

Aspects of neoclassicism within post-war Greek musical avant-garde: the violin concertos by Dimitri Dragatakis (1969), Yannis A. Papaioannou (1971) and Yorgos Sicilianos (1987)

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Abstract

Avant-garde trends of the 1950s-'60s are generally evaluated by today's history and criticism as the norm of that period, as regards art and culture being cultivated into social and political reforms. Musical genres and aesthetics of the first half of the 20th century (or prior) that were incorporated into a new stream after 1950, are nowadays examined either under a touch of academic conservatism, or as new prospects of experimentation within the very trends of avant-gardism.

The violin concerto encompasses a 200-year period of continuous development within tonal traditions of Western music, ranging from the late Italian baroque period to belated romanticism of the early 20th century (Sibelius, Glazunov). Between 1920-1950, it was reintroduced as a paradigm of neoclassicism within new tonalities (Bartók, Prokofiev, Stravinsky, and many others), and also as a trend of atonal expressionism (Berg, 1935 and Schoenberg, 1936). After World War II (and particularly after 1970) many composers consecutively employed the genre of violin concerto, involving miscellaneous aspects of form, notation and performance practice that sometimes resulted in impressive and innovative works. As concerns the post-war context of neoclassicism within concerto form, it was expanded, restrained, innovated, misinterpreted or even post-modernly reapplied.

Greek avant-garde composers also delivered exceptional examples. Dimitri Dragatakis' (1969), Yannis A. Papaioannou's (1971) and Yorgos Sicilianos' (1987) violin concertos are reviewed, in order elements of compositional structure, texture, aesthetics and style to be defined into (*or out of*) the avant-garde norms of the period. Moreover, through a personalized approach on each composer's musical language, special aspects of Greek art music after 1950 are being reconsidered.

CV

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