



# Monodies from Parnassus and Helicon

Produced by

*Friends of The Melpo Merlier Music Folklore Archive*

Concept, production / publication management:

Markos Ph. Dragoumis, Thanassis Moraitis

- Produced by *Friends of The Melpo Merlier Music Folklore Archive*
- Sponsored by The Ministry of Culture
- Recorded in Athens in 1930, and on location at Upper Agoriani in 1981, and at Boeotian villages: Kyriaki, Zeriki, Vayia (Kaznesi), 1999 (viz. “A brief history of this publication”)
- Texts: Melpo Merlier, Irene Spandonides, Markos Ph. Dragoumis, Thanassis Moraitis
- Musicological analysis and comments: Markos Ph. Dragoumis
- English versions and translations: Demetrios E. Lekkas
- Arvanitic songs transcribed and translated into Greek by Thanassis Moraitis
- Restoration of sound, mastering: Christos Hatzistamou / *Athens Mastering*
- Booklet supervision, concept, production management: Markos Ph. Dragoumis, Thanassis Moraitis
- Photographs of Vlach wedding were kindly offered the M.F.A. by Paraskevi Mexi and the Ioannis Pallis family. Portraits of Yiannis Kofinis, Andrias Moukas and Lucas Timbas kindly offered by Dimitris Soulios. The rest come from the M.F.A.
- Cover photo: Vlach wedding at Vayia, near Thebes. Dimitrios Bistarakis at the pípiza and Ioannis Pallis at the daouíli. Pavlos Mexis leads the dance (Vayia, 1957).
- Layout, typesetting, cover design: *AltSys*
- Typographical corrections: Markos Ph. Dragoumis, Demetrios E. Lekkas, Thanassis Moraitis
- Manufactured by *Fabel Sound*
- Published in October 1999
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# A BRIEF HISTORY OF THIS PUBLICATION

This album, containing recordings from the *Music Folklore Archive* of the *Centre for Asia Minor Studies*, is titled *Monodies from Parnassus and Helicon*. Strictly speaking, a monody is a solo unaccompanied song, but this is not all that is contained here. The district of Parnassis is the origin of:

- a. Thirteen songs and a dialogue in the local dialect, recorded in Athens in December 1930 on limited access 78 rpm records (## 1-14).
- b. Three additional songs recorded locally at Upper Agoriani in January 1981 on cassette (## 15-17).

The idea of recording this valuable material is due to the initiatives of Melpo Merlier (1930) and Kyriakos Stephanou and Markos Dragoumis (1981) respectively. Local singers can be heard in songs

of their home village Upper Agoriani, nowadays renamed Heptalophos. The original singers were invited to Athens by distinguished folklorist Irene Spandonides in 1930 for the purpose of this recording. The Helicon mountain region is represented by twenty pieces, including a few instrumental airs and a number of songs in the Arvanitic dialect. Only the first two pieces in this part (## 18, 19) come from the 1930 limited access 78 rpm records; these were sung by draftees originating from Steveniko (nowadays Hagia Triada) and Zeriki, close to Levadia, serving in Athens. The rest (## 20-37) were recorded recently (1999) at three Boeotian villages:

- a. at Kyriaki and Zeriki by Leonidas Embiricos, Thanassis Moraitis and Markos Dragoumis;
- b. at Vayia (Kaznesi) by Thanassis Moraitis.

The aforementioned instrumental airs have all been played at Vayia by the only *zyiá* in the village, a duo of a *pípiza* (shawm) and a *daoúli* (side drum). The songs from Kyriaki are accompanied by Costas Skipis on the *daoúli*.

Let it be noted, also, that most of the cleftic “at-the-table” songs included in the present recording (## 4, 6, 11, 18, 19) have been studied, analyzed, transcribed and published by top ranking scholar of Greek demotic music Samuel Baud-Bovy in his book *Études sur la Chanson Cleftique*, Athens 1958, a *Music Folklore Archive* publication. Baud-Bovy was the Archive’s own Director of Studies for several years, and is the first person ever to attempt a systematic study of its unique treasure of recordings.

## GENERAL NOTES

1. This translation covers the lyrics heard in the recordings. The actual songs in their complete form are of course much longer, their present shortened duration dictated by the capacity of a 78 rpm. A synopsis of the missing part can be found at the top of the accompanying note, inside brackets.
2. These notes focus on a brief musicological commentary. Terms such as “trichord”, “tetrachord”, “pentachord”, “mode” etc. shall typically be mentioned in reference to each piece. The name of a musical note shall be placed next to them. When for example we write “an E hexachord”, what we mean is that the piece moves along a scale of six notes forming the following intervals: semitone - 3 successive tones - semitone, ending on E again, unless otherwise specified. Note “E”, as well as any other note cited, should be conceived as a movable and not an absolute pitch, in the same manner as familiar Western so-called “E-mode”. We need perhaps not stress the fact that tones and semitones are not tempered in our musicological area, nor are they all fixed nor the same in each instance.