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The Social Development of the Music Profession in Ancient Greece

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Abstract

Seemingly overnight in the early third century BCE, guilds of Dionysiac Artists became among the largest and most powerful private associations of the Hellenistic period. Professional musicians, once members of a small and exclusive field, now had the influence to interact directly with cities, leagues and kingdoms. This power did not come about spontaneously, however. It was the result of several hundred years of social, political and economic development in Ancient Greece, throughout which the music profession was invested in, expanded and democratized. The first large-scale musical competitions, the civic commitment to entertainment in fifth century Athens and the New Music revolution all played important roles in the evolution of the music profession from the bards of Homer to the powerful guilds of the third century, and for centuries later. This thesis will explore exactly how the development of ancient Greek society shaped the accompanying development of the music profession.

Table of Contents

Introduction……4
1. Defining "Professional Musician"……6
2. Sources and Scope……8

Part I: Homer and Professional Musicians of the Early Polis
1. Introduction……11
2. Homer……12
3. From Epic to Lyric……16
4. The Late Archaic Period……20
5. Conclusions……23

Part II: Democracy and Opportunity
1. Introduction……24
2. A Democratic Chorus……25
3. Stimulating the Music Economy……26
4. The New Working Class……33
5. Upper-Class Professionals……37
6. Conclusions……40

Part III: The "New" Musicians and Social Change
1. Introduction……42
2. The New Musicians: Innovation and Invention……43
3. Public Demand and Elite Backlash……47
4. Musical and Social Changes of the Hellenistic Period……52
5. Conclusions……57

Part IV: Dionysiac Technitai: Independent Artists' Guilds as Political Entities
1. Introduction……59
2. Creation and Structure of the Dionysiac Technitai……61
3. Political and Social Power of Guilds……65
4. Conclusions……72

Conclusions……73

Ancient Sources in Translation……76

Works Cited……78

Introduction

Music has always been one of the best barometers of modern culture. Some of the most popular recording artists often find success by making music that is topical and responds to current events in a fashion that expresses the undercurrent of feelings present in a larger audience. Beyond musical content, however, the specific social and political conditions of a time period can have an even more profound effect on the development of the music profession itself. While this notion can be relevant in the study of professional musicians today, for example in the recent ability of popular online artists to become fully-fledged celebrities at the top of the radio charts, it is by no means a recent phenomenon. The unique role of music as an expression of culture means that the nature of the music profession has always been explicitly tied to societal change. This relationship between music and society was as present in the cities and kingdoms of ancient Greece as it remains today.

Throughout the history of ancient Greece, from the Bronze Age through the Hellenistic period, the music profession was a reflection of the society in which it operated. As systems of government, international relations and economics changed, so did the nature and societal role of professional musicians. By dividing the history of ancient Greece into several generally descriptive, conventional historical "periods," the changing nature of the music profession and its clear response to the social and economic conditions of the time becomes clear. During the Late Bronze Age (ca. 1600-1200 BCE), professional musicians were scarce, and served kings and nobles. After the birth of the *polis* (orga-

nized city-states which also controlled the surrounding territory from the eighth century BCE on), new religious festivals and musical competitions gave musicians opportunities to publicly perform and win prizes; however, most musicians were still amateurs. The democracy of Classical Athens invested unprecedented amounts of money and manpower into music, almost singlehandedly increasing the size of the profession, yet the most prominent musicians were still upper-class composers who took commissions from aristocrats. Eventually, however, the exposure of artists in Athens to large audiences allowed more musicians to find success on the same level as their aristocratic counterparts by creating “crowd-pleasing” art, growing the economic power of individual musicians. After the Macedonian conquests that created the Hellenistic world created a greater demand for Greek culture around the Mediterranean, musicians organized into guilds of Dionysiac Artists. These guilds consolidated their economic power and allowed them to act as political entities which had control over all aspects of musical culture.

Throughout this historical development, famous musicians stand out in ancient sources. The “great men” of ancient musical history may be remembered for their acclaimed compositions or exciting performances, their strict adherence to the customs of their day or their rejection of traditional musical values. In all of these instances, the musician seems to single-handedly alter the course of musical development. Regardless of the place or time, in ancient sources, their individual actions weigh heavily on history. However, by examining not only the musicians but the society in which they lived, we gain a greater insight into the development of the music profession. It is clear that chang-

ing societal conditions throughout Ancient Greek history were the primary driver of innovation in music and in the music profession. The musicians remembered by ancient writers for their work were taking advantage of the unique opportunities made available to them by their respective societies. This thesis will focus on these specific historical opportunities and how they affected the development of the music profession.

Defining "Professional Musician"

Today it is obvious who professional musicians are. They may come in many varieties: from wedding singers to classical composers to chart-topping pop stars; however, they can be easily defined as artists who get paid to play and write music. In the ancient world the distinction between professional and amateur was not so clear. The foremost problem in determining exactly what "Professional Musician" means in the context of ancient Greece arises simply due to the different nature of the economic system in antiquity compared to modern times.

The word "economics" comes from the Greek οἰκονομία; however, this word does not mean the transfer of goods and services, but should be more accurately defined as "household management." Many people in ancient Greece may also have had specialized skills or practiced a trade; but to suggest that this was the primary source of income for all or even most people of the time period would be inaccurate. Ancient Greece also relied heavily on slave labor—by some accounts slaves outnumbered citizens in Classical

period Athens—and while coinage was in use in Greece as early as the sixth century BCE, credit and bartering were still common transactional methods.

Another problem complicating the creation of a definition for Professional Musician is the fragmentation of the ancient world, especially across time periods. A professional in the Bronze Age might not resemble a professional in a Hellenistic period guild. Additionally, a polis such as Sparta that was completely dependent on slave labor might produce different kinds of professionals than a polis like Athens that had a slightly more diversified labor market. A definition that works for one place in one time period would simply be insufficient.

After acknowledging these issues, it is clear that a useful definition for Music Professional that covers as many places and times as possible in the ancient Greek world must be broad. For the purposes of this thesis, a Professional Musician shall be defined as a person who satisfies the following qualities: their art is commissioned by any type of employer, including kings, wealthy citizens, civic governments, festival organizers, militaries or others; and they receive compensation for their art, be it money, food, lodging or a combination of the three. There is not enough evidence to say with certainty what percentage of any ancient musician's income was directly related to their art, however this thesis will strive to focus on those musicians who spent most of their time pursuing their craft professionally. This definition is sufficiently broad to describe the bards of the Homeric epics, who lived before coinage was used in the Greek world yet performed for kings and nobles, the poet-composers of the Archaic and Classical periods, who were

presumably independently wealthy yet still took aristocratic commissions, and the working class musicians who could be hired in many contexts and competed at religious festivals for prize money.

Other histories of music often also cover tragic and comic poets and actors; however, this thesis will focus on instrumental musicians, composers and to a lesser extent choral singers. Actors will only be used in examples when they are covered more extensively in ancient sources, but their situations can be extrapolated to also describe the aforementioned groups. In several instances amateur musicians will also serve as examples to illustrate arguments either about the social conditions of their time or about musicians in general.

Sources and Scope

A broad range of sources is necessary to adequately support any argument pertaining to the musicians of the ancient world. This thesis will primarily employ different kinds of ancient primary sources, including those from the literary and epigraphical records. Several different contemporary studies of ancient music will assist in contextualizing ancient information[1].

Literary sources are the most well-studied extant pieces of evidence from ancient Greece. Ancient authors have been copied and transmitted through thousands of years,

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[1] West's *Ancient Greek Music* provides perhaps the most comprehensive survey of the history of the profession, while Pickard-Cambridge's *Dramatic Festivals of Athens* is the authoritative text on the Dionysia and its participants.

languages and societies. Some of their writings provide a great deal of information to illustrate the social, political and musical conditions over different time periods. Homer's epics, for example, are thought to include a good deal of influence from both Bronze Age and pre-Archaic historical data. Philosophical writings such as those by Plato and Aristotle grant us a particular view of society from an educated, upper-class perspective. Plays of the time period, especially those of Old Comedy by writers like Aristophanes, include many explicit references to contemporary subjects. Accurate information can also often be gleaned from ancient historians including Herodotus, Plutarch and others, although these writers tend to include as many mythical anecdotes as they do faithful accounts of their subjects. The fragmentary pieces of ancient music that still remain allow us to observe how music changed throughout Greek history and reveal a good deal about their creators as well.

The epigraphical record has not been quite as robustly studied until recently; however, it still illuminates much about ancient musicians, especially later ones (Hellenistic and Roman period inscriptions provide almost all of our knowledge of the Dionysiac Artists' Guilds). Inscriptions give us information about ancient musical contests and their participants. Especially during the Hellenistic period, the business of music was meticulously recorded by decrees of kings, cities, federal leagues and Dionysiac Artists' guilds.

Many recent scholarly authors have chosen to focus on ancient music. The topics of ancient instruments and the musical theory of the Greek musicians especially have

been extensively covered. For the purposes of this thesis, specifics relating to instruments or theory will only be discussed when they are relevant in a social context, such as the "profit-driven" innovations of the New Musicians during the late fifth century BCE.

Part 1: Homer and Professional Musicians of the Early Polis

Introduction

The origins of the music profession in ancient Greece date back to the Late Bronze Age, a period in which Greece was divided between many small kingdoms. During this time, music appears to have been a significant part of Greek culture, as attested to by artifacts of the era as well as literary evidence like Homer's writings. However, actual musicians making a living from their art seem to have been few and far between. Even after the creation of the *polis* and the organization of large-scale musical competitions and festivals for the first time, while the nature of the profession changed, the actual number of professional musicians did not seem to notably increase. In Archaic and pre-Archaic times music was truly an exclusive field, reserved only for the very best. A few of these artists are even well-attested in the ancient literary record due to their skill and perchance for innovation. However, it was not only their virtuosity, but also their ties to the ruling class which helped these ancient musicians find success.

Kings, tyrants, priests and aristocrats all played important roles as patrons in the early manifestations of the music profession. Bards in Homer perform in courts of the nobility, mingling with regional rulers. Early lyric poets and instrumental virtuosos earned their keep at festivals funded by the aristocracy, and chorus leaders were paid by high-ranking civic officials. A few of the most famous figures of the time collected the patronage of tyrants for their creations. Innovation increased at the same pace as the investments of these rulers: from the small lyric contests of the eighth century to the large,

marathon festivals of the sixth—from a musical community just beginning to break out of its primitive origins to one on the verge of the artistic revolution of the fifth century BCE. Every step along the way gave more opportunities for new musicians to enter the fold; and although the profession was still incredibly exclusive, by the twilight of the Archaic era, it was much less homogenous than when it began. The ties between the upper classes and musicians in Archaic Greece truly laid the framework for music to grow into a wide-spread occupation in later centuries

Homer

The world of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* is a unique amalgamation, built as much from elements of Bronze Age tradition and Homer's own experience in pre-Archaic Greece as it is from myth. Music is deeply interwoven into the fabric of this vast universe, where every occasion is celebrated with a song: weddings and funerals, health and sickness, drunken revelry and somber defeat. In the City at Peace, a boy with a clear-toned lyre plays the Song of Linos as his young companions pick grapes,[2] as swift-footed Achilles lounges in his tent, he sings about the celebrated deeds of men,[3] and at the side of Hector's deathbed, musicians play a mournful dirge as Andromache wails.[4] These and count-

[2] Homer, Iliad XVIII 561-572.

[3] Iliad IX 184-189.

[4] Iliad XXIV 718-724.

less other examples of the origins of Greek musical culture can be found throughout Homer's epics.

In such a musical climate, the musicians, or *ἀοιδοί*, play an important role. Through Homer's writings it is possible to locate their general standing in the social hierarchy and contextualize the music profession in a time before the organization of the *polis*.

Homer places musicians in the larger group *δημιοεργοί,* loosely, "workers for the public good," a term that also described doctors, sculptors and other artisans. These specialized craftsmen were often not tied to any particular kingdom, instead traveling between many, and offering their services to cities across Greece.[5] They were highly respected—throughout the epics ἀοιδοί are valued guests in the courts of kings, singing tales much like those of their creator's, about the accomplishments of heroes in the past.

Thamyris, "that famous Thracian," is the only singer (as such) mentioned by name in the *Iliad*. The narrator tells us that while returning home from the court of Eurytus, King of Oechalia, Thamyris boasted that his skills rivaled the gods'. Angry and jealous of his claims, the Muses mutilated him, making him forget the art of songcraft and lyre playing.[6] Thamyris' mention is brief, but his appearance in book II's "Catalog of Ships" is significant, since scholars have dated that section to several hundred years before Homer was active. In fact, Warren D. Anderson contends that Thamyris is the "first

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[5] Anderson 29

[6] Iliad II 591-600.

identifiable bard"[7] in western literature (barring the more famous mythical figure, Orpheus), and may be the only truly pre-Archaic singer in Homer. Importantly, even in this early source, the professional musician is respected enough to have played in a distant king's court.

Other bards throughout Homer's writings follow the model established by Thamyris. In the *Odyssey,* Phemius seems to be a member of Odysseus' court. He entertains the suitors with songs of Troy and the Achaeans during their long wait for Penelope to choose a new husband.[8] Phemius later tells Odysseus that his service to the suitors was compulsory, claiming "their greater power and numbers brought me here by force,."[9] He pleads for Odysseus to spare his life by virtue of his being a bard and therefore close to the gods.[10] In Phemius' speech to Odysseus, he also explains how he became a singer, noting that he is "self-taught" - an independent practitioner in a sparsely populated professional field.

We witness another singer in the *Odyssey,* Demodocus, in action, as he performs in the court of Alcinous, King of the Phaeacians. Alcinous invites Demodocus to feast as a member of a group of nobles, including the visiting Odysseus, and praises him to the crowd, calling him "the man who has received from god the gift of song above all

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[7] Anderson 29

[8] Homer, Odyssey i 326-329.

[9] Od. xxii 330-355

[10] Dougherty 95-6

others."[11] Demodocus' performance, singing of the heroes of the Trojan War,[12] moves Odysseus to tears, and the hero offers a portion of his food to the bard as a reward. Odysseus' high commendations of Demodocus affirm the "public good" done by musicians, "for from all people living on the earth singers win honor and respect."[13]

Musicians in Homer's poems serve both their kings and the gods with their craft. They are respected for their skill; but the political structure of their pre-Archaic setting is not built to support more than a few professional musicians, so only the very best may enjoy the benefits of recognition from the ruling class.

Homer himself was, of course, a musician—most likely a traveling bard who would recite his stories in different cities throughout Greece, similar to the musicians in his epics. While this model of music professional would quickly become outdated, some followers of Homer apparently existed long after his death. The *Homeridae* (literally, "sons of Homer") were a clan or professional group that recited Homer's works at least into the fourth century. Several ancient writers mentioned them, but few offered any true explanation of their nature. Pindar, for example, calls them *rhapsodes* (singers of woven tales), connecting the Homeridae to rhapsodic competitions of Homer recitation held in fifth-century Athens.[14] Mentions by Isocrates and Plato paint the Homeridae as the an-

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[11] Od. viii 44-48.

[12] Od. viii 72-85.

[13] Od. viii 475-481.

[14] Pindar, *Nemean* 2.

cient authority on their namesake, reciting his lesser-known (or misattributed) works and telling stories of his historical life.[15] The Homeridae remain a mysterious group in history, however, they represent one of the first true organizations of musicians, pre-dating the guilds of Dionysiac Artists that will play a large role in the history of the music profession during the Hellenistic period.

From Epic to Lyric

While the courts of kings and nobles such as those of Agamemnon, Achilles and Odysseus had ceased to exist by the end of the Bronze Age, the legacy of respected court singers, inspired by the gods, was persistent in Greek culture. By the time Homer was performing his epics, sometime during the eighth century BCE, the polis was beginning to become the dominant political system in ancient Greece. This change had a profound impact on the development of the music profession.

Early poleis had what are called city religions with vibrant civic traditions built around their religious practices. An important part of this Archaic civic life were religious festivals, many of which were created in the late eighth and early seventh centuries. These festivals often featured public celebration and revelry along with their religious ceremonies, and a few offered musical competitions.

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[15] Isocrates, *Helen* 10.65, Plato *Ion* 530d, *Phaedrus* 252b, *Republic* 10.599e.

These competitions were funded by aristocrats, high-ranking civic officials and priests, and were at first mostly between amateur choruses.[16] Sparta, for example, was considered the musical mecca of the seventh century, and their boys' and girls' choruses were legendary. Each chorus was usually composed of 8-15 members, drawn exclusively from the upper classes.[17] They would often be trained by a prominent musician. Alcman, for example, is remembered for his composition *Partheneia*, written for a Spartan girls' chorus.

The most famous music professionals during this time were not chorus trainers, however, but soloists. Festivals such as the Spartan Carneia, Pythian Festival at Delphi, and Athenian Panatheneia all featured competitions for lyric poetry,[18] a genre of much shorter compositions with more complex melodies than the epics of Homer. The few very best lyric singers earned prizes and lasting fame, and their compositions had a long impact on the development of music in the ancient world. Consequently, while these festivals allowed many amateurs to participate, they set a high bar for entry into the profession of music. While only a small minority of musicians supported themselves with their art, this practice kept musical tastes inexorably tied to the interests of the rich and powerful citizens who funded them.

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[16] Marrou 18

[17] Griffith 45-6

[18] Kemp 216

The giant of early-Archaic lyric poets was Terpander, a *citharode* (lyre-player) from Lesbos who was active around the early seventh century BCE. Pseudo-Plutarch says he gave music its "first constitution," building a foundation that was expanded on by later instrumentalists.[19] Terpander has been credited with many dubious innovations, including inventing the *barbitos* (long-stringed lyre), composing the first *nomos* (instrumental piece for solo lyre), extending the musical scale from a seventh to an octave, creating the Mixolydian (mixed Lydian) mode and adding three strings to the traditional, four-stringed lyre of the epic poets.[20] Whether or not he actually was responsible for these changes is a murky question at best. It does seem likely that Terpander at least played the seven-stringed lyre he was known for, but he probably did not invent it—there is evidence they had been in use in Crete as far back as the Bronze Age.[21]

Despite the unreliable testimony of the existing ancient sources about him, Terpander was undoubtedly a very important figure in ancient music. He won a stunning number of contests, including the first Carneia,[22] and four consecutive victories at the octennial Pythian Festival. Beyond that, his proficiency inspired a respect for Lesbian musicians lasting centuries after his death. In Sparta, for example, the first spot at any

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[19] Pseudo Plutarch, De Musica 9.

[20] Anderson 62, West 329-330, Terpander Fr. 6

[21] Anderson 62

[22] Anderson 61

competition was always reserved for Lesbian performers,[23] and "after the Lesbian singer" became a common turn of phrase. The appreciation for Terpander also seems to be indicative of a fledgling "international" class of musicians in early Archaic Greece. Singers could find success traveling from their own polis far abroad in order to take part in festivals, earning prizes and acclaim.

While Terpander essentially created the notion of the professional citharode, another foreigner, a Phrygian, Olympus, is said to have introduced the *aulos* to Greece. Ancient sources on Olympus are a strange marriage of myth and reality. Olympus is said, for example, to have been taught how to play his instrument by the satyr Marsyas, and there is a disagreement among ancient historians on his dates. Some authors say he lived during the Trojan War, while others place him during the reign of Midas, more or less contemporary to Terpander. Modern historians tend to use the latter estimation in their research.[24]

It is certain that Olympus' claim to fame, having brought the aulos to Greece, is untrue, as the instrument was mentioned at least in passing by Homer. There also is no evidence that he won any contests as Terpander did. However, by the time ancient historians were writing several hundred years later, the aulos had eclipsed the lyre in popularity, and was being used much more frequently in both solo compositions and choral music. Some authors may have simply been trying to assign an origin story to the instru-

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[23] West 335

[24] West 330-1

ment. His Phrygian origins make at least partial sense as well, since centuries after he supposedly lived, there was still a connection between the aulos and the Phrygian Mode.[25] Mostly, however, the prominence of Olympus as a musician is similar to Terpander's: they were two professionals in a culture where music was primarily an amateur venture, and their actions set long-standing precedents for their successors to follow.

The Late Archaic Period

Even as few solo musicians earned fame, opportunities for them to perform did not increase significantly until the mid- to late sixth century. At this time, the major religious festivals throughout Greece were re-organized by city leaders, placing a heavier emphasis on musical competitions. The trend began in 586 BCE in Delphi when the Pythian Festival became a quadrennial rather than octennial event. Athletic contests and a greater number of musical competitions were added and began to attract musicians from around the Aegean. For example, victors of some of the early contests came not from Delphi but from Arcadia and Argos. Twenty years later, the tyrant Hipparchus instituted similar reforms to the Panatheneia at Athens, expanding the musical contests and adding entire new genres, like recitations of Homer by performers called rhapsodes.[26]

One of the most important of these additions was the inclusion of unaccompanied instrumental playing in the festivals for the first time, opening the door for an entirely

[25] Aristotle, Politics 1342 a32-b12, West 180

[26] West 336-40

new group of musicians to enter the professional world. The winner of the first three solo *piper* competitions in Delphi was Sakadas of Argos. He performed his *Pythikos Nomos,* which would become a standard aulos piece throughout the following centuries,[27] and kickstarted the tradition of virtuosic aulos playing, foreshadowing the imminent popularity of the instrument. Following the success of Sakadas and his instrumental aulos pieces, the Pythian festival added unaccompanied lyre playing in 558 BCE as well.[28]

The new and experimental nature of these genres was good for innovation. However other artistic inventions of the sixth century would temporarily overshadow solo composition in Greek musical culture. *Dithyramb* and tragedy were both pivotally important musical genres that would provide many instrumentalists with jobs as composers and accompanists in fifth-century Athens. In the Hellenistic Period, they would become performed exclusively by paid musicians. Dithyramb and tragedy were not yet a part of the major festivals during the late Archaic era, but their creation in the mid to late sixth-century BCE is well-attested to in the ancient literary record.

The dithyramb, a style of choral pieces written in the "tragic mode," was a hotly discussed topic among ancient historians, but remains difficult to date. A fragment of Archilochus mentions dithyramb as early as 650 BCE, calling it a song of Dionysus, sung when one's head is "thunder-struck with wine."[29] However, the most famous form of the

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[27] West 212-14

[28] Pausanias, Description of Greece 10.7.7

[29] Archilochus Frag. 77

dithyramb was the more or less secular one performed in fifth-century Athens (the content of the songs were often secular, though the festivals they were performed at were religious in nature), where it was one of the most popular events of the annual City Dionysia festival. Herodotus writes that this style had its origins in the polis of Corinth and the citharode Arion,[30] in the early sixth century. In the same breath, Herodotus also tells us that Arion arrived in Corinth on the back of a dolphin, so his testimony may be suspect. It is known, however, that the tyrant Periander of Corinth was a major patron of Arion's, and Pindar corroborates Herodotus' acccount.[31]

Ancient historians place the birth of tragedy a little later than Arion, in the mid-sixth century. Aristotle writes that tragedy was "at first mere improvisation" and in fact arose from the dithyrambs of the time.[32] Later writers stepped in to expand Aristotle's brief history, with many settling on Thespis as the inventor of the genre.[33] However, most modern scholars agree that these sources are at best unreliable and are working from a dearth of evidence.[34] Indeed, the only four extant fragments of Thespis are generally not considered authentic.[35] Aristotle was writing the *Poetics* almost a century after the great tragedians had died, and the sources available to him probably did not extend beyond the

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[30] Herodotus, The Histories 1.23

[31] West 340, Pindar names Corinth the birthplace of the dithyramb in Ol. 13. 18.

[32] Arist. Poetics 1.4

[33] Pickard-Cambridge 69-72

[34] Scullion 104

[35] Pickard-Cambridge 85

fifth century (the surviving list of the winners of the tragic contest at the Great Dionysia begins in 502 BCE).

Thespis himself seems to be more of a mythical character, similar to Olympus. However, the form of Arion's dithyrambs was likely a sort of call-and-response, similar to a conversation between an ancient actor and the chorus, and many may have been re-enactments of myth similar to those of tragedy.[36]

Conclusions

The development of the music profession happened incredibly slowly between the end of the Bronze Age and the late sixth century. Musicians had started out as primarily entertainers in the courts of kings, and the creation of musical competitions gave them more freedom to perform. However, poet-composers writing for wealthy and powerful patrons were still some of the most famous and important artists of the time, just as they had for centuries.

The real importance of the creation of festivals with musical elements in the Archaic period was the precedent it set that could be built upon later by powerful poleis like Athens in the fifth century. Taking professional music out of the courts of the aristocracy and putting it in the public sphere did not change the profession immediately, but it laid the groundwork for it to be driven much more by popular demand than by the more conservative voices of wealthy patrons.

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[36] West 339

Part 2: Democracy and Opportunity

Introduction

The first major re-organization of the Greek religious festivals in the early-to-mid sixth century BCE was an important step forward for the music profession. However, the size, popularity and funding of these contests were still not quite large enough to field a working class of musicians. Even as new genres, like tragedy, and more instruments such as the aulos became popular, most famous musicians were those who were patronized by powerful tyrants or were even aristocrats in their own right. They had social status on the level of philosophical and political leaders: while Arion frequented the court of Periander, Thespis is said to have debated the merits of his art with Solon.[37] It was not until the very end of the 500s and the birth of Athenian democracy that the infrastructure necessary to support a true music profession in ancient Greece came into being. It was built through civic cooperation, not on the whims of the aristocracy.

The democratic government and festival culture in Classical Athens allowed a huge number of new professional and amateur musicians to begin training and performing every year. Money came pouring in to support this venture, mixing public and private funds to pay musicians wages and prizes. By the end of the fifth century, the effects of this policy were clear. A burgeoning musician class in Athens, made up of citizens and foreigners alike, was on the rise, and music was shifting radically. Meanwhile, the traditional poet-composers in the tradition of Arion and Terpander were still around but vastly

[37] Plutarch, Solon 29

outnumbered. Music was on the verge of a popular revolution, and the most conservative performers were about to be left behind.

A Democratic Chorus

Aristocratic rule in Athens came to an end in 508 BCE when Cleisthenes came to power after the fall of the tyrant Hippias (brother of former patron of the arts Hipparchus) and upended the city's political structure. A new council of 500 was created, leading to further progressive reforms later on in the fifth century, including paid trial juries and perhaps the first ever civic government structure where power was in the hands of the people (*demos*). Cleisthenes' reforms also targeted the social organization of Athens, including an important shift away from the historical "tribes" of Attica (the peninsular region of Greece over which the Athenian democracy had jurisdiction). Ten new tribes were created in their stead, each representing different "demes" (villages or neighborhoods) around Attica, and all Athenian citizens automatically became members.

The new tribes were very much a political creation, and their organization, location and membership had no real historical precedent. However, immediately after their creation, in 507 BCE, they began to play an oversized role in Athenian public life, when Cleisthenes instituted a new dithyrambic competition between the tribes at the City Dionysia festival. This was a major step - with it, the Dionysia not only became the first *annual* event to feature musical competitions, but was also poised to become one of the

largest Greek religious festivals in general.[38] Each of the ten tribes had to field two choruses for the contest, one for men and one for boys, and every chorus could number up to fifty people.[39] All twenty of the choruses needed a *leader* (leader), *chorodidaskaloi* (trainers) and accompanying aulos or lyre players with whom they would train and perform. The first Dionysia also featured tragedies and comedies, and the many plays required similarly large numbers of poets, actors, choruses and accompanists. As a direct result of the new, more inclusive democratic system in Athens, the social commitment to music was larger than it ever had been before, and the pool of musical talent in Athens and around Greece finally had a means to grow.

Of course, the citizen class in Classical Athens was, in terms of numbers, a minority group—they were outnumbered in their own city by women, slaves and *metics* (foreign residents). Of that class, an even smaller number still were actually able to participate in choruses at the Dionysia. Being a part of a chorus was a huge, time-consuming endeavor that must have required some personal or family wealth to undertake. Beyond that, politics often dictated who would be in the choruses, so having the right connections could be key.[40] However, even this fraction of the population was still relatively huge

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[38] Csapo 2010 83

[39] Pritchard 220

[40] For a more in-depth discussion see Pritchard

compared to the participation in musical events beforehand, and it resulted in the dithyramb becoming a “mass spectacle”for the first time.[41]

Perhaps the most important member of any Athenian chorus did not actually play or sing any of the music. The two choregoi from every tribe (one for each chorus) were more like public servants than anything else but in a new, democratic sense. Culled overwhelmingly from society’s elite,[42] choregoi were essentially volunteered by their communities to bear the public burden of leading, and partially funding, their choruses.[43] Winning dithyrambic competitions was important for both the choregoi and their tribes, and every victory was celebrated with the erection of an extravagant monument at the choregos’ expense. Xenophon’s Socrates tells us of one very successful choregos, the military general Antisthenes, who was “eager for victory” in all aspects of his life. Though “there is no analogy between the handling of a choir and of an army,” Antisthenes’ strategy was to find the “best experts” in music and chorus training to help his chorus come out on top.[44] In this way, choregoi were essentially analogous to modern “producers,” in that they did not have much creative input, but instead their job was to hire the right people and coordinate their training.[45] This system had been used before,

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[41] Csapo 209

[42] Pritchard 219, Old Oligarch 1.13

[43] Baumol 372

[44] Xenophon, Memorabilia iii. 4, 3-4.

[45] Pickard-Cambridge 76-77

notably in Archaic Sparta, where high-ranking civic officials would fund choruses, but never on this scale. Arguably the average Athenian choregos had more responsibility and more at stake in his position than any of his predecessors.

While the choristers could all be chosen by the choregos from their tribe,[46] choral trainers and accompanists were harder to come by. Chorus trainers and pipers (or sometimes citharodes) would be randomly selected by the group of choregoi.[47] There was often a great deal of competition for the very best talent, and those choregoi with earlier picks could gain important advantages over their competition. Demosthenes writes of one such occurrence in his tribe of Panionis where a “heated discussion” took place between tribal officials.[48] Importantly, this was the first time there was an open market for musical talent, as the chorus trainer and the accompanist could easily make the difference for their chorus between winning and losing.

The chorus trainer was often also the poet of the dithyramb, and would thus have much creative control over his chorus’ final performance. Many times, a *hypodidaskolos* (deputy trainer) would assist the trainer over the months of training leading up to the

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[46] Pickard-Cambridge 76

[47] Pickard-Cambridge 75

[48] Demosthenes, Against Midias 21.13

Dionysia.[49] The accompanist might also contribute creatively to the chorus, and the performance of the piper or citharode was weighed heavily by judges at the festival.[50]

This selection process was a novel and unique part of the democratic system of Athens. It brought a staggering number of new musicians into the contests, and opened new doors for instrumentalists and chorus-trainers to find work.

Stimulating the Music Economy

The new influx of hundreds to thousands of chorus members, trainers, accompanists, poets and actors participating in the Dionysia at Athens every year represented a significant increase in the number of active musicians, but it also required an enormous, and unprecedented, accompanying financial investment. As democracy opened up musical participation to a larger percentage of the population and created new opportunities for professionals, music itself started becoming a business, and business, as they say, was booming.

By the mid-fifth century, over the course of three days at the City Dionysia, over thirty talents (one talent is six thousand drachmae, or the equivalent of around twenty-six kilograms of silver) would have been exchanged[51]—almost ten percent of Athens' total

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[49] Wilson 83

[50] Anderson 113

[51] Csapo 2010 83

annual revenue,[52] and more than the richest man in the city would make in over *five years.* This cost was on a scale that had never been seen before. Even theater on its own was quite a large expense; and one that only large states could afford.[53] Adding in the dithyrambic competition and other performances made traditional funding methods inadequate.

Classical Athens was in a unique position among Greek city-states to bankroll this unprecedented expansion of professional and amateur music. Their public coffers were quite full, especially later in the fifth century, filled with tribute collected from the city's vast imperial holdings around the Aegean.[54] Private citizens were also brought in to help pay for the festival, including theater lessees, investors and the wealthy choregoi who could easily spend thousands of drachmas on their choruses each.[55] For example, one choregos is recorded to have spent over three thousand drachmas in one year - higher than the cost of a top-tier racehorse or even some houses in downtown Athens.[56] Other estimates place these costs even higher, with one speech listing a choregos' expenses at between four and five thousand drachmae.[57] Remarkably, even after these huge public and private contributions, festival attendees still had to be charged an admission fee of

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[52] Davies 94

[53] Csapo 2004 208

[54] Wilson 88

[55] Pritchard 218

[56] Wilson 88

[57] Baumol 372

two obols for the first time in the history of any musical performance,[58] setting an important precedent separating the consumers of music from the professionals who created it.

While a large portion of the money spent on the Dionysia was reserved for props, costumes, materials and logistical support, a not insignificant cut of the funding went directly to the artists. Monetary prizes were offered to the winners of almost all of the competitions, including poets and playwrights, and the amounts could be quite substantial. While recorded numbers are at best unreliable, estimates of prizes in the range of a few hundred drachmae each are not out of the realm of possibility.[59] The three dithyrambic victors in Piraeus (a city outside of Athens) in the fourth century, for example, were awarded ten, eight, and six minae for their efforts (one mina is 100 drachmae).[60] Considering one drachma was roughly pay for a day's work in fifth-century Athens, it seems reasonable that at least the victors of musical competitions at the Dionysia could live comfortably for most of a year on their prize money.

Importantly, though, musicians in Classical Athens did not *have* to win all of the time to support themselves. The democratic government paid regular wages to the actors, chorus-trainers and accompanists performing in the Dionysia.[61] Together with the fierce

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[58] Pickard-Cambridge 265-70

[59] Baumol 371

[60] Flickinger 269

[61] Baumol 372

bidding over the most talented of the artists by choregoi, this meant that skilled musicians could now be picked from lower classes and make their art their sole source of income.

Even the choristers received benefits for their participation. Their costumes, music and training were all paid for, and after the selection of the choregoi in early summer, choristers would essentially train as full-time musicians until the festivals in early spring.[62] During this time they were exempt from the compulsory military service asked of other Athenian citizens. Unlike other publicly financed positions in Athens, anyone could serve in a chorus or tragedy as many times as they were recruited for one.[63] While music was surely not the primary source of income for these upper-class choristers, they were being compensated for their efforts at a higher level than any of their predecessors. The "Old Oligarch" (a pseudo-Xenophon) famously took this process to task in *Constitution of the Athenians*, exclaiming "At least the people think themselves worthy of taking money for singing, running, dancing, and sailing in ships, so that they become wealthy and the wealthy poorer."[64]

Despite the reservations expressed by wealthier Athenians, their investments paid dividends. The few religious festivals wth music around Athens at the beginning of the fifth century had grown into six by the century's end, and nineteen at the close of the fourth. Additionally, theaters and festivals had begun to crop up in many places around

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[62] Pritchard 214

[63] Wilson 75-81

[64] Old Oligarch 1.13

the Aegean, including Macedonia, Syracuse and Isthmia, among other towns and localities. Dithyrambic competitions had also become features of most of the largest Greek festivals.[65] "Touring" between these theaters was not uncommon.[66] Throughout the fifth century many tragedies and comedies that had debuted at the City Dionysia could then make their way around the Athenian demes. Sometimes a play might even debut in a deme and come later to Athens.[67] Opportunities for working musicians were multiplying, and the demand for them was growing at a similar rate.

The New Working Class

The "working class" of musicians enjoying these new opportunities was divided into two distinct groups: lower-class instrumentalists hired for more low-profile gigs, and the performers working and competing in the many festivals and theaters of the day. The former category of working musicians was the most numerous. It does not appear as though they were composers in any way or that they were even competitors in the festivals that had been primarily responsible for increasing participation in music. Instead, they were musical freelancers, willing to play in most situations where their services

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[65] Csapo 2004 208

[66] "Exportation" of plays was common, see Dearden 1999

[67] Dearden 224

might be of use. They were often foreigners and sometimes slaves, and their gigs were their livelihood.[68]

It seems as though these pipers-for-hire were in reasonably high demand throughout the Classical period, as almost any activity or work could be accompanied by music and rhythm. Weddings, funerals and other events and celebrations all traditionally included background music, and the *symposia* of high-class Athenians employed musicians in much the same capacity. However, by the fifth century, musical opportunities had expanded even farther. Aristophanes' image of a busy classical city in his *Archarnians* includes the noise of many flutes and pipes encouraging workers.[69] Even non-traditional laborers used musical accompaniment: vase-paintings show us high-profile athletes of events like the long-jump, discus, javelin and boxing training to music.[70]

Major building projects could also become gigs for working musicians. Literary sources attest to this, though most are later than the Classical period, such as in one recorded instance, when pipers played to the building of the walls in Messene.[71] Music even accompanied destruction: Lysander and the Spartans tore down the Athenian walls

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[68] West 35

[69] Aristophanes, Acharnians 554

[70] New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Psykter attributed to Oltos

[71] Paus. 4.27.7

and burned their fleet to the music of flute-girls, celebrating a new "beginning of freedom for Greece."[72]

Working musicians were within the ranks of many militaries of the time. Triremes, the ships responsible for the dominance of the Aegean by the Athenian navy, required a large number of rowers, who would keep time to the music of pipers on board[73]. Pipers famously marched in formation with the Spartan army as well, a tactic which Thucydides said helped them advance evenly without breaking ranks, even at the moment of engaging the enemy.[74] These musicians were considered an essential part of the Spartan military strategy and are attested to rather exhaustively by ancient sources.[75]

While the many lower-class working musicians provided an essential service to their communities, an ancient stigma against manual "work" (of the type done by slaves, foreigners and the poor, who made up this category of musicians) kept them out of the spotlight. As a result, they remain largely anonymous in literary and epigraphical sources. The second group of working musicians, while not wealthy or aristocratic, nevertheless commanded more respect in their time than their lower-class counterparts.[76] They were "creative professionals," comparable to artisans like sculptors, providing luxury goods or

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[72] Xenophon, Hellenica 2.2.23, Plutarch, Life of Lysander 15.4

[73] West 29, Euripides, The Trojan Women 124-130

[74] Thucydides 5.70.1

[75] Plutarch, Life of Lycurgus. 22.2.3

[76] West 35

services to the populace.[77] While they occasionally might enjoy a commission from a private citizen or tyrant, most of their income came from working in festivals like the Dionysia. They were both soloists and accompanists, and their profile rose considerably throughout the fifth century.

The Athenian investment in public musical and theatrical performance created a positive feedback loop that continually increased the size and scope of this second group of professional musicians. The production of dithyrambs, tragedies and comedies meant that demand for pipers and citharodes was higher than ever. The pressure on choregoi and their tribes to win these contests ensured a healthy competition for the top talent, driving up wages and creating competition between the musicians themselves to improve.[78] Festival musicians of the time enjoyed new benefits, such as the exemption from military service also granted to choristers and actors.[79] There was a drive to innovate. As performers attained higher levels of virtuosity in their instruments, they would also refine their technique and perhaps even change the instruments themselves.[80] As these changes took place, musicians could individually become well-known professionals with public reputations without entering into the traditional elite.[81]

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[77] Sirski 51-3

[78] Csapo 2004 209

[79] Kemp 218

[80] West 35

[81] Sirski 50

As theater, dithyramb and musical contests expanded out of Athens, the musicians followed. By the latter half of the fifth century, the new deme theaters that had spread around Attica and other, similar venues around the Aegean meant that a piper or citharode could effectively pack their yearly schedule with many paying performances. They would travel farther and more often than their predecessors in the Archaic period, and many would come from far away to Athens to find work.[82] In fact, by the late fifth century, "theatre music was performed almost entirely by working-class, foreign professionals."[83] A list of famous classical-period festival musicians in the pseudo-Plutarchian *De Musica* illustrates the extent of the role that foreigners played in the music profession at the time, naming Melanippides from Melos, Timotheus from Miletus, Phrynis from Lesbos, Telestes from Salinas and Philoxenus from Cythera, among others.[84]

Upper-Class Professionals

The structure of the music profession was in the midst of a revolution in fifth-century Athens, opening the door to a new and larger group of workers operating in new genres and earning money in new ways. The old model established by poet-composers like Arion in the preceding centuries was not obsolete, however. Even as working foreigners and lower-class Athenians won contests at the Dionysia, a different league of musician

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[82] West 349

[83] Csapo 2004 210

[84] Ps. Pl. Mus. 30

still worked, operating in the highest social strata of ancient society.[85] Their adoration by ancient historians and thinkers echoes that of the lyric poets who came before them, although they were not performers in their own right. While they would take commissions, their fame was more a consequence of their personal wealth rather than the cause of it.

The musicians earning their keep from competitions at festivals were all primarily performers. They could often compose and may have been hired by certain choregoi to do so, but their skill was primarily in their ability to play in front of an audience, sometimes by themselves and other times as an accompanist. The poet-composers were exactly the opposite. They may have been excellent virtuosi or mediocre instrumentalists, however they are remembered for their contributions to the musical catalog over anything else.[86] Looking through the ancient historical record makes this distinction clear. Lasus, for example, earned fame for his compositional improvements to the dithyramb just as choral competitions were beginning in Athens.[87] Several decades later, Simonides became considered a master of writing in the Dorian mode. Perhaps the most famous of the fifth-century poet-composers was Pindar, who was known to write music for both public and private events, from sprawling choral compositions and odes to intimate hymns and processionals.[88] A general consensus among academics is that while Pindar himself may certain-

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[85] West 35

[86] Kemp 217

[87] West 343

[88] West 345

ly have had the ability to perform his works solo,they were more often written for performance by local choirs.[89] Often, these pieces written by upper-class composers would become staples of the symposia of later aristocrats. They could become “standards," re-performed at these parties time and time again by both lower-class hired musicians and the wealthy hosts themselves, allowing both the composers and their musical work to live on.[90]

The number of ancient poet-composers was very small, and most were of high birth. Their personal wealth allowed them to not work for a living in the same way as their festival performer counterparts.[91] They were often friends and honored guests in the courts of wealthy aristocrats, tyrants and kings, and would accept commissions from them for their work.[92] The demands of the upper class brought the poet-composers around the ancient world, and Pindar, Simonides and Bacchylides were known to be patronized by rulers all the way from Italy to Asia Minor.[93] These upper-class commissions had another effect which separated the poet-composers from the performers: the tastes of the rich were much more conservative and less volatile than of the public, so the musicians of the elite rarely experimented or innovated.[94]

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[89] West 346

[90] West 25

[91] Kemp 217

[92] Kemp 217

[93] West 347

[94] Csapo 2004 212

The two major groups of musicians, both working and upper-class, were generally two entirely separate groups throughout most of the fifth century. They worked for different people and ostensibly marketed different services. The immense popularity of the former class was growing quickly, however, and large scale changes to music were just over the horizon, driving the groups farther apart. In the late fifth century a conflict was brewing that would decide the future of ancient Greek musicians for several centuries.

Conclusions

The intentions of Cleisthenes and the democrats were not to break with musical traditions. They did not reform the Athenian political system in order to make music a viable career path for their citizens. Regardless of their intentions, however, the creation of the Athenian democracy truly had this effect. Thousands of Athenian citizens were drawn into the musical contests under the guise of civic duty, and many of them were receiving pay and benefits. Musicians came from all over, sensing opportunity, and they found it. It was perhaps an example of Keynesian economics in the ancient world - when a state decides to spend 10% of their revenue on the arts, a lot more artists are going to find themselves with jobs.

The effects of the Athenian democracy on Greek music were greater than a temporary increase in the number of employed musicians, however. Musicians that followed, at the end of the fifth century, worked in a smarter, more targeted fashion. The tastes of the masses started to determine who got paid, an important step away from the aristocrats

of the past who had made that determination. Even by the late fourth century BCE, when Athens could no longer afford to spend such extravagant sums on their festivals, the other cities of Greece were already holding their own, as the huge initial Athenian investment had rippled throughout the entire region. When Cleisthenes implemented the dithyramb competition in 507 BCE, the professional class of musicians in ancient Greece had reached a turning point, between being a small minority of the population to becoming a cultural and economic force.

Part III: The "New" Musicians and Social Change

Introduction

In 446 BCE, the Lesbian citharode Phrynis won the Panathenaic contest for his performance.[95] Over the following half-century, he and a series of other young, innovative musicians took Athens and the cultural world by storm. Since the expansion of the Dionysia in 507, Athenian festival audiences had been treated to some of the greatest musical performances in recorded history up to that time and were getting more involved in the judging process. They would cheer and support those artists that excited them, and Phrynis was just the first who notably took advantage of the artist's ability to appeal to the crowd. These "New Musicians" ignored musical conventions, instead choosing to follow their own rules. They proved wildly popular with the Athenian people, but were resented by elite writers and philosophers, who mocked their lowest-common-denominator appeal. Despite the harsh reactions from wealthy citizens, it was clear that the Athenian democratic system ultimately encouraged the actions taken by the New Musicians to advance music, and subsequently their innovations resonated throughout the following several hundred years of musical history.

By the end of the fourth century, monarchy, not democracy, ruled over most of the Greek poleis, but music was still dominated by *virtuosos* in the tradition of the New Musicians. As the world shifted around them, these artists gained more economic power than

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[95] Aristophanes, Clouds 971

ever before, foreshadowing yet another radical shift in the organization of music starting in the first decades of the third century.

The New Musicians: Innovation and Invention

Above all else, the New Musicians were known for their innovation. In composition, instrumentation and performance, these musicians continually shook up the status quo, to the delight of their audiences. Not since the first lyric poets had so many changes been made to popular music so rapidly.

After the first material improvements to the lyre and aulos in the seventh century, the form of the instruments had largely remained static. The seven-stringed lyres of Terpander in the seventh century, Arion in the sixth and Pindar in the fifth would have been more or less interchangeable. These old-style instruments limited compositional complexity, and in the case of the aulos, even limited the player to only one musical mode. A relevant fragment of Aristophanes tells us the old songs were “seven-chord and all alike."[96] Many of the musical advances away from the old style by the New Musicians were made possible by technical improvements to the lyre and aulos.

While the exact timeline of when physical changes were made to instruments is hard to pin down, it is clear that Phrynis probably made some of the first. He was one of the earliest of the New Musicians, active in the mid-fifth century,[97] and he apparently in-

[96] Ar. Fr. 467

[97] Sirski 22, 27

creased the number of strings on the lyre from seven to nine, according to a passage of Pseudo-Plutarch's *De Musica.*[98] It is known that by the time of Timotheus, who first defeated Phrynis in competition around 420,[99] the lyre had 11 strings.[100] Melanippides may even have played a lyre with a dozen strings, although there is sparse evidence to support this claim.[101] We do know that adding strings to the lyre was important both musically and symbolically. It gave the instrument a greater tonal range and also required that training be more thorough, allowing the songs of New Musicians to be more complex than those of their predecessors. It could also be seen as the logical continuation of a musical trend with its roots in myth.[102] Timotheus writes of his mastery of the 11-stringed lyre in the context of his forebears: Orpheus, who received the four-stringed lyre from Apollo, and Terpander who later performed with a seven-stringed lyre.[103] The aulos also underwent changes at the hands of New Musicians. According to Pausanias, auloi traditionally came in three varieties for three modes: Dorian, Phrygian and Lydian. Pronomus, however, created an aulos that could be used for any of the modes,[104] giving pipers much more flexibility in their composition and performance.

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[98] Ps. Pl. Mus. 30, West 360

[99] West 361

[100] Ion fr. 32. 3-4

[101] Ps. Pl. Mus. 30, Sirski 23-4

[102] Sirski 24

[103] West 362

[104] Paus. 9.12.5

The increased complexity and flexibility of improved instruments gave composers the tools they needed to move beyond the constraints of traditional musical styles. However, the real catalyst for the New Music revolution was the vibrant class of professional musicians who had grown up around festival culture in Classical Athens. Instrumentalists, especially pipers, were unique in that they could be hired to accompany dithyramb, tragedy, comedy, and other forms of both choral and solo instrumental music. For years, these genres had been wholly separated, and adhered to their own strict stylistic traditions. Poets and even actors rarely worked in more than one genre, and often entire families would work in the same style. Many of the children of Sophocles and Euripides went on to become tragedians, for example.[105]

The ubiquity of instrumentalists among all of these genres gave musicians experience working in many different styles. When these instrumentalists went on to compose their own music, they could import ideas from one genre and add it to others.[106] One of the most significant of these genre fusions was the addition of elements of solo performance (*nomoi*) to dithyramb and other choral pieces.[107] Crexus added instrumental interludes to his works,[108] and Melanippides' introduced *anabolai*, instrumental and vocal so-

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[105] Csapo 2010 88

[106] Csapo 211

[107] Sirski 40

[108] Ps. Plut. Mus. 28

los to dithyramb.[109] With these new solo sections, instrumentalists could, in a sense, transcend their role as an accompanist and contribute their own musical phrases, pulling the spotlight onto themselves and away from the chorus.

Other New Musicians blurred the lines among genres even further. The chorus traditionally sang as one unit, but some composers started dividing them into groups to sing separate phrases. The resulting dithyrambs sounded more like dramatic productions than ever before, with the sort of call-and-response dialogue that was common between actors and choruses in tragedy.[110] Crexus took this trend even farther, adding spoken dramatic verse in the style of Archilochus to his dithyrambs.[111]

The resulting mash-ups of traditional genres concocted by the New Musicians were much more "loose" than the creations of their predecessors. They would often flow freely between different modes and rhythms, recalling nome in one moment and tragedy in the next. When they performed these pieces, New Musicians became showmen in a way instrumentalists had never been before, adding physical movements into their repertoire. Dancing, overacting and rhythmic gyrations of the body all became common elements of musical performance by the New Musicians, perfectly complementing the loose feel of the music. A fragment of Theophrastus names Andron of Catane and Kleolas of

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[109] Aristotle, Rhetoric 3.9.5

[110] Csapo 214-5

[111] Ps. Plut. Mus. 28

Thebes as the originators of this style,[112] and other pipers popularized it. Pronomus, for example, captivated his audience with his dancing and facial expressions,[113] while Timotheus imitated the characters of his works, including monsters, storms, and the screams of a woman in labor.[114]

These changes were all revolutionary. By the time Timotheus was composing his works, music looked and sounded completely different than it had even thirty years beforehand. New Music was exciting, innovative and entertaining, delighting the audiences of ancient Greece. One thing it was not, however, was conservative. In fact, many of the common elements of New Music flew in the face of the traditional rules of music. The aristocracy watched these changes happen and were aghast; however it was their previous investments in the festivals of Athens that directly led to these changes, and allowed them to become a phenomenon.

Public Demand and Elite Backlash

The growing working class of musicians of the fifth century had directly evolved into the New Music movement. As a group, these musicians had already been operating in a favorable economic environment for almost a century, where their potential employers competed over the most talented pipers and citharodes. At the end of the fifth century,

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[112] Csapo 213

[113] Paus. 9.12.6

[114] Csapo 214

they began to respond not only to the economic pressures of the choregoi and poets that often employed them, but also for the first time also to the tastes of the public consumers of music. The radical changes to music during the New Music revolution did not come out of nowhere; rather they were created “for the people”[115] and proved to be incredibly popular.

It was not only the music that caused a stir among the Greek population. Individual composers and soloists of New Music became celebrities, reaching a higher social status than most musicians had ever been able to attain,[116] putting them on par with actors and poets. One vase painting, by the aptly-named Pronomos Painter, shows a good artistic depiction of the celebrity of new musicians. The vase shows a group of famous tragic actors, and at the center sits Pronomos playing his aulos.[117] This “star system” rewarded the most innovative musicians who played directly toward the desires of their audience of regular Greek citizens attending the festival,[118] rather than their musical directors or even the judges at the festival contests they competed in.

Not everyone was enamored with these changes to musical tradition. Contemporary writers and philosophers, often of high birth, grumbled about the New Musicians in many of their works. Among the aristocracy, pieces of New Music were often dismissed

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[115] Sirski 48

[116] West 366

[117] Naples, Museo Nazionale H 3240 (Pronomos Painter)

[118] Csapo 212

as *thematikon* (“profit driven”) or *philanthropon* (“popular”), not worthy of serious elite consideration. Some even focused in on New Music in their writing, dissecting its most popular elements with a leery eye cast toward the lower classes who enjoyed it.

A scene written by the comic poet Pherecrates gives a graphic depiction of the elite attitude toward New Music. During the scene (from a lost play), some of the biggest names in New Music one after another mangle and maim Lady Music in some new and disturbing way, until she eventually submits to their new style. Among those accused are Cinesias with his “mangled verse," Phrynis with his many harmonies and “whirlwind brains," and Timotheus with his acting style and “freaks."[119] In his *Politics,* Aristotle also does not mince words about the New Musicians, calling them “vulgar people."[120] He manages to find fault with basically every single tenet of New Music in some way. The aulos, for example, was the most popular tool of New Musicians, but Aristotle says it is much too exciting compared to the lyre and other instruments “that require manual skill." He recommends that it never be taught, as its lively nature does nothing to “improve the character” of the player, and instead is less an instrument and more a fashionable accessory. Similarly vulgar are the body movements of the musicians and performing for money rather than the improvement of one’s soul.[121]

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[119] The passage is quoted in its entirety in Pseudo-Plutarch’s De Musica: Ps. Plut. Mus. 30

[120] Arist. Pol. 8.1339b

[121] Arist. Pol. 8.1341a-b

Some of the arguments against New Music by the elites of the late fifth and early-to-mid fourth centuries go beyond philosophy and are explicitly sexist in nature. Many ancient thinkers already “accepted a gendered classification of modes or genera,”[122] in which music could be either masculine or feminine. The New Musicians mixed many elements from both gendered classifications, and writers complained that the result was much more effeminate than previous styles. Aristotle even dismissed the entire notion of playing music professionally as a female one, saying “we think it not manly to perform music, except when drunk or for fun.”[123]

The level of vitriol directed at New Musicians seems rather exaggerated; after all they were still mostly foreigners and lower-class citizens, regardless of their popularity. However, it echoes the feelings many members of the upper class had toward the lower classes in general. The New Music revolution was the first time in which the culture of the elites, from the music of the Bronze Age kings all the way up to the poet-composers of Classical Athens, did not hold sway over the general public. The growing economic power of professional musicians threatened this “cultural superiority” that the aristocracy saw as a necessary force to keep the masses in check.[124] It was becoming clear that when Cleisthenes created the Athenian democracy, the power that was granted to the people was real and capable of changing the culture.

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[122] Csapo 230

[123] Arist. Pol. 8.1339b

[124] Csapo 236

Plato's works express many of these ideas of elite cultural superiority over the people. In his *Republic*, he describes the ideal society as one in which only the "best" people would know the truth, and they would exert their influence over the people by teaching them myths and stories meant to keep them in line. Unsurprisingly, New Music was wholly incompatible with this system. Plato railed against what he saw as an affront against the traditional laws of music, one which was immoral and entirely unworthy of his Republic. Much the same as Aristotle after him, Plato thought that every popular element of New Music was bad and expressed as much in his writings[125]. Perhaps most importantly, though, he described the common people who enjoyed New Music as a "theatocracy"[126]—a tyrannical majority who do not know good from bad, but pretend to. Plato is clear about this point: only the aristocracy could possibly know what good music even is. To suggest that the people could make that decision collectively is not only laughable but immoral to boot.

To these elite writers, democracy granted power to people that were incapable of wielding it, and New Music was a symptom of the problem, among many other forms of art that were beginning to foster innovation. When all was said and done, however, the aristocracy was truly fighting a losing battle against a cultural force they could not control. New Music *was* the result of a functioning democracy and one which had invested unprecedented resources into developing music, musicians and venues for them to per-

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[125] Csapo 236

[126] Plato, Laws 3.700a-701b

form. As the golden age of Athenian democracy came to close after the rise of Macedonian power in the late fourth century, the music profession was an inexorable part of society. It was created as a consequence of democratic policies, and it was there to stay as a vehicle of popular culture.

Musical and Social Changes of the Hellenistic Period

The fourth century saw an upheaval of the system of independent poleis that had come into being several hundred years beforehand. Athens remained an important player, even after its defeat in the Peloponnesian War and subsequent loss in ability to project its power. However, for the most part the international influence of individual Greek cities, both politically and culturally, had ended. Regional powers like the Aetolian and Achaean Leagues, and the Macedonian Empire, led by Philip and Alexander, took their place.[127]

While this meant that the kind of single-handed musical dominance displayed by Athens throughout the fifth century was no longer possible, the redistribution of power from cities to kingdoms also helped spread Greek culture farther and wider than ever before. All across the Mediterranean theaters were being built to satisfy a new demand for Greek music and theater.[128] It was not until the fourth century, for example, that the cities of Anatolia constructed their first theaters, and it was during this time when Lycurgus rebuilt the Athenian theater to be made of stone. In many of these new cities, new festivals

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[127] Chamoix 166

[128] Pickard-Cambridge 281

were set up to accommodate demand, and the Dionysia in particular grew in size from an Athenian event to a global one, being celebrated basically everywhere. Accompanying the global spread of Greek culture was a greater volume of overseas trade and an increased ease in travel, so the commutes of musicians of the past to Athens could be replicated between any two cities along the Mediterranean.[129]

The "globalization" of Greek culture and decline in power of cities tended to give more social power to individuals living at the time compared to their predecessors.[130] This independence became a feature of Hellenistic civic life as many private associations sprung up in cities around the Mediterranean, rivaling the power of the states they resided in. Private, or voluntary associations, defined themselves by their exclusivity, as opposed to the universality of the "involuntary" associations like militaries with compulsory service and large religious cults. They may generally be divided into three broad categories: private religious associations, philosophical schools and, the most relevant category to musicians, professional associations. Private religious groups were small domestic associations that were usually focused on one deity in particular. They often operated inside much larger groups, such as the Eleusinian or Andanian Mysteries (both large, public religious affiliations).[131] Philosophical schools, such as Plato's Academy or the Epicurean Garden, were exclusive homes for thinkers and educators to work. While both of these

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[129] Chamoix 289

[130] Chamoix 166

[131] Ascough 12

categories represent a significant step away from the state-centric life of the Classical period, professional associations caused perhaps the greatest effect on ancient life of the three, and certainly the greatest on music and musicians.

Professional associations were created for all types of artisans and laborers, including carpenters, bakers, smiths, leather-workers and others.[132] They could range from just a few members to thousands. Some of the largest and most powerful of these groups by far were associations of musicians and entertainers known as the Dionysiac *Technitai*, which will be covered in greater detail in the next chapter. Importantly for their members, these associations by and large chose to model themselves on the civic structure of the poleis where they operated. Each had its own constitution, codified laws and bureaucracy. Decisions were made by appointed administrators and regular meetings and votes of assemblies, making these associations in essence “little private republics.”[133] They were subject to the local laws, but operated entirely independently of the cities where they were based and could even be more inclusive than civic governments, offering membership to foreigners and even slaves.[134] Their members still felt allegiance to their city, but interacted with their professional association in exactly the same ways: basically, as a citizen of it.

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[132] Ascough 13

[133] Gabrielson 188-90

[134] Ascough 13

The increase in individual power was replicated in the musical sphere. Just as quickly as the New Music revolution seemed to explode into a full-blown cultural phenomenon, it appears that the art of composition lost its prominence in Greek music. Following Timotheus, there is no substantial evidence for any major musical composer in any genre.[135] This is not to imply they did not exist; as West emphasized, "new music was being composed all the time."[136] In the literary and epigraphical record however, composers seem to have been replaced in importance wholesale by performers. From the fourth century onward, actors, singers and especially instrumental musicians are subjects of countless inscriptions and monuments, while, barring a few scattered literary references, composers are hardly mentioned at all.

The other mainstay of Classical-period music, the chorus, also declined in importance throughout the Hellenistic period. The tragedian Agathon started a trend in the early fourth century of inserting an *embolion*, a sort of interchangeable choral stock song, into the interludes of his plays.[137] This move was imitated by Aristophanes, and soon it was convention that the songs sung by choruses might only be tangentially related to the plot of the play. Later in the fourth century, Menander's comedic chorus had devolved into a group of revelers that would *only* appear between acts,[138] while the rest of the play

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[135] Comotti 41, Webster 192

[136] West 372

[137] Aristotle, Poetics 1456a.26

[138] Sifakis 113-4

would, for the most part, lack any other type of music.[139] Eventually, a sharp line was drawn between choral music and non-choral music, and choral odes became an afterthought in drama.[140] Choruses also became much smaller at this time. By the third century, a typical dramatic chorus was limited to six members, while even dithyrambic choruses, which were made up of as many as fifty choristers each in Classical Athens, were whittled down to a mere 12-15.

This shift away from composers and choruses, in a way, is a consequence of the innovations of the New Musicians in the late fifth and early fourth centuries. Their introduction of a much looser musical style and highly adaptable instruments meant that strict composition was often simply not necessary. The fact that a piper or lyre player could use his instrument to improvise and switch between modes at will could also make his performance more interesting than the chorus or dramatic production he might be accompanying. The audience's new focus on instrumentalists is reflected in the victory monuments erected by winners of the musical contests. Beginning in the late fourth century, the names of the pipers and lyre-players preceded the poets, choregoi and choristers in the inscriptions on these monuments.[141] During individual performances, since musicians were being judged on the merits of their virtuosity rather than the strengths of their com-

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[139] Comotti 40

[140] Safaris 75

[141] Webster 193

positions, they often simply relied on performing the established old standards.[142] A piper might play his rendition of the *Pythikos Nomos,* while an individual *tragodos* could sing selections from Euripides, and rhapsodes would recite Homer to musical accompaniment.[143]

The most famous of these virtuosos were offered the considerable honor of performing before contemporary monarchs, encouraging and perhaps quickening the pace of Greece's cultural move toward individual performers. Philip II of Macedonia, for example, began holding impromptu "festivals" of music and dramatic readings, such as one held after the fall of Olynthos in 348.[144] His son Alexander followed his example, putting on several contests throughout his career, including one at Tyre,[145] and another that lasted for nine full days at Dion.[146] Later kings, including Antimatter and Antigonus, continued the trend well into the future.[147]

Conclusions

Social and political developments of the fourth century had driven the music profession into unexplored territory. Inevitably, the meritocracy of the new Greek musical

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[142] West 372

[143] Comotti 41

[144] Dem. de F.L. 192-3

[145] Plut. Alex. 29

[146] Diodorus Siculus, Diodori Bibliotheca Historica xvii. 16

[147] Pickard-Cambridge 280

system, in which individual instrumentalists, singers and actors were able to find work in any major city around the Greek world, and even act as personal entertainment for the Macedonian kings, allowed the very best of these performers to elevate the status of their profession. Once dismissed by the aristocratic elites as a "vulgar" group of manual laborers, by the late fourth century musicians were an internationally recognized group, both politically and culturally, for their contributions to society.

Part IV: Dionysiac Technitai: Independent Artists' Guilds as Political Entities

Introduction

Musicians of the late fourth century enjoyed an elevated social status compared to their predecessors and their skills were in incredible demand across the Greek world, however their economic power had essentially remained the same for almost two hundred years. Musicians were freelancers—they worked for whoever might offer them the best deal, be it a choregos, a city official or Alexander the Great. This system might have been enough during the first half of the fifth century, when the city of Athens dominated the market for musical talent, but was simply insufficient for the global demands of the Hellenistic festival scene. All of the power was in the hands of the states and wealthy benefactors who ran performances and competitions, and this could clearly have an adverse effect on the livelihoods of the artists they wished to employ. As late as 306 BCE, an inscription records the negotiations between an individual musician, in this case Polos, and the city of Samos, in his effort to receive fair pay and benefits for his performance.[148] Samos seems to have won that particular battle, guaranteeing Polos no fixed payment and instead limiting his wages to funds brought in at the theater itself.

Even while the freelance nature of the music profession allowed states to negotiate their reimbursement quite aggressively, it also put those states at a disadvantage who wished to organize large-scale festivals which might require tens or hundreds of performers. Another inscription, recording a Euboean law passed between 294 and 288 BCE, dis-

[148] SEG[1] 362

plays the logistical complexities of such an endeavor.[149] The law allows for the appointment of agents to scout talent for six festivals, including the Dionysia, across the four cities of Euboea: Karystos, Eretria, Chalkis and Oreos. Each festival required pipers, actors, choristers, trainers, and other behind-the-scenes personnel, and the law as written only allowed standard rates to be paid, regardless of any individual artist's musical or professional reputation, while the agents could be fined for failing to complete their duties. It is clear that securing performers was an important, and difficult job. When replicated in multiple cities around the Greek world, it made for a complex and difficult-to-navigate system, for musicians and prospective employers alike.

The appearance of organized artists guilds, known as the Dionysiac *Technitai*, seems to be a logical development from a late-fourth-century standpoint[150]. Other professional associations throughout the fourth century had proved the viability of such groups; and while the decline of musical institutions like the chorus meant that individual performers were now more important than musical groups, artists were still being hired *en masse* for the purpose of large festivals like those throughout Euboea. It was clear that a group of musicians, actors and even poets could exercise a great deal more economic power collectively than they could alone. Four resulting guilds were centered in the Pelo-

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[149] Pickard-Cambridge 306-8

[150] Secondary sources on these guilds are sparse in English. The chapter on the guilds in Pickard-Cambridge is a good place to start, but it is easier to find information on the *Technitai* by researching the festivals they competed in. To this end, Sifakis' *Studies in the History of Hellenistic Drama* is helpful, as is Aneziri's chapter in *Greek Theatre and Festivals: Documentary Studies*.

ponnese, Attica, Asia Minor and Egypt, and their legacy stretched far into the era of the Roman Empire. In the Hellenistic period especially, however, the Technitai found that the role of the musician had grown so important since the first large-scale organization of the Athenian Dionysia that they leverage their position as political power. Over the ensuing centuries, the various guilds negotiated with cities and kingdoms alike for payment and special privileges. While the power of each individual guild ebbed and waned, the domination of the Dionysiac Technitai over Hellenistic musical culture was absolute. The New Musicians had used the democratic principles of the Athenian state to innovate and please their audiences, but the Technitai were the true musical successors to Athens, in that they dictated the terms of musical performance throughout the Greek world.

Creation and Structure of the Dionysiac Technitai

The first evidence for organized guilds of Dionysiac Artists does not appear in the epigraphical record until sometime after 300 BCE, most likely following the Euboean law which required individual recruitment of artists. An inscription dated to between 300 and 280 records the Amphictyonic League (which administered Delphi) granting several privileges to a guild of artists gathering at the Isthmos and Nemea (the northeast corner of the Peloponnese, near Corinth). These special rights, as listed, were priority access to the oracle, reserved seating at games and priority in receiving justice.[151] Immediately after their creation, it seems the Technitai were wielding a special sort of institutional power,

[151] SIG 460

even over important international associations like the Delphian League. This law would also serve as a model for later associations of Dionysiac Artists in other geographical areas.

The organization of this Isthmian-Nemean chapter of Technitai was quickly followed by that of an equivalent group in Athens, who sent two envoys, Astydamas, a tragic poet and Neoptolemos, a tragic actor, before the Amphictyonic League in 279 BCE to request similar privileges.[152] The resulting decree (displayed in both Delphi and Athens) was incredibly favorable to the artists. In exchange for the artists agreeing to provide music and entertainment for religious ceremonies and celebrations, they received exemptions from military service, taxes, and legal prosecution (except in the case of unpaid debts, or non-adherence to the terms of the contract). It was an expansion of the Classical-period rights granted to performers in the Dionysia but now afforded to all members of the Dionysiac guild, year-round.

In Asia Minor, Dionysiac Technitai are not mentioned in inscriptions until between forty and fifty years later. A record of the Aetolians (also displayed in both Delphi and Athens) from between 240 and 228 refers to the decree made by the Delphian League earlier in the century, granting artists gathered in Ionia and on the Hellespont the same rights as the Isthmian-Nemean guild.[153] The Aetolian decree also makes sure to mention a guarantee of security and inviolability for the artists during travel, an important provision,

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[152] IG^2 1132

[153] SIG^3 507

given that at that point it is not clear whether or not Technitai outside of mainland Greece had organized around a central location. The city of Teos is the first place that pursued the consolidation of a formal organization of the Technitai of Ionia and the Hellespont within their borders. A decree of the Teisian Council dated to between 205 and 202 goes farther than any before it in granting privileges to the artists.[154] Among other things, the people of Teos bought the Technitai any property they wished that was worth 6000 drachmas, granted them a five-year delay before repayment, several commemorative monuments and prayers for goodwill. Though these generous offers strained the coffers of the small city, by this time the importance of the Technitai was well known, and the Teisian administrators obviously considered their settlement a good enough investment to guarantee future prosperity.[155]

Greek artists in Ptolemaic Egypt seem to have organized more or less contemporary to their Ionian counterparts, although records mentioning them from this time are sparse. One particular historical account, originally written by Kallixenos and recounted by Athenaeus, names one particular poet, Philiskos, as the leader of the Egyptian Technitai sometime during the reign of Ptolemy Philadelphus (282-246 BCE).[156] Guilds were established in Egypt without a doubt by 240, when a local chapter at Ptolemais erected

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[154] Aneziri 2003 D2

[155] Strang 253

[156] Pickard-Cambridge 287

two decrees honoring officials from the court of the Ptolemaic King.[157]

It is clear that as soon as they came into being, the Dionysiac Technitai were recognized by local governments as a potentially powerful force in the cultural sphere. The guilds themselves chose to organize in a way that would be conducive to their wielding of political power, following the model of earlier professional organizations and becoming mini-poleis of their own.[158] Each chapter met as one group, or *koinon*, to vote for policies and appoint ambassadors and other administrative positions such as secretaries and accountants. Notably, the different groups of Technitai all had slightly different organizational approaches. The head of the Athenian guild was an *epimelete* while the Ionian equivalent was an *agonothete* (reflecting the yearly contest, or *agon*, of the Teian group),[159] and the aforementioned inscriptions from the Technitiai at Ptolemais name a Priest of Dionysus as their leader.

The power-structures of the Technitai could grow quite large, to accommodate all of the artists who were members of the guilds, and they operated independently of the governments of their home cities. Often, the Technitai would undertake similar political actions to the councils they modeled themselves after. They had systems of laws for their members, often focusing on financial matters and the conduct of individual members,

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[157] Pickard-Cambridge 310

[158] Austin 215

[159] Strang 260

such as the punishments for failure to perform at a contracted event.[160] They also recorded many decrees honoring their members, contest winners, or even partner cities. One such record, from the Ionian Technitai, honors Kraton, a famous piper who had served as their agonothete and patron[161]. The long-winded dedication awards Kraton for his service to the guild by erecting a statue of him in the assembly, to be crowned every year by the agonothete. Similar decrees from the Athenian guild were erected in the name of two of their members, a tragic actor and a singer, one at the base of a statue of the poet Xencrates,[162] and another at a sanctuary of the Technitai near the Dipylon Gate.[163] The Isthmian-Nemean guild left decrees as well, although these are harder to interpret.[164]

The Political and Social Power of Guilds

After the initial agreements honoring the inviolability of the Technitai and granting them privileges in their home cities, the guilds continued to exercise political power by inserting themselves into the planning of festivals, allowing cities to bypass the complicated systems they had set in place for securing the entertainment in the past. In many instances, the Technitai even chose to set up festivals of their very own. This marked the

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[160] Strang 263-4

[161] Austin 214-6

[162] IG II^2 3211

[163] IG II^2 1320

[164] Pickard-Cambridge 286

first time that artists were truly making all of the decisions concerning the circumstances of their performance. They could use this power to mold musical culture as they wished, and also gained enough influence among Greek states to take on promotion of the events they planned. Importantly, the addition of the guilds acting as “middleman" between the cities and the artists, helped to limit liability on the artists for actions like breach of contract or failure to perform, which were formerly punishable by harsh fines.[165] Eventually, many of the high-ranking administrators of the Technitai were folded into the courts of local kings, and the influence of the guilds became an extension of monarchical power.

Three major festivals, the Delphic Soteria, Mouseia at Thespiai and Theban Dionysia provide good examples of events in which the Technitai were intimately involved in planning and executing.[166] The Soteria was at first an annual festival at Delphi organized by the Amphictyons to commemorate the Greek defeat of the Gauls in 279-8 BCE, and later was reorganized by the Aetolian League to be quadrennial and probably larger.[167] Several recorded programs for the festivals include detailed preambles listing the organizers and competitors.[168] Among the administrative officials at the festivals are Priests of Dionysus, which have come to be associated with the Isthmian-Nemean guild

[165] Sifakis 138

[166] Aneziri 2007 68

[167] Sifakis 63

[168] SEG[1] 187B, FD III[1] 478, SEG xviii 234

of Dionysiac Technitai.[169] The guild apparently paid for the first Soteria festivals as a contribution toward both the gods and the Amphictyons, but was later granted reprieve from this expense, while still retaining their important role in the planning of the event.[170] The performers the Technitai provided for the festival were very diverse, including pipers, citharodes, rhapsodes, tragic actors, comic actors, dithyrambic choruses, poets and trainers. In an uncommon move, pipers were also included as part of every dramatic company. As Sifakis points out, at this time poets had moved beyond including the chorus and other musical elements in their productions, so the roles of these pipers are unclear.[171] What is notable about this decision is that it displays the power Dionysiac guilds had over performance art at the time—they could increase the importance of music in dramatic productions by virtue of their planning the events where these productions would be showcased.

An inscription dated to 250 BCE records the deliberations between the Thespians and the Isthmian-Nemean Technitai that led to the first Thespian Mouseia.[172] This contest, held at Mount Helicon, featured pipers, citharodes and rhapsodes competing for prizes of crowns. It is clear that the Thespians had to approach the Technitai first to make their prospective festival a reality. A meeting occurred between Mnasion from Thespiai

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[169] Aneziri 2007 73

[170] Pickard-Cambridge 283

[171] Sifakis 75

[172] Roesch IThesp 156

and Aischylos from the artists, in which they agreed that the guild would provide a great deal of assistance in the promotion of the contest. The Technitai were required not only to provide a priest to oversee the contest and its religious rites but also to compose commemorative decrees, to send out *theoroi* notifying locals about the contests and, notably, to work in the capacity of a state, sending ambassadors to other Greek cities to promote their involvement. The involvement of the Technitai in the Theban Dionysia was similarly important to its promotion.[173] The Dionysiac guilds could apparently make or break the success of a Hellenistic period festival with their support, not only by their ability to provide the actual entertainers but also because they had diplomatic ties to other Greek states strong enough to use them to promote festivals throughout the year.

The decision of some Dionysiac guilds to hold their own festivals is yet another factor that contributed to their resemblance to civic governments, but it also helped them gain support from the cities they were based in. The annual *agon* (competition) of the Ionian Technitai was one of the largest of these festivals, and so it became the greatest responsibility of that guild's agonothete and was extensively covered by the group's laws.[174] In these cases, the Technitai could still use their powers in festival promotion and political influence to their advantage but were not subject to the whims of any other sponsor-state.

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[173] Aneziri 2007 71

[174] Strang 261

Despite the independence of the Technitai from the cities they operated in, monarchs sought to exercise control over their actions at various points throughout the Hellenistic period. The Isthmian-Nemean guild, for example, was apparently compelled to perform for Cleomones III of Sparta after he had conquered Megalopolis.[175] Beyond simple entertainment, however, other kings recognized the social and political influence wielded by the Technitai and moved to use it for their own purposes.

A decree from Egyptian ruler Ptolemy IV dated to 215 BCE makes a direct play to keep the Dionysiac guilds under royal control.[176] The decree requires all of the Dionysiac artists in Egypt to register in the capital Alexandria. It even goes as far as to lay out a specific time-frame for artists to abide by the law (10 days from the publishing of the decree, or 20 for those past Naukratis, in the Delta), and the registration process required them to name "[from] what persons they have received the transmission of the sacred rites for three generations back."

The Ionian Technitai were famously tied to the rule of the Attalids, who conquered Teos after the installment of the artists' guild there. The role of the agonothete was expanded at this time to also become a Priest of Dionysus in the court of the Attalid king, and had responsibilities that included the organization of an annual birthday festival for King Eumenes.[177] The dedication to Kraton by the Ionian Technitai mentioned this posi-

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[175] Plutarch, Cleomenes 12

[176] Bagnall & Derow 221

[177] Strang 280

tion, acknowledging Kraton's role as priest to the "queens and brothers of Eumenes II."[178]

Later still, after the conquests of the Romans, the Dionysiac Artists functioned under their new political leaders. The historical evidence concerning the guilds is much sparser from these periods, but still grants some insight into their existence. Some decrees, such as the early agreement between the Amphictyonic League and the Isthmian-Nemean guild, were updated accordingly to reflect the new Roman rule and keep the old privileges of the Technitai intact. New decrees made during this time were sure to honor Roman leaders, such as one from second-century-BCE Iasos, which records a new agreement between the town and the Dionysiac artists under the Romans, their "common friends and benefactors."[179]

The Technitai appeared to have existed long after the power of individual city-states had faded. Sulla and the Roman Senate confirmed the privileges of the guild of Ionia and the Hellespont, including those regarding taxation and public service, in a decree dating to approximately 80 BCE.[180] After the affirmation of their rights by the Romans, the Technitai continued to spread, and were active in Naples in 44 BCE, according to Plutarch.[181]

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[178] Austin 214-6

[179] SEG 53 1201

[180] Pickard-Cambridge 296

[181] Plutarch, Brutus 21.5

The eventual creation of the Roman Empire seemed to have consolidated the disparate guilds of artists into one greater worldwide guild under the control of the emperor. A letter from 43 CE records Claudius granting some rights to this guild, including the privilege to set up statues for his worship.[182] Even as late the second century CE, this worldwide guild was responsible for musical performances at festivals around the Roman Empire. Some of these notably resulted in political favors from Roman officials, such as the actions of imperial secretary T. Aelius Alcibiades, who granted stables to the guild in 142 CE.[183] It is clear that not only did the legacy of the guilds remain important for centuries after their creation in Hellenistic-period Greece, but that they were able to adapt to changing political conditions throughout their existence.

Conclusions

The Dionysiac Technitai came into existence as a necessary advancement away from the freelance model of artists before them in a more globalized world. However, they extended their cultural reach beyond easier bargaining power for their members by operating essentially as political entities wholly separate from the states they resided in. It is clear that musical performance, before it reached the Hellenistic period population, went first through the Technitai. Their social and political influence was greater than that of any group of musicians before them, and this was a recognized fact at all levels of so-

[182] BGU 1074

[183] Pickard-Cambridge 298-9

ciety—from ordinary citizens up through monarchs.

Conclusions

If one were to read all of the ancient historians and take their words at face value, it would be only natural to assume that the history of the music profession in Ancient Greece is one primarily driven by "great men." Indeed, without the likes of Homer, Terpander, Olympus, Arion, Pindar, Timotheus and countless others, not only may the history of music in Greece have changed, but the development of music in general would be profoundly altered. Their contributions to their art were essential, and just as often new, exciting, and radically innovative. As is often the case, however, viewing history through the actions of any isolated individual, no matter how important, offers an incomplete perspective. These musicians lived, wrote and performed in unique historical contexts. The conditions and idiosyncrasies of their respective societies interacted with their profession and their art, influencing both. These ties are strong; as Ancient Greek society changed, so did the Ancient Greek music profession. By piecing these two elements together throughout the historical timeline, the narrative that emerges paints the music profession in a new light. The "great men" that delighted their audiences with new musical inventions did not do so entirely of their own volition. They were given the *opportunity* to innovate, or to play before a certain audience, or to be remembered for their work. Without his having been at the right place at the right time, the impact of Arion's first tragedies would not have been felt outside of Corinth. Sakadas' *Pythikos Nomos* would not have

become a standard of the aulos. The New Musicians would not have found a receptive audience in the Athenian masses. The Dionysiac Technitai would not have elevated the music profession to such heights of cultural and political power.

Answering the “what-ifs” of history is, of course, a thoroughly unscientific endeavor. If Athens had stayed at the height of its fifth-century power into the third century, for example, would the guilds of Dionysiac Artists have been created in the first place? The answer is unknowable. What is clear, however, is the facts of history do tell a story of their own. The traveling lyric poets that won the first competitions at the Pythian Festival and the Carneia in the sixth century operated entirely differently than the musical guild members accompanying tragic performances some four centuries later. They played different music and often different instruments, they were paid differently, and they inhabited different rungs on the societal ladder. However, each was entirely appropriate in the context of their time. In the era of Terpander, lyric poetry was a young art, festivals were few and far between, and the polis did not invest heavily in subsidizing the arts. After the creation of the Dionysiac Artists, musicians could play many different genres at any number of performances and competitions, and be well compensated for their work. The Archaic musician was subject to the demands of aristocrats, while the Hellenistic musician used the power of private organizations to negotiate directly with civic governments. These changes were not strictly musical—they involved every part of Ancient Greek society: politics, economics, even philosophy.

Examining how the music profession and society interact helps uncover the real effects of societal change throughout Ancient Greek history. It shows how Athenian democracy changed not only politics, but culture, and how organized groups of musicians could enjoy more power than even some city-states. It offers a new perspective on the social history of music, and perhaps a more complete view of the Ancient Greek world in which music played such a vital and pervasive role.

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