

Aristotle Cont.

- Thought that most understanding was to be found in the music itself, not the words (valued instrumental music)
- Recognized value in music not only for education/ethics, but for entertainment
- Thought music could be used to purge negative emotions, calling this *Katharsis*

Works Cited

- http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Lyre_player_Met_06.1021.188.jpg
- <http://stigmes.gr/br/brpages/articles/ancientlyre.htm>
- <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aulos>