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Aristophanes' Phrynichos and the Orientalizing Musical Pattern

Over the past sixty or so years, there has been an increasing awareness of archaic Athens' receptivity to the Eastern lifestyle and culture. The insistence of scholars on reading the earlier evidence about *orientalia* through the lens of fifth-century anti-Persian obsessions has been overcome, to a great extent, by the recent investigation of the ἀβροσύνη — the luxurious style of life (and clothing) “consciously taken over from the East and embraced by a segment of the population to differentiate themselves and assert their pre-eminence” (Kurke 1992: 98). The elites of archaic Athens felt that they belonged to the vast Ionian world — the Solonian Ἰωνία, which included East Ionia, Attica and Euboea (Mazzarino 1989: 72–78, 227) — and borrowed from the Ionians, who were heavily influenced by their Lydian neighbors, sumptuous garments and other attributes indicating status. As Thucydides notes: “The elder men of the nobility...only recently stopped wearing linen chitons and binding their hair up in a bun with the insertion of golden crickets” (1.6.3; trans. by Kurke 1992: 95). Linen chitons and golden crickets were part of a luxurious Eastern clothing adopted by noblemen to distinguish and define themselves; but after the Persian Wars the negative judgment of ἀβροσύνη became commonplace, and such luxurious items were identified as markers of effeminacy (Lombardo 1983; Kurke 1992). The dominant ideology of the Athenian polis evolved from aristocratic to democratic; the Orient, contrasted with the isonomic Spartan model, was connoted with stereotypes of cowardice and effeminacy (Miller 1997: 243–258), and the Athenian elite choose to discredit the Eastern luxuriance by connecting it with despotism and tyrannical ambition — a connection that, in turn, “influenced the modern scholarly association of ἀβροσύνη with political ὑβρις” (Kurke 1992: 103).

Supporting evidence for this double phenomenon — the archaic emulation of Eastern culture and its systematic vilification from the mid-fifth century — can be found also in the musical sphere. Together with ways and dress, Athenian artists imported from the East musical styles and instruments (especially the βάρβιτος, a long-armed lyre, and the πηκτίς, a Lydian harp), also owing to Anacreon's promotion of a Lydian-sympathizing musical fashion (Franklin 2008: 197–198). After the Persian conquest, the vilification of Eastern imports included also musical attributes: both harps and βάρβιτοι were closely associated with the world of women (McIntosh Snyder 1972; Franklin 2008: 195); Orientalizing ἁρμονίαι and rhythms were regarded languid, feminine and orgiastic (see esp. Pl. *Resp.* 398d–400c) and

Eastern garments worn by archaic pipe-players were strictly limited to women (Miller 1997: 175–176).

The vilification and marginalization of musical *orientalia* was contextual with the creation of a “timeless musical tradition” ideologically considered manly, simple and authentically Greek. The latter was precisely the opposite of the musical trend promoted by the supporters of the so-called New Music — that fifth-century “mass-phenomenon” chiefly dismissed for its effeminacy, indiscipline and barbarization, and for symbolizing, in the eyes of the elite, “the most threatening and unpleasant features of democracy itself” (Csapo 2004: 246; see also 230). This musical polarity, developed for enhancing the definition of a Greek aristocratic cultural identity based on the contrast between self and other, has influenced the scholarly definition of a Greek musical prehistory. The modern representation of a pristine music characterized by simplicity and order is generated by its late fifth-century reconstruction. After the democratic wind had swept through the Athenian polis and other parts of Greece, the upper class tried to maintain its leadership, no longer guaranteed by the public manifestation of individual wealth and luxury, by claiming its own ethical superiority and demonizing the vulgar tastes of the masses. Ἀβροσύνη, now emulated by the lower classes (Miller 1997: 253–255), was replaced by σωφροσύνη (moderation and self-discipline), and a mythological musical history was invented, which represented the transition from a simple pattern to a more complex one. But the musical claims of Athenian elites “reflect more upon their own ideological makeup than upon musical realities. Scholars would do well to be more skeptical of what they say, not only about New Music, but about musical tradition. The elite critics invented a musical past in which all was simplicity and order” (Csapo 2004: 237). Not only should one be aware that the fifth-century depiction of a “sober” melodic archaism is ideologically biased, but it should also be borne in mind that such ideal depiction must not be generalized for all archaic lyric. A different pattern is offered, for example, in Critias’s portrayal of the lyric poet Anacreon (frag. 1 Diels-Kranz). Regardless of whether we interpret the poem as a sincere encomium (see, e.g., Rosenmeyer 1992: 16–17) or argue for an ironic form of psogos (Iannucci 2002: 141–151), the figure that emerges of a poet/musician is by no means consonant with the idealistic representation of a simple and manly Greek musical pattern (the poet is depicted as a composer of sweet feminine songs, an exciter of symposia and a lover of parties, women and the Asiatic βάρβιτος¹).

1 This depiction somehow prefigures the later, much more negative representations of the poet, which focus on Anacreon’s fondness for erotic pleasures, wine and komastic revelry (evidence: Rosenmeyer 1992: 17–19; the exaggeration of such negative portraits motivates the eloquent defense of Athenaeus 10.429b; Rosenmeyer 1992: 19–20).

In this paper I will analyze the Aristophanic portrayal of the tragic poet/musician Phrynichos, which also appears distant from the usual late classical representations of traditional music and musicians. The aim is to demonstrate that not all early musical patterns could provide a good antithesis to New Music and all that it symbolized, as some of them were guilty of the same vices generally attributed to the new musical paradigms (Orientalization, elaboration, languidness). This, I suggest, is connected with the above-discussed promotion of an Oriental musical taste until the early fifth century, and might explain partly why the late classical elite critics needed to invent a musical tradition of their own, characterized by “orderliness” and “sobriety” and located in an idealized “old age.”

The “Question of the Multiple Phrynichoi”

In Aristophanes’ works the name of Phrynichos is attested a dozen times, the half of which (*Vesp.* 220, 269; *Av.* 749; *Thesm.* 164; *Ran.* 910, 1299) securely refer to the most known among the fifth-century Athenian “Phrynichoi,” the tragic poet identified as the son of Polyphrasmon. Another Phrynichos, an actor and dancer active in Athens at the end of the fifth century, is believed by scholars to be mentioned three times in the *Wasps* (1302, 1490, 1524). The scholiasts report that this second Phrynichos was ridiculed in comedy because of the delicacy and variety of his dance figures — an assertion that receives support from the parodic character appearing in scenes in which his orchestric schemata are alluded to. Contrarily, the Aristophanic references to the “tragedian Phrynichos,” all in musical contexts, have usually been taken as genuinely complimentary: the comic poet would especially praise the sweetness and pleasantness of his choral songs (Rogers 1906: 102; Pickard-Cambridge 1962: 63; Lloyd-Jones 1990: 236–237).

The identification of the Phrynichos cited at the end of the *Wasps* with a contemporary tragic χορευτής is not certain. Some scholars (e.g., Sommerstein 1983: 235) accept the view that line 1302 refers to Phrynichos son of Stratonides, a radical democratic politician and later a member of the *Four Hundred*. Even more controversial is the reference in line 1490 (and the following one in line 1524): the Phrynichos mentioned here has been identified with either the tragedian or the later dancer named by the scholiasts. Furthermore, it has even been supposed that no dancer by the name of Phrynichos existed, and that the scholiasts may have confused the various artists bearing this name (MacDowell 1971: 324; Ceccarelli 1994: esp. 76).

The last hypothesis, which represents a turning point in what scholars have denoted the “problem of the multiple Phrynichoi,” contrasts, however, with the

ambivalent attitude evidenced by Aristophanes' text. In other words, if we accept that there was only one Phrynichos, who was a dancer, a playwright and a song composer, how could we motivate the coexistence of two opposing perspectives about the same figure of poet within the same text (the positive perspective presented in the *Wasps* opening scenes and the negative perspective of the exodos)? Moreover, given the favorable treatment accorded to the *tragedian* Phrynichos elsewhere in comedy, which one might expect for a composer of the "good old age," how could we justify the parodic reference to him in the *Wasps* final scene? Our attempt to answer these questions satisfactorily is further hindered by the fact that the comic judgment of Phrynichos's lyric style is in itself a controversial issue: the majority of scholars argue for genuine expressions of praise, but Barker doubts that Aristophanes' allusions to Phrynichos's musical sweetness amount "to a whole-hearted commendation such as is given to Aeschylus in the *Frogs*" (Barker 1984: 111 n. 49). It is clear, therefore, that the so-called question of the multiple Phrynichoi and the question of Aristophanes' own opinion of Phrynichos's songs are closely related: a precise understanding of the latter can shed light for clarifying problems of the former.

Reexamining all the Aristophanic passages mentioning a poet/musician/choreographer named Phrynichos may help, therefore, to advance a hypothesis about the reasons for his recurrence throughout the entire text of the *Wasps* (if all occurrences indeed refer to the same person), and might provide the groundwork for better comprehending the ideological implications of this late fifth-century musical portrayal.

The Poet Bee and the Sweet Muse (*Birds* 737–752)

A secure mention of the tragic poet Phrynichos is that in the *Birds*' parabasis ode,² where the winged creatures celebrate their own mountaintop songs by addressing a specialized Muse, whose attributes are appropriate for such a chorus. As "Muse of the thickets" she inspires all thicket songsters, including the birds' chorus; she is ποικίλη, "Muse of intricate song," or — considering the generic sense of the term — a "variegated Muse" (Ar. Av. 739); she inspires the devoted birds as they sing "sacred melodies of song for Pan and holy choral strains for the Mountain Mother" (746–747; trans. by Sommerstein 1987: 99). From these birds' lyrics the poet Phrynichos drew inspiration for his own divine melodies, "ever sucking the nectar of deathless music to produce his honeyed songs" (750).

² See Schol. Ar. Av. 749a.

The mention of Phrynichos has been interpreted as a clue that the present ode, in an unparalleled combination of dactyls and trochaic dimeters, was musically reminiscent of a lyric by that tragedian, and the presence of dactylo-epitrite metres in the scanty surviving fragments of Phrynichos's songs (frags. 9 and 13 Snell) may support such a conjecture (Dunbar 1995: 462).

The high poetic style is discordant with the comic context, and is enriched by the skilful use of traditional types of musical qualification: the idea of men borrowing songs from birds (Ar. Av. 748–749) is much loved by Alkman (frags. 39–40 Page), and the poet–bee comparison (748), used to hint at the sweetness of musical composition, is well attested in both epic and lyric (Ransome 2004: 104–116). The evocation of musical sweetness and complexity, then (the last quality being alluded to by the adjective ποικίλος; Ar. Av. 739), is as ancient as Pindar's lyrics (Barker 2004: 188–189 and n. 6). However, if in the earlier tradition the expressions evoking musical delightfulness and intricacy carried unambiguous positive implications and were used to stress craftsmanship, for Aristophanes the situation seems to be more problematic: his allusions to images and expressions taken from ancient and serious contexts are rarely free from parody, and his only other example of the bee comparison is itself parodic (Ar. Eccl. 973, where a woman is defined μέλισσα Μούσης, “the bee of the Muse,” after she has sung a sweet erotic song). Moreover, from the second half of the fifth century, the ποικιλία of musical patterns and the softness of songs become elements regularly mocked as characteristic of the New Music (Zimmermann 1993: 40–43, 45; Barker 2004: 188–189 and n. 7). And throughout *Birds*, the image of honey sweetness, used in musical context, carries always ironical overtones: at the beginning of the second part, Aristophanes portrays the old-fashioned poet-composer, mocked by Peisiterus for his pompous self-presentation, coming in the Cloud-Cuckoo-Land μελιγλώσσων ἐπέων ἰεὶς ἀοιδάν “launching a song of honey-tongued verses” (Ar. Av. 908), and in associating the nightingale's song with honey imagery (224), he pokes fun at the malleable softness and lasciviousness of the music-making bird, represented, as Barker has convincingly argued, as a “degraded figure of slave-girl, hired out to play the pipes and to double as a prostitute” (Barker 2004: 198).

This last example becomes even more striking if we accept the assumption that the birds' Muse is the nightingale herself (so Zanetto 1987: 242; Dunbar 1995: 462), already described in line 659 as “sweet-songed singer with the Muses,” and regularly praised in Greek literary tradition for her *complex, varied* and *sweet* voice.³ It is a plausible conjecture that this mute figure of a bird, whom the chorus

³ In particular, the shiftiness of the nightingale's song is emphasized both in Homer (*Od.* 19.521) and in Euripides (whose πολυχορδοτάτη φωνή is reminiscent of the *Odyssey's* πολυεχέα φωνή), and this makes the epithet ποικίλος highly appropriate for the song of that bird. The adjective

leader has invited with a parodic invocation to accompany the forthcoming anapests with the *sweet* sound of her aulos (Ar. Av. 676–684), has remained in view accompanying the whole parabasis (685–800), or at least miming the pipe playing while the αὐλητής actually produces the pipe music.⁴ With the presence of such a figure on the scene, the invocation to a Muse with attributes appropriate to the birds' chorus might well have been addressed to the nightingale herself, the perfect inspirer of sensuous and very complex songs. It could be assumed that the ode aims to reproduce the high poetic style of the tragic invocations, with which the nightingale, an improbable figure of lascivious Muse with pipes in her mouth, would contrast to excellent comic effect.

In such a context the reference to Phrynichos, whose sweet lyrics are said to be borrowed from birds' similar songs, could be viewed as a concrete template used to strengthen the impression of delicate and elaborate music. For a well-knowing audience, such a template would provide consciously intelligible associations between a human musical pattern (the tragic songs of Phrynichos) and a non-human one (the birds' music): if the adjective γλυκεῖα 'sweet', used here to qualify Phrynichos's melodic style, is highly appropriate for the sweet song of the music-making birds,⁵ the epithet ποικίλος, referring here to the birds' Muse (= the nightingale Muse?) and usually evoking melodic or rhythmic complexity, is well suitable for characterizing a recognizable feature of Phrynichos's lyrics, whose rhythmic and orchestric variety, strongly emphasized by the ancient sources (see below), might be reflected in the alternating meter of the passage, consisting of mixed dactyls and trochaic dimeters.⁶ Further, as we have already said, the honey

λοχμαῖος, too, fits very well the *Birds'* nightingale, who is said thrice to live in a λόχη (Ar. Av. 202, 207, 224). It is also remarkable that the expression "my vibrant throat" (γένυος ξουθῆς, 743), referring here to the birds' chorus, is used elsewhere in the *Birds* to refer only of the nightingale (214: γένυος ξουθῆς; 676: ξουθῆ), and that the mention of νόμοι ἱεροί (745) finds a significant parallel in the νόμοι ἱερῶν ὕμνων, which this mute figure of bird is invited to release in the parodos (210).

4 A significant argument in favor of such a view could be drawn by considering the previous lines: immediately before the parabolic ode, within a πνίγος of 24 anapests, the chorus leader points out that the birds, if accepted as the new gods by men, will take over the function of "Muses," "Favorable Breezes" and "Seasons" (Ar. Av. 723–726). It is thus quite plausible that in the following invocation, ironically addressing an odd figure of bird-Muse, he would allude to the concrete realization of such a subversive plan.

5 The warbling of birds is "soft" (μαλακήν ἰέντα γῆρυν, 233), and "sweet" is the song of the nightingale herself (ἡδύν φθόγγον ἔμοι φέπουσ', 681; τὴν δ' ἡδυμελῆ ξύμφωνον ἀηδόνα Μούσαις, 659).

6 A good parallel could be a hyporchema by Pindar, where the allusion to the rhythmic variety of the song (καμπύλον μέλος), well reflected in the dance steps, is confirmed by the peculiar combination of dactyls and iambics (Pindar, frag. 107a Snell, with Kaimio 1977: 149–150).

imagery alluding to the sweet songs of Phrynichos is used elsewhere in the play for the nightingale herself, whose languid auletic sound is ironically praised by Euelpides. Indeed, it cannot be ruled out that a similar ironic tone is here used to celebrate the honey songs of Phrynichos, even though the ironic emphasis of the ode is on the sounds of the bird singers, rather than on parallel human melodies.

However, although set on a level of comic exploitation, what we can reasonably assume is that Aristophanes evokes here two specific qualities of a real (human) musical pattern (the melodic sweetness and the musical variety), which are both also elsewhere indicated by the playwright as typical Phrynichean features (cf. below).

A third quality, that seemingly contrasts with melodic sweetness, but is also associated with Phrynichos, could perhaps be deduced from the mention of the sacred songs and dances for the Arcadian Pan and the Asiatic mother-goddess Cybele (Ar. Av. 745–646), linked to Phrynichos by the conjunctive adverb *ἐνθεν* (“from whence” — *ἐνθεν, scil. from the sacred melodies and the holy strains* — “... Phrynichus was ever sucking the nectar of deathless music”). Both the deities are addressed here as mountain-gods, the perfect protectors of the winged creatures that dwell in thickets, but according to some scholars, who emphasize especially the association between the tragedian and the “divine addresses,” Aristophanes also means that Phrynichos’s songs are reminiscent in rhythms and tunes of these old cult hymns and dances (Fraenkel 1962: 210⁷). It is possible, of course, that this is the playwright stressing the influence of real musical patterns on Phrynichos’s tragic songs, but, if so, the mention of melodies for Pan and the Asiatic Great Mother — both the gods being “worshipped with ecstatic rituals involving drums” (Dunbar 1995: 465) — could also be viewed as an allusion to a mystic/orgiastic atmosphere, closely associated with Dionysian rituals, which, I believe, Aristophanes points to also elsewhere as being typically Phrynichean (see below).

Agathon and Phrynichos (*Thesmophoriazousae* 159–172)

Of the abovementioned musical features, some are also alluded to in a passage from the *Thesmophoriazousae*, where the reference to Phrynichos is part of Agathon’s own defense against the ironic comments of the Relative on the sexual “incongruity” of his costume (made up of male and female items). The defense

7 Contra Dunbar 1995: 466, who claims that “Ar.’s Chorus is unlikely to be making a scholarly point about the influence of earlier *human* music on Phr.”

is based on the enunciation of an aesthetic theory about the process of composition: the dress and appearance of the poet must correspond with the works he is composing, in the aim of capturing women's and men's habits, so as to faithfully represent them in the theatre (Ar. *Thesm.* 148–156). The specifically female items of Agathon's disguise are therefore a necessity of dramatic μίμησις 'imitation' (Cantarella 1970; Muecke 1982; Mureddu 1982–1283: 75–78; Saetta-Cottone 2003), and provide no evidence of the well-known effeminacy alluded to by the Relative.⁸



Fig. 1: Attic red-figure lekythos, ca. 470–60 BCE.

In lines 159–166, Agathon strengthens these theoretical principles by reference to a specific literary tradition: the poets Ibycus, Anacreon and Alcaeus wore similar *refined* dress, composed similar *elaborate* music and had in common a *mannered*

⁸ On the theoretical enunciation as an Aristophanic attempt to point out the arbitrary character of the whole system of representing gender on stage, as well as the contradictions inherent in the mimetic process between theatrical illusion and reality, see esp. Zeitlin 1981; Stehle 2002: 378–384; Compton-Engle 2003: 515–524.

Ionian sensuousness. The same can be said of Phrynichos: his *beautiful* plays reflected the *beauty* of his figure and clothes. Similarly, the Relative ironically adds, the bitter aspect and frigid character of poets like Philocles, Xenocles and Theognis correspond with the bitterness and frigidity of their compositions. I have tried to show elsewhere (De Simone 2005) that the example of the “Ionian” poets is introduced to members of the audience not only to persuade them that Agathon’s theoretical underpinnings are true (Muecke 1982: 51); nor is it used to mock Agathon’s pretentiousness in associating himself with a tradition he is unworthy of (McIntosh Snyder 1974). It is likely, I think, that Aristophanes establishes here an authentic link between old and new styles of composition. This hypothesis cannot be supported without considering the “lost” levels of performance (music, costumes and accessories, to name a few) which on the Athenian stage invested the verbal language with additional dramatic meanings. Although we cannot reconstruct these levels, we can learn much about them from textual clues.⁹

Consider first the level of ὄψεις ‘visual signs’: McIntosh Snyder, in a brief but fundamental article, has shown the strong correspondence between the specific elements of Agathon’s costume (*Ar. Thesm.* 136–140, 249–263)¹⁰ and the items of a dress worn by several individuals presented on a group of 46 Attic vase paintings depicting bearded men in scenes of komastic revelry. These were produced between 530 and 470 BCE, and denoted “Anacreontic” because Anacreon’s labeled figure appears on three of them (McIntosh Snyder 1974, see Fig. 1). Moreover, on a well-known Attic krater attributed to the Brygos painter, Alcaeus wears similar clothes, and plays the Asiatic βάρβιτος (the same instrument that is part of Agathon’s costume; *Ar. Thesm.* 137)¹¹ in a manner reminiscent of the Anacreon type. Such iconographic sources confirm the previous observations about ἀβροσύνη: the items of the bearded men’s attire (chiton, himation, sakkos/mitra, earrings and parasol) can find parallels in the East Greek and Lydian world (De Vries

⁹ A first systematic study of Aristophanes’ plays (esp. *Clouds*, *Lysistrata* and *Wealth*) from the perspective of stagecraft and performance is Revermann 2006, which charts very thoroughly the recent evolution of “performance studies.” Such methodology of analysis, which moves beyond textual cues as a guide to extra-textual performative elements, was first applied by Taplin 1977 to Aeschylean tragedy.

¹⁰ Elements of Agathon’s disguise that are in common with the Anacreon figure: κροκωτός ‘long saffron robe’, στρόφιον ‘girdle around waist’, κεκρύφαλος ‘turban-like headdress’, μίτρα ‘headband’, ἱμάτιον ‘cloak’, ὑποδήματα ‘shoes’ and βάρβιτος ‘long-armed lyre’.

¹¹ Description of the instrument and references: McIntosh Snyder 1972, 1976; Paquette 1984: 173–186. What is remarkable for our purposes is the Asiatic origin, the use in connection with symposia and Dionysian revelry (confirmed by both archaeological and literary evidence) and the association with Anacreon and Alcaeus.

1973); far from being the external signs of an effeminate identity, it is likely that they functioned as markers of Eastern luxury, in a period in which aristocratic ἀβρότης was praised in literary sources.¹² Whether these lavishly dressed figures are Ionians (e.g., Anacreon and other refugees from Samos) or Athenians who have adopted Ionian ways and dress, the link with both komastic revelry and the East Greek world is self-evident, and the fifth-century negative rethinking of their sumptuous garments could have been motivated by the association with the feminine sphere (Kurke 1992: 97–99).

It is doubtless that Aristophanes, in associating Agathon's dress with that of Anacreon and Alcaeus (evidence about Ibycus is lacking), is referring to the tradition represented by the vase paintings: the New Musicians of the late fifth century probably turned to the Ionian East seeking models of extravagance in dress, but the increasing female use of such markers of luxury had entailed a loss of status to male users, justifying the ironic comments of the Relative on Agathon's effeminacy. However, the association with the East Greek poets involves not only the Ionian fashion, but also the style of lyric composition: the interchangeability between the poet's aspect and his work (Ar. *Thesm.* 148–156), of which the dress is only a visual representation, is theorized by Agathon himself. A clearer confirmation can be found by considering a further level of performance, that of μελοποιία 'lyric composition': the song performed by Agathon, an astrophic dialogue in which the tragedian takes the role of both the coryphaeus and the female chorus (101–113), is characterized by the parodic use of "free Ionian verses" (Rau 1967: 107–108; Dearden 1976: 103–104; Zimmermann 1993: 45), the perfect rhythmical correlates of the Ionian-female disguise. The reminiscence of archaic metrical sequences is self-evident: there are anacreontics in lines 104 and 124, variations of anacreontic in 117, 118 and 123 (which are found in Anacreon's but also in Alcaeus's songs), and perhaps aeolo-choriambics in lines 106, 110, 113, 119 and 125 (Parker 1997: 398–405).

The interaction between two performative levels (ὄψις and μελοποιία) and Agathon's verbal enunciations (λέξις) makes it possible, thus, to interpret the parodic allusions of the scene within a unitary framework of the exotic-and-erotic innuendo. More precisely, Agathon's assertion about the resemblance he bears to the refined "Ionian" poets (level of λέξις) finds a concrete confirmation in the Ionian and "Anacreontic" costume worn by the new tragedian (level of ὄψις), and is perfectly coherent with the parodic use of sweet Ionian verses (level of μελοποιία). As said above, for fifth-century Athenians Ionia was a byword for

12 For a different interpretation cf. Miller 1999, who believes the sumptuous garments to be involved in "the creation of...a sexless third gender," which emphasizes "the external separation of the komasts from the rest of humanity and the mundane" (247).

effeminacy and luxury, and the Ionian “markers” were all indicative of the *lascivious* and *Orientalizing* character of Agathon’s musical inspiration (a character confirmed by the Relative, who after hearing Agathon’s Orientalizing performance ironically reacts by defining the song as lascivious, effeminate and erotic; *Ar. Thesm.* 130–133).

The association between the new musical style of Agathon and the lyric manner of the Ionian poets amounts to an ambivalent attitude toward the Orientalizing musical heritage, as being characterized by the same delicate, refined, even effeminate overtones that are typical of the New Music. Such an attitude fits very well the fifth- and fourth-century elites’ perspective about the Lesbian and Ionian poets: conservative Athenians used to speak of the Eastern lyrics in terms of licentiousness and vulgarity,¹³ and a similar association between a supporter of the new style and an Eastern composer is found in Epicrates (frag. 4 Kassel-Austin), who compares Sappho’s songs with the erotic verses of a new dithyrambist like Cleomenes. “By harmonizing these assertions with the evidence of Aristophanes, one may conclude that in the elite critics’ literature the popular erotic songs, the new musical compositions and the lyrics of the Orientalizing tradition were all tarred with the same brush for their similar lascivious overtones” (De Simone 2008):¹⁴ if classical Athenians could regard the luxurious garments of the earlier Ionian male elite as effeminate, they could also consider their lyric/symposiastic performances as chiefly marked by a mannered sensuousness. This perspective is not in contrast with the elites’ predilection for the music of the past:¹⁵ Athenian aristocrats invented a tradition of their own, whose ideal sobriety and manliness was very distant from the luxurious/languid/Lyidian-sympathizing pattern of the ancient Eastern poets, and opposed to the elaborate new musical manner. It should not be surprising therefore if the Aristophanic Agathon explicitly associates his lyric style with the “Ionicizing” musical influence of poets like

13 In Clearch. 33 W., for example, the poems of Sappho and Anacreon are said to be not so different from popular erotic songs and trivial Locrian songs: Lasserre 1993; Csapo 2004: 232–235.

14 My paper is about a scene from the *Frogs*’ agon (1301–1328) about Euripides’ choral songs. Common to both episodes is the charge against the *lascivious* and *exotic* songs of a supporter of the New Music (Agathon in the *Thesmophoriazusae* and Euripides in the *Frogs*). Also similar are the devices of criticism: in the contest of the *Frogs* the parodic use of Lesbian lines (μελοποιΐα) is coherent with the allusion to a Lesbian and erotic Muse (λέξις), and probably confirmed by the appearance and behavior of the Muse herself (ᾄψις; see infra n. 20).

15 See, e.g., *Ar. Nub.* 966–972, 1355–1372; ps.-Arist. *Pr.* 19.15; ps.-Plut. *De mus.* 6.1133b; *Ath. Deipn.* 14.631e.

Anacreon and Alcaeus, nor if he refers to the lyric manner of Ibycus — well known for his homoerotic songs.¹⁶

What about Phrynichos? Why his presence in this discourse? Does it imply a definition of his musical pattern, or is it due to a generic association with a refined charm that he is mentioned? One could note that the tragedian is cited separately from the lyric poets, and for almost different motivations: it is not his sweet Ionian style that is referred to, but rather the beauty of his person, clothes and plays.¹⁷ Nevertheless, the similar focus on the congruence between the aspect of the poet and the process of composition, and the analogous association with Agathon's poetic and aesthetic style, suggest an evaluation of his lyric manner similar to that of the Eastern composers, which can be further confirmed by considering once again all the levels of performance. Let us take, for example, the level of λέξις: that Phrynichos's musical style is characterized by a refined sweetness and sensuousness, the same qualities which the Relative ironically attributes to Agathon's musical performance (Ar. *Thesm.* 130–133), we have already seen in commenting on the *Birds*' parabasis ode (but see also *Vesp.* 218–220, discussed below, and the possible reference to Phrynichos's effeminacy in Schol. Ar. *Nub.* 1091). Yet, it is the level of μελοποιΐα (of which only the rhythm is an available feature for modern readers) that provides a strong connection between the musical models cited by Agathon: just like Anacreon and Alcaeus, Phrynichos has a special relationship with the Ionian meters. Hephaestion says of him that he habitually used Ionic tetrameters, and in support of this assertion quotes two catalectic verses (frag. 14 Snell-Kannicht). Moreover, and most significantly, a parody of Phrynichos's Ionian lines is offered by Aristophanes himself (*Vesp.* 291–316: cf. below). The level of ὄψις, on the other hand, is no longer within the reach of the modern

¹⁶ Cf. Ath. *Deipn.* 13.601b (= frag. 5 Page), 603d (= frag. 28 Page). As a matter of fact, there is a tradition that groups the three poets together as authors of παιδικά: see Cic. *Tusc.* 4.33 (*quae de iuvenum amore scribit Alcaeus! Nam Anacreontis quidem tota poesis est amatoria. Maxime vero omnium flagrasse amore Rhegium Ibycum apparet ex scriptis*) and Schol. Pind. *Isthm.* 2.1b; but the perfect coincidence of names with the passage of the *Thesmophoriazousae* strengthens the suspicion that the common source is Aristophanes himself.

¹⁷ In commenting on the example of Phrynichos, Agathon introduces the concept of φύσις: the style of poetic composition inevitably reflects the poets' nature. However, this explanation is incompatible with the assertion that a dramatist by physical imitation must conform his τρόποι to a character's speech and behavior: "If he is imitating feminine qualities which he does not possess (155–6), it is not true that those qualities are in his own nature (167)" (MacDowell 1995: 256). Aristophanes, indeed, the comic stage not being the ideal setting for a scholarly discussion on poetics, wants only to make an implicit critique of Agathon's poetic and aesthetic style, and to give a general impression of effeminacy and licentiousness.

reader; however, it is again Aristophanes who supplies us with his hint at Phrynichos's lovely aspect, corresponding to a lovely style of composition.¹⁸

The juxtaposition of different performative levels allows us, thereby, to define a set of stylistic qualities (namely, the lyric sensuousness and the Ionian overtones) which, together with an external beauty and elegance, can justify not only Agathon's self-comparison with the Phrynichian pattern, but also the association between Phrynichos and the "Ionian" poets, included too in this discourse because of the combination of Asiatic and erotic elements. From this perspective, Agathon's self-reference to the lyric models of the past amounts to a unitary and coherent presentation of an Orientalizing musical pattern, which fits very well the attitude of a conservative playwright like Aristophanes.

The Refusal of the Phrynichian Pattern (*Frogs* 908–910, 1298–1300)

There are two passages referring to Phrynichos in the *Frogs*. The first is found in the opening speech of Euripides, at the beginning of the formal agon between the two tragedians. Euripides' first argument is a reference to the organization of his own discourse: he will first show "what a charlatan and quack (Aeschylus) was, and by what devices he hoodwinked his audiences, whom he took over after they had been brought up to be stupid in the school of Phrynichus" (*Ran.* 908–910; trans. by Sommerstein 1996: 109). According to Sommerstein, the mention of Phrynichos is here used by Euripides to stress that the rival "merely *exploited* the (crude) tastes of the audience he inherited, whereas he himself has striven to *refine* their sensibility and understanding" (Sommerstein 1996: 236); the new tragedian is thus marking his distance from two older colleagues; however, a charge put by Aristophanes in Euripides' mouth may just as well be an Aristophanic compliment.

18 The aesthetic resemblance with Agathon and Anacreon would receive surprising support, if we believe that the central figure of a dancer labeled "Phrynichos" on a red-figured krater of the second half of the fifth century (probably the leader of a dance group), dressed with the same luxurious/Eastern garments of the Anacreon type (the ἱμάτιον, a decorated κροκωτός and the μίτρα), is to be identified with the tragic poet (Ceccarelli 1994: 93). Harvey (2000) rejects the identification with the tragedian, asserting that "it is difficult to see why such an image should have been painted almost half a century after his death" (116 n. 7). Molitor (1984: 254) suggests that the Phrynichos represented on the vase is the "former dancer" mentioned by Andocides (*De mysteriis* 47: cf. infra n. 22). But Phrynichos the tragedian is also associated with dancing, and it is not improbable that he is the same person referred to by Andocides (see below).

Nonetheless, a similar remark is put in the same play into Aeschylus's mouth. In the second section of the choral songs contest (Ar. *Ran.* 1249–1328), after Dionysos has satirized the popular sources of Aeschylus's lyric style (1296–1297), the tragedian claims the original and noble character of his own μέλη: he has not imitated the songs of his tragic predecessor Phrynichos (1299–1300); instead, he has transposed them εἰς τὸ καλὸν ἐκ τοῦ καλοῦ (1298).¹⁹ The image of Phrynichos gathering his poetic “nectar” from the divine meadow of the Muses (1300) belongs to the same metaphorical sphere as the bee imagery²⁰ (twice associated with Phrynichos himself, in *Birds* 748 and *Wasps* 220: see below), and it could, with due caution, be taken as an allusion to the same musical feature (the melodic sweetness, perhaps together with a “sacred flavor” already evoked in the *Birds*' parabasis ode).²¹

In claiming his own originality, Aeschylus does not explicitly depreciate Phrynichos's musical inspiration; however, it is perhaps indicative that he would take special advantage by emphasizing a difference between his own songs and the lyrics of Phrynichos. What exactly implies the definition of such a difference? It could be inferred that the sensuous-and-Oriental character of Phrynichos's songs was perceived as distant from the noble and sober overtones of Aeschylus's lyric verses, explicitly associated with the Dorian kitharoedic nomoi (1282), and opposed to the Orientalizing meters of Euripides' μέλη²² (the Aeschylean parody of Euripides' choral songs is all made up of Aeolic verses; Ar. *Ran.* 1309–1328).²³ It would be unwise, however, to draw any sweeping conclusion from the evidence of a too-laconic reference, and, more broadly, to infer anything else from the text of the *Frogs*. We can only try to draw a more firm inference by verifying whether the Aristophanic definition of a sweet, varied and Orientalizing musical pattern, which seems to emerge from the above analyses, is corroborated by the *Wasps*' much more significant evidence about Phrynichos.

¹⁹ On the Greeks' predilection for the καλόν, see van der Valk 1982: 60 and n. 25.

²⁰ All the items of the poet-bee imagery (bee, honey, meadow, Muses) are used in an epigram in praise of Erinna (*AP* 7.13) “The lyric maid Erinna, the poet bee that drew The honey from the rarest flowers the Muses's garden grew, Hath Hades snatched to be his bride...” (trans. by Ransome 2004: 105).

²¹ If one assume that “Phrynichos himself may have used honey imagery” (Dunbar 1995: 467) the triple association of such a metaphor with the tragedian would support the hypothesis of a parody of high lyric.

²² I owe this last observation to Prof. Massimo Di Marco, whom I thank for a stimulating discussion and helpful remarks on an earlier version of this paper.

²³ The allusion to a Lesbian Μοῦσ' Εὐριπίδου (Ar. *Ran.* 1308), whose erotic activity (λεσβίζω/λεσβιάζω is the *vox propria* for *fellatio*) is perfectly coherent with the lascivious and erotic character of Euripides' lyric sources (listed by Aeschylus in lines 1301–1303), would confirm that the Aeolic inspiration is one of the main points of Aeschylus's musical criticism (see De Simone 2008).

Drunken Excess, Dancing Mania and Eastern Emotionality (*Wasps* 218–220, 268–315 and 1474–1537).

Let us begin with the *Wasps*' exodos, whose interpretation and exegetic usefulness mainly depends on the identification of the dancer/choreographer Phrynichos, who is mentioned twice. The scene (Ar. *Vesp.* 1474–1537), much discussed by scholars (Roos 1951; Borthwick 1968; Vaio 1971; MacCary 1979), is an authentic dance-agon, which takes place in the theatre. It begins with a report of the servant Xanthias, who announces that old Philokleon has been seized by a dancing mania (1476–1478), that he has been performing the old dances of Thespis (1479) and that he means to challenge the younger tragedians to a dancing competition (1480–1481). Philokleon appears, and together with Xanthias goes on to describe in anapestic dimeters (1482–1495) the set of his dance figures.²⁴ In doing so, the old man mentions a certain Phrynichos and his proverbial high kick, which was named after him the “Phrynichean” (1490). A dialogue follows between Philokleon and Xanthias (1496–1515), at the end of which the sons of Carcinus enter one by one to contend with Philokleon; then, after the chorus has delivered a brief κατακελευσμός (1516–1517), the contest begins, and is concluded by the exit of the chorus (1518–1537). In the middle of this lyric agon, in line 1524, the Phrynichean kick is mentioned once more, but this time it refers to the performance of the “new composers” of dances.

What is clear from these two references (in lines 1490 and 1524) is that the Phrynichos alluded to in the exodos is somehow associated with dance, and one might suppose that he is the same Phrynichos mentioned by the scholiasts as a dancer, an actor and a target of comic joke (Schol. Ar. *Nub.* 1091, for example, mentions a “Phrynichos tragic dancer” satirized for his effeminacy and for the great variety of his dance figures: Vaio 1971: 347 n. 54; Molitor 1984).²⁵ Nevertheless, as we have already pointed out at the beginning of our investigation, it has been supposed that “‘the tragic actor’ or ‘the tragic dancer’ is not necessarily a

²⁴ On the basis of the metrical structure, which suggests a mixture of song and παρακαταλογή, Rossi 1978, followed by MacCary 1979: 140–141, has claimed that such dance figures were only mimed, not actually danced as in a modern ballet.

²⁵ See also Schol. Ar. *Vesp.* 1302 (which refers to Phrynichos the actor as one of the “sycophants” mocked by Xanthias) and Schol. Ar. *Av.* 750 (which distinguishes Phrynichos the actor, son of Chorocles, from Phrynichos the tragedian, son of Polyphrasmon), with Chantry 2001 (who takes the view that lines 1490 and 1524 refer to Phrynichos the dancer, son of Chorocles). Consider too the list of names quoted by Andocides in *De mysteriis* 47, which includes Φρύνιχος ὁ ὀρχησάμενος, “Phrynichos who used to be a dancer.”

different person from the dramatist” (MacDowell 1971: 324): Phrynichos the tragedian is associated too with dancing, and in an epigram ascribed to him (but perhaps of Hellenistic date) is said that his dances “gave as many figures as at sea, when...the cruel night makes waves” (Plut. *Quaest. symp.* 732f.);²⁶ that there was another poet of the same name famous for the ποικιλία of his dances sounds too good a coincidence to be true.

Moreover, to deny that the Phrynichos of the *Wasps* exodus is the ancient tragic poet, and that Philokleon's dance steps are somewhat reminiscent of old-fashioned orchestric movements, would contrast to what Xanthias says in lines 1478–1481 about Philokleon's intention to perform the old *tragic* dances of Thespis in a contest with the modern *tragic* performers²⁷ — an assertion that is confirmed by the *tragic* diction used by Philokleon in telling Xanthias to make way for him (1482–1484).²⁸ More importantly, Philokleon's devotion to the songs of the tragic poet has already been a theme of this play (see below), and considering the old age of both the dicast and his companions in the chorus one may conclude that he is a favorite poet with the democratic Athenians of the old generation.²⁹

²⁶ See also Ath. *Deipn.* 1.22a; Eusth. ad *Il.* 13.637.

²⁷ Roos 1951, who denies a reference to early Athenian tragedy, suggestively assumes that Philokleon's dances are the same performed by ἑταῖραι; but cf. MacDowell 1971: 323: “No doubt some of the individual movements mentioned in 1484–1495 may sometimes have been performed by ἑταῖραι, but that does not prove that they were not performed in early tragedies too.” For full references to earlier proposals, see MacCary 1979: 142–144.

²⁸ In support of this, further evidence has been added by scholars in the long exegetical history of the text: Starkie (1897: 384), for example, appeals to Schol. Ar. *Vesp.* 1490, where it is said that the expression πτήσσει Φρύνιχος ὡς τις ἀλέκτωρ (“Phrynichos cowers like a cock”), allusive of a line thrice quoted by Plutarch (ἔπτηξ ἀλέκτωρ δοῦλον ὡς κλίνας πτερόν = *Amat.* 762e = *Alc.* 4.3 = *Pel.* 29.11 = frag. 17 Snell-Kannicht) and assumed to be by the tragedian Phrynichos himself, is proverbial from the famous event of Phrynichos's expulsion after the first representation of his *Sack of Miletus* (the Athenians, sorrowed by the horrors unsparingly depicted by the tragedian, punished him who was “cowering” himself for fear). Borthwick (1968: 44–47), who explains the “cowering” as a figure of Pyrrhic dance, appeals to the tradition that connects the tragedian Phrynichos with the composition of music for Pyrrhichists; Handley (1953), arguing against Roos's view that Philokleon dances in the manner of ἑταῖραι and revelers, quotes Euphronius's remark that “the Phrynichian” is a figure of tragic dance (see Schol. Ar. *Vesp.* 1524), and MacCary 1979: 143–147 associates the ithyphallic rhythm of the lyric agon with the violent and obscene rhythm-and-dance of early Greek tragedy: see *infra*.

²⁹ To these arguments I think that the following ones can be usefully added: Xenocles, the third of Carcinus's sons who appears in answer to Philokleon's challenge, is the same condemned as a bitter poet in the passage from the *Thesmophoriazousae* examined above, where his bad figure and poetry are similarly opposed to the beautiful style of Phrynichos the tragedian. Common to both episodes is the fact that Xenocles' physical ugliness is a source of delight and ridicule to

Such a straightforward view is indeed not without problems: what generally causes the association of the tragedian Phrynichos with the high kick to be considered implausible (Roos 1951: 122–132; Rau 1967: 156; Vaio 1979: 347 n. 54) is the question, first raised by Meineke, of Aristophanes' strong admiration for the dramatist, which does not suit the parodic and paratragic overtones of the entire scene (Meineke 1839: 149). This objection, which relates to the larger question of Aristophanes' appropriation and reinterpretation of the ancient musical patterns, might be first answered, I think, by harmonizing the exodos evidence with the double mention of Phrynichos's songs contained in the first part of the play, and then, more generally, by interpreting all the Aristophanic allusions to the dramatist within a unitary framework.

Let us begin by examining the two occurrences of the first part. In the prologue, the old Athenians who form the chorus of the wasp-dicasts are said with a long compound (219–220) to sing the “lovely old honeyed Sidonian Phrynichos's songs” (μυνυρίζοντες μέλη ἀρχαῖα μελισιδωνοφρυνιχῆρατα, a compound of μέλι, Σιδών, Φρύνιχος and ἐρατός, with Σιδών being probably allusive of Phrynichos's *Phoenician Women*; Starkie 1897: 156; Sommerstein 1983: 169).³⁰ With such songs they used to call for their ex fellow dicast Philokleon, imprisoned by his son Bdelykleon, who was deeply worried about the father's juridical mania and tried to persuade him not to go outdoors. Then, in the parodos, the chorus leader reminds his fellow old-dicasts of the old days when their colleague Philokleon, a man “devoted to music” (ἀνήρ φιλωδός; *Vesp.* 269–270), used to sing something out of Phrynichos, and invites them to sing a song from this repertory, hoping that he will hear the delightful melody and come outdoors (270–272). It can safely be assumed that the paratragic stanzas that follow are metrically and musically reminiscent of a Phrynichean model, with which the content and diction would contrast to afford a parodic effect (Sommerstein 1983: 169; Parker 1997: 218). The first song (273–290), where the chorus speculates on the reasons that may be keeping Philokleon indoors, is in an unparalleled combination of Ionic and dactylo-epitrite (both the meters are attested in the scanty surviving fragments of Phrynichos; Parker 1997: 218). The second song (291–316), a comic duet between the chorus leader and his son, is in Ionics.³¹

Aristophanes, who, in the *Wasps*, compares the dancer to a “vinegar-cruet or a spider” (1509, with Borthwick 1968: 47–51 for the proposal to read ὄτος ἢ σφέλαξ;).

³⁰ It is perhaps noteworthy that in Aristophanes ad hoc compounds are usually created for parodic purposes.

³¹ “Aristophanes uses the *Ionian a minore* metre only in parodies” (Starkie 1897: 175). See also Zimmermann 1987.

Thus, once again, the tragedian Phrynichos is mentioned for the sweetness and delightfulness of his lyrics (the keywords are *μελι*, 220, and *ἡδονή*, 272), and once again this sweetness is associated with the Ionian rhythm and the Eastern world (consider the allusion to the *Phoenician Women*).³² Both delightfulness and Orientalism have a special relationship with Dionysos, the god of wine, female abandon and orgiastic ritual who is represented as always arriving from the East. And it seems that the dance-agon of the exodos is also drawn within the Dionysian sphere: MacCary (1979: 140–141, 144–147) argues for a relationship between the ithyphallic element, which is recognizable in the metrical sequences of the final song (1518–1537, including recitative archilocheans), and the *ithyphalloi* who carried the phallus-pole in processions in honor of Dionysos, whose connection with an early stage of drama is well known (see Arist. *Pol.* 1449a).³³ It is possible, of course, that Philokleon in his “conscientious attempt to evoke the dance of old tragedy” is “getting back to Dionysos” (*ibid.*: 144–145); but, if so, the association with the god of wine could involve musical features of a less technical kind, which might allow us to make a little step forward in establishing a link among all the *Wasps* passages where the repertoire of Phrynichos is alluded to.

Philokleon, like the chorus of wasp-dicasts, has a particular fondness for the Eastern overtones of Phrynichos's songs. The Eastern world is associated not only with luxury and effeminacy, but also with erotic pleasure and drunken excess, which both imply an uncontrolled and irrational behavior. In the final scene of the play, Philokleon is a drunken man (1476) who flirts with a debauched flute-girl (1341–1363), and cannot stop dancing in Phrynichos's old-fashioned “Dionysian” style (1477–1479). His excessive and uncontrolled passion provides a linking motif between the symposiastic themes of the final scenes and the dicastic themes of the rest of the play: formerly expended in the law courts (the judicial mania of part 1), and far from vanishing under Bdelykleon's cares, it dissolves later into the erotic energy, the drunkenness and the inhibited dancing-mania of part 2 (Vaio 1979: particularly 337–340 and 344–347).³⁴ It is the same excessive passion

32 See already Lloyd-Jones (1990: 235), who argues for “an affinity” between Phrynichos and “the eastern half of the Greek world,” confirmed by both the Aristophanic evidence and the occurrence of Orientalizing meters in the scanty surviving fragments of Phrynichos's songs (and I think this is hardly surprising, given the Orientalizing atmosphere of at least two of his plays, the *Sack of Miletus* and the *Phoenician Women*).

33 It is perhaps indicative that “there is what appears to be an archilochean among the fragments of the tragic poet Phrynichus (frag. 13 Snell-Kannicht)” (Parker 1997: 261). It is Hephaestion (*Poem.* 15.2.47) who refers to the last element of the archilochean as an ithyphallic. For discussion and references to earlier metrical analyses, see MacCary 1979: 138–140.

34 The once prevailing view that the final scenes connect only loosely with the rest of the play is no longer considered. Contrarily, scholarly attention has focused on “certain important motifs

of the fellow old-dicasts who form the chorus of wasps: “They were the men who fought at Marathon, and whether it be sword or stylus, their sting is the badge of the heroic spirit” (Whitman 1964: 148). In Part 1, they are represented while carrying torches and twittering the Orientalizing songs of Phrynichos. In part 2 it is their ex-fellow Philokleon, drunken and sexually inhibited, who performs the old-fashioned dances of Thespis and Phrynichos. The fondness for Phrynichos is a leitmotif of the play, and his musical pattern seems to be chosen intentionally: both musical Orientalism and languidness, together with the orchestric versatility and complexity, stand in diametric opposition to a mythical past characterized by soberness and self-discipline, all implying a “non-Hellenic” lack of measure, which perfectly suits the uncontrolled behavior of a drunken Philokleon.

That Phrynichos’s style was particularly related to unrestrained emotionality and lack of self-control might be evidenced, too, by the report about the famous episode of the first representation of his *Sack of Miletus*: the horrors of that dramatic event, depicted in a way as to be extremely pathetic and painful, caused the audiences to react with excessively emotional outpouring, and to show their sorrow by shedding tears. Consequently, a payment of a thousand drachmas was imposed on Phrynichos, and his tragedy was banned. From this episode, quoted by Herodotus (6.21) and perhaps alluded to in *Wasps* 1490 (see n. 28), it is clear that Phrynichos’s poetic style was regarded to produce uncontrolled emotional overtones, and to cause the audience members to loose their inhibitions.³⁵ Such a tragic pattern is a perfect landmark for the Aristophanic Philokleon and his fellow old-dicasts, whose scenic (mis)behavior is characterized by frenzy and lack of inhibitions.

Conclusion

These last observations remind us the initial question of Aristophanes’ attitude toward Phrynichos’s μουσική. The image of Phrynichos as a sweet, melodious

that link the several parts of the play and give it an overall coherence of thematic structure” (Vaio 1971: 335 and n. 2 for earlier references; see also Slater 2002: 106–108). Among these motifs, Philokleon’s excessive passion has the advantage of combining both political and symposiastic themes. I think that the fondness for Phrynichos’s musical pattern could usefully be added to the list (a similar view is now supported by M. Wright, *Comedy versus tragedy in Wasps*, in *Greek Comedy and the Discourse of Genres*, ed. E. Bakola, L. Prauscello and M. Telò, Cambridge, England 2013, 205–225, not yet available at the time of the conference).

³⁵ Setting aside the possible political implications of the episode summarized but brought into question, by Roisman 1988.

and lovable poet is drawn largely by Aristophanes' plays. But a complete analysis of the Aristophanic evidence allows us to define a more complex portrait, which squares with the different musical features to which the text alludes. The following table presents a restrictive list of musical/ethical qualities related to Phrynichos, and includes all lines involved to show the distribution of the "labels" throughout the entire Aristophanic text.

	Orientalizing overtones	Sweetness/sensuousness	ποικιλία	Cultic/Dionysian atmosphere
<i>Birds</i> 737–752		bee imagery	"variegated" Muse, "varied" meter	reference to the Asiatic dances for the Great Mother as possible Phrynichean sources
<i>Thesmophoriazousae</i> 159–167	association with Ionian fashion and Ionian rhythm	association with effeminacy and sensuality		
<i>Frogs</i> 1298–1300	possible opposition to the "Dorian" pattern (kitharoedic <i>nomoi</i>)	poetic "nectar" (= poet-bee comparison)		reference to the sacred meadow of the Muses
<i>Wasps</i> 218–220, 268–315 <i>Wasps</i> 1474–1537	Ionian rhythm	honey imagery, delightfulness	introduction of new dance figures (the orchestric variety of Phrynichos being confirmed by later sources)	ithyphallic rhythm-and-dance, drunken excess

In the time of Aristophanes, when the theatrical genres of dithyramb and drama were being influenced by the new style of musical performance, references to music's variety, emotionalism, languidness and Dionysian Orientalism became elements in a vocabulary regularly used to point the finger at the excesses of the new composers (Csapo 1999–2000: 404–405). Aristophanes himself systematically employs them in parodic and polemic contexts. As the table shows, the

same musical attributes serve also to define the Aristophanic portrait of Phrynichos μουσικός, which makes the general view that the comedian highly praises his lovable songs questionable at the least, and Rogers' assertion that "no nobler panegyric was ever pronounced by one great poet to another" slightly exaggerated (Rogers 1906: 102). None of the characters who are said to have a special relationship with his lyric style (Agathon, Philokleon, the nightingale herself) is a figure whom the spectator was encouraged to treat favorably, and the Orientalizing attributes (mainly the Ionian rhythm) left no positive impression on the defendants of traditionalism. As we have argued in the above analysis of the Agathon scene, the association between the new musical trend and an early tragic pattern should not come as a surprise: "The New Musicians imagined their project as the (re-)creation of an authentically Dionysian music," which "suited the professional virtuoso's desire to unleash music's unique potential for expressing emotion and sensuality" (Csapo 1999–2000: 425). This need not mean that Phrynichos is the target of the same criticism as the new composers of music, nor that his musical pattern is intended to be a favorite source of inspiration for musical innovators (although it is not at all improbable). Instead, an overall interpretation of his comic portrait makes it a little clearer that the late classical representation of a manly and remarkably Greek musical prehistory, as opposed to the Orientalizing new musical trend, cannot be assumed to be the rule. If the scanty surviving Phrynichian fragments do not allow us to reconstruct with absolute certainty the cultural and aesthetic orientation of the tragedian, nor the features of his lyric style, Aristophanes' insistence on emphasizing a connection with both musical Orientalism and sensuousness makes it plausible that he was perceived by later generations of Athenians as being distant from the rigid cultural model of the "good old age," and well located in the Lydian/Ionian-sympathizing climate of late archaic Athens. I actually agree with Barker when he asserts that "though beautiful and sweet, the compositions of Phrynichus did not have," for Aristophanes, "the solemnity and weight of those of Aeschylus" (Barker 1984: 111 n. 49), and that the Aristophanic portrait is far from amounting to an enthusiastic praise of his lyric songs.

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Volume VIII

Music in Antiquity

The Near East and the Mediterranean

Edited by Joan Goodnick Westenholz, Yossi Maurey
and Edwin Seroussi

DE GRUYTER
OLDENBOURG

MAGNES

ISBN 978-3-11-034026-6
e-ISBN 978-3-11-034029-7

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

A CIP catalog record for this book has been applied for at the Library of Congress.

Bibliographic information published by the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek

The Deutsche Nationalbibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliografie; detailed bibliographic data are available in the Internet <http://dnb.dnb.de>.

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& Hebrew University Magnes Press, Jerusalem

Cover image: Female figures with drums. Bichrome ware. Cyprus.

Cypro-Archaic I period, 750–600 BCE.

Courtesy of the Elie and Batya Borowski Foundation and the Bible Lands Museum Jerusalem.

Photographer: Moshe Caine

Typesetting: Michael Peschke, Berlin

Printing: Hubert & Co. GmbH & Co. KG, Göttingen

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Printed in Germany

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