

## **Therapy in Ancient Greek Texts & Dance Practices: theory & applications. Approach online.**

Η θεραπεία στα αρχαία ελληνικά κείμενα και στις χορευτικές πρακτικές: θεωρία & εφαρμογές. Εξ αποστάσεως

### **Anna Lazou**

In the context of the research effort of the *Ancient Orchesis Study Group* to reconstitute the philosophical and wider cultural presuppositions that define the ancient Greek dance culture (from which the Greek-speaking and Roman world was removed to return with the Renaissance in a new European context), and with the recognition of, on the one hand, the basic anthropological and, on the other, the aesthetic criteria and principles of art and, in particular, of dance expression, we attempt a review of certain concepts like *θεραπεία*, *κάθαρσις*, *έρως* and finally *χορεία* & *όρχησις* – which stand for characteristic phenomena of ancient Greek culture.

On the grounds that the uninterrupted history of interest in the understanding, interpretation and knowledge of all the elements that illuminate the values and deeds of ancient Greek culture can be explained by the perspective of its physicality, the uses and functions of the human body in relation to them, we attempt a theoretical approach of these concepts as representative of the ancient Greek dancing and therapeutic culture.

In addition to the theoretical research, our presentation includes an experiential workshop – ppt and short video - based on the dramatic reconstruction of the ancient chorus parts from the dramas of Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides. In the workshop part of our contribution we attempt to present the multiplicity of meanings of the ancient cultural form of dance that encompassed logos - music - body movement as a moral and aesthetic unity, and to illuminate the assumption that this unity may be revived in our time through ancient drama and teaching drama with educational and therapeutic purposes.

Key Words: Orchesis, catharsis, dance philosophy, revival, theater philosophy, therapy, choreia, movement, dance, metaphor, language, drama.

### **Biography**

Born in Athens, **Anna Lazou** studied Philosophy and Theatre in Athens and London. Author of various dissertations and articles, among them, *Orchesis. Texts on Ancient Greek Dance* - in English (2003) and *Man, the Creator* (2016), *Orchesis and Athletics* (coedit.) (2015), *Art, Philosophy, Therapy* (coedit.) v. A & B, (2016), *Interpreting Ancient Greek Dance-Workbooks* (2013-2018) (editor). At present she teaches philosophy and runs experiential workshops for adults and younger people; she composes and directs plays for university theatre and dance theatre and coordinates the *Ancient Orchesis Study Group of Dora Stratou Theatre*. She intends to start an international programme of body and dance techniques and philosophy for lifelong learning and therapy in the context of Athens University and finalise her long-term research on ancient Greek dance and drama for a future publication. She collaborated with cultural organizations and universities for the investigation (theory & practice) of *Orchesis*.

### **Recent publications and conference presentations**

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