6

MAPPING LITERARY STYLES IN ARISTOPHANES' *FROGS*

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Early on in the action of Aristophanes' *Frogs*, when Dionysus asks Heracles to show him the way to Hades, he envisions the journey as one that follows a particular path through literal spaces (cf. ὁδούς, 113, 117). Heracles, in contrast, treats the path to Hades as a metaphor, and offers Dionysus a number of ways to commit suicide. Dionysus plays along, rejecting various modes as physically uncomfortable and confirming that he needs a quick route, not being much of a walker (ὡς ὄντος γε μὴ βαδιστικοῦ, 128; cf. 134). Lazy critic though he is, he finally requests the path that Heracles himself took, and the hero tells the god of drama in Athens precisely how to go in "real" (i.e., mimetic) space, though he warns him that it is a "massive passage" (ὁ πλοῦς πολύς, 136).[1]

Dionysus must, Heracles says, take the road (cf. 135) that goes through a big and bottomless marsh (λίμνην μεγάλην. . .ἄβυσσον) (137–38), a path that the Frog chorus that greets him deems the precinct of "Dionysus in the Marshes" (Διόνυσον. . .ἐν λίμναισιν, 216–17). He successfully crosses the *limnai*, accompanied by the Frogs' jocular reference to the "hangover crowd"

[1] By "mimetic" I mean space as it is demarcated onstage, which is "real" or actual (i.e., not metaphorical) within the fictional frame. Stanford *ad loc.* captures the onomatopoeic humor of the phrase ὁ πλοῦς πολύς as "a whale of a sail."

invading the precinct during the Anthesteria celebration (cf. ὁ κραιπαλόκωμος/ τοῖς ἱεροῖσι Χύτροις χω-/ ρεῖ κατ' ἐμὸν τέμενος λαῶν ὄχλος, 218–19). After this crossing, he arrives at flowering meadows for processional dances by new choruses of male and female celebrants that appear to be engaging in Mysteries "play" (παίζειν, 376, 392, 443, 452). Finally, he knocks on the door of "Hades," which eventually opens out onto the famous contest between the tragic poets Euripides and Aeschylus.

In *Frogs*, as elsewhere in Attic comedy, the multilayered semiotics of theatrical space and situation complicates the revelation of where one is, as well as with whom and to what end. On the dramatic stage quite generally any referential or deictic gesture points up a here and now that is first and foremost fictional, mimetic of some other time and place, and secondarily resonant with the actual space of the theater – say, on the south slope of the Acropolis, in the ritual swing of the springtime.[2] As Nick Lowe has explored, comic space, particularly in the hands of Aristophanes, often shapes a wild ride, from earth to the upper air, up and down the Acropolis, in and out of the city.[3] When, for instance, at the beginning of Aristophanes' *Birds*, Euelpides and Peisetaerus leave the city to seek out an avian Elsewhere, they trace within the confines of the Theater of Dionysus a non-urban, non-Athenian setting that is demarcated, at least initially, by thickets and birdsong. These two Athenians explicitly indicate their civic identities by means of this search for a not-Athens, a quiet space apart from the busy (and busybody) work of the city (*Av.* 40–45). Later in the play they will build their city in midair, having identified the vault of the sky (*polos*) as the proper place for their *polis* (179–84).

Such orchestrations of place and space engage a mapping of schemes, within topographies that are usually quite well known, that are imbued with intellectual and political

[2] On theatrical referencing and semiotics, see Ubersfeld 1977; Elam 1980; Issacharoff 1989. See also Dougherty (Chapter 4 in this volume) for the ways in which "infrastructure" metaphors in tragedy and historical narratives reinforce Athenian civic identity.

[3] Lowe 2006.

significance, and that constitute a unique intermingling of the aesthetic, the ethical, and the spatial. As with Chris Eckerman's exploration of Pindar's poetics of place and Tim Rood's demonstration of Xenophon's mastery of terrain (Chapters 1 and 2 in this volume), my discussion treats both landscapes and "landscapes." That is, I consider both the concrete stamp of culture on actual spaces and their shaping within dramatic literature and by onstage semiotics as resonant, value-laden settings. Though primarily fictional and only secondarily directly referential, these settings are not abstract spaces in any true sense; rather, they are deeply rooted in the ground of civic practices, organized and assigned value in relation to recognizable transactions in familiar places.

While *Birds* charts a path out of the city that dramatizes a political and intellectual terrain of fantastical proportions, *Frogs* traces the route to literary judgment as passing through a landscape that is grounded in local topographies and rituals of aesthetic and religious import. It thereby serves a unique function in explorations of space and place in Greek drama. At the outset of *Frogs*, the audience is offered the inside joke of "paths" on the comic stage – namely, that there are paths and "paths," including those that since Homer indicate a poetic "way" or style. In addition, within the semiotics of the dramatic stage, there is the path through mimetic space, which maps the "Athenian landscape" within the Theater of Dionysus; there are also the actual ritual spaces that the dramatic mimesis appears to reference, which accrete symbolic significance through this mapping. And then, again, there are paths that signal "ways" in some more inclusive sense – in this play especially those that intertwine the aesthetic, religious, and civic realms.[4]

[4] Raymond Williams 1973, in his famous discussion of English pastoral poetry, emphasizes repeatedly the imbeddedness of the literary discourse in concrete social and economic relations to the fields, hills, roads, and towns that shape a community's everyday life. See also Buxton 1994; Schama 1995; and Cosgrove and Daniels (1988) 2002 on the imprint of culture on topography.

The action of the play first conflates modes of leave-taking ("getting to Hades") with a literal path from Heracles' house, across a marsh, and into the countryside. Scholars have usually highlighted the ritual significance of the play's changing spaces, and many regard its signposts as pointing importantly to features central to the Eleusinian Mysteries.[5] My aim in this discussion is not to dispute such connections, as these may well be vital to understanding the ritual shaping of Dionysus' journey to the Underworld. But *Frogs* is the only extant Attic comedy that features Athenian rituals to this extent, which in itself encourages questions about how the cultic references relate both to the localities mimed onstage and to the play's primary focus, literary judgment. I thus pursue here in tandem the literary, ritual, and topographical signposts that together shape the path that Aristophanes charts from city to countryside. Focusing on the first half of the play, I look to the stylistic conventions and rituals that were practiced locally in dramatic and fertility celebrations, some of which appear to have taken place in riverside spaces outside the city walls, such as along the Cephisus and the Ilissos. The latter becomes the more significant space for the literary critical tradition, and it cannot be happenstance that the topographical references in *Frogs* indicate that Aristophanes associates a burgeoning literary critical discourse with this riverside setting. In fact, his dramatization of this stylistic landscape was quite influential, since Plato and later literary critics situate their own stylistic discussions in relation to this same terrain.[6]

[5] Segal's 1961 important article, despite its focus on Eleusis, does emphasize that Aristophanes also intertwines local rituals such as the Anthesteria and Lesser Dionysia; cf. Moorton 1989; Bowie 1993; Lada-Richards 1999; Edmonds 2004. As earlier scholars such as Tierney 1934 have emphasized, wartime impediments to the Eleusinian procession make it unlikely that Aristophanes would directly lampoon this prominent ritual, the loss of which must have been sharply felt by his Athenian audience. Note as well that the play never directly references Eleusis or the Eleusinian Mysteries.

[6] Most evident in Plato's *Phaedrus*, Cicero's *De Oratore*, and Dionysius of Halicarnassus' *On the Style of Demosthenes*. Cf. Gilhuly's discussion of how places get reputations (Chapter 5 in this volume).

Why these discursive references should be located here has to do with a clustering effect in which ritual practices, topographical features, and poetic traditions converge to shape a fitting path for the comic enactment of literary judgment. As I show, along this route from city to (quasi-) countryside, choral songs that invoke local rituals separate out stylistically one from another, and these ritually inflected stylistic strands illuminate the significance of different spots on the way, prefiguring later distinctions between the tragic poets in relation to the urban-rural divide, to old and new modes, and to gender allegiances.

In the sections that follow, I first locate Aristophanes' scheme within the larger literary critical tradition that makes stylistic meaning out of rural and quasi-rural landscapes. Next, focusing in on *Frogs*, I highlight the features along the path out of the city that shape differences between choral modes and the poets' styles. I then consider the intersection of ritual practices and topographical details from the prospect of the Theater of Dionysus, the mimetic spaces of which resonate with the actual terrain that lies below the south slope of the Acropolis. Finally, I consider a specific set of aesthetic coordinates that grounds Aristophanes' intervention in this literary critical tradition: the styles that rivers can shape.

THE LITERARY CRITICAL LANDSCAPE

The literary critical journey that Aristophanes traces in *Frogs* takes its most prominent cue from poetic and ritual traditions that situate inspiration and fertile proliferation outside of the city walls, down along a valley stream or up a mountainside.[7]

[7] See, e.g., Harriott 1969; Connor 1988. Cf. Rosenmeyer 1969: 267–70 on the importance of the pastoral setting to ancient poetics. Discrete studies also treat (e.g.) path/road metaphors (Becker 1937; Lefkowitz 1963), rivers and springs in Alexandrian and Augustan poetry (Zetzel 1983), Hesiod's imagery (e.g., Pucci 1977), metaphors in Pindar (Steiner 1986), metaphors in Callimachus (Asper 1997), river imagery in Roman literature (Jones 2005), Greek landscapes (Snell 1955: chapter 16; Parry 1957; Elliger 1975), and the topos of the *locus amoenus* (Curtius 1953: chapter 10; Schönbeck 1962; Hass 1998). Again, cf. Eckerman (Chapter 1 in this volume) on Pindar's landscapes.

In ancient poetic and critical discourses more generally, metaphors that indicate distinctions among styles of writing often trace their lineaments by means of elements in rural settings.[8] Not only paths and roads, but also rivers, springs, and meadows in flower mark out stylistic differences in ancient literary usage. The shapes and spaces sketched in this way sometimes contrast rural and urban settings; and they are usually inhabited by those who can harvest, harness, or properly utilize the stylistic "resources," whether these are the lovely flowers of a meadowland or garden, the flowing waters of a river or mountain spring, or the life-sustaining wheat of a farmer's field.[9] Further, many of these formulations invoke what we might call a "landscape with figures" model: they delineate quasi-pastoral or rural spaces whose significant features generate metaphors (i.e., "figures") that serve inhabitants (i.e., "figures") who respond to, make pointed use of, and/or in some way have affinities with these features.[10]

Thus if, for instance, Pindar's poet culls flowers from the Graces' garden as an indication of his own metaphorical style (*O.* 9.28–29), so do the artistry and distinctive styles of Euripides and Aeschylus in *Frogs* correlate to various spaces along the path out of the city. Further, *Frogs* fashions a discriminating route for Dionysus by means of one of the oldest and most prominent metaphors in ancient literary conception – one

[8] Scholars have argued about "pastoral" versus "bucolic" as generic labels (e.g., Halperin 1983; more recently Fantuzzi 2006), but my focus more generally (Worman forthcoming) encompasses an inclusive discursive space, which runs from epic to prose and from mountain springs to city limits. Thus gardens (which may be essentially suburban), shepherds' paths (which at least mark human husbandry), and farmers' fields (which are cultivated spaces), though they may not all signify in the same ways, would all fall under this general interpretive distinction of non-urban space that is conceived of in tradition as natural/rural but is also marked by human use.

[9] See, e.g., Hes. *Th.* 1–4, 29–31, Sapph. fr. 2.5–7, Pi. *P.* 6.1–4, Pl. *Phdr.* 237c4–238d3, Cic. *Orat.* 228–29, DH *Dem.* 32.10–15.

[10] See further in Worman forthcoming.

that seems near dead in certain contexts, only to become fully invigorated in others. This path (ὁδός, οἶμος, κέλευθος) of words, a usage extending from Homeric epic to Roman rhetoric, is usually deployed as a means of indicating aesthetic and/or moral direction.[11] The Homeric poet refers to the epic song as a "path" (οἴμης, *Od.* 8.74; cf. 481, 22.347); in the *Homeric Hymn to Hermes* Apollo similarly calls the poetry that the Muses inspire "the shining path of song" (ἀγλαὸς οἶμος ἀοιδῆς, 451).[12] Hesiod, in some contrast, invokes the path of virtue that leads straight to justice (ὁδὸς ἑτέρηφι παρελθεῖν κρείσσων ἐς τὰ δίκαια, *WD* 216–17); later he warns that it is long, steep, and rough at the beginning (μακρὸς δὲ καὶ ὄρθιος οἶμος ἐς αὐτὴν/ καὶ τρηχύς τὸ πρῶτον, 291–92). This kind of ethical landscaping initiates an adjacent tradition of tropes that mark the intersection of aesthetic and morally instructive tracks. Both the "path of song" image and that of the "virtuous path" are familiar from Pindar (e.g., τιμῶντες ἀρετάς/ ἐς φανερὰν ὁδὸν ἔρχονται, *Ol.* 6.72–73; cf. *Pyth.* 3.103, *Nem.* 7.51).[13] That is, path images tend to imply a complex and varying conjunction of superior aesthetics (i.e., the path of the poet's song, cf. ἐπίκουρον εὑρῶν ὁδὸν λόγων, *Ol.* 1.11) and moral direction.

In Aristophanes' comedies, the use of such idioms as the "path of words" (ὁδὸς λόγων) may parallel a sense of place (on stage, in life).[14] Markus Asper has argued that Aristophanes'

[11] See Asper 1997: 23–26 for arguments and bibliography.

[12] Although scholars have disagreed as to whether in Homeric epos these terms indicate a very strongly envisioned "way" for a particular poetic mode or story, the vocabulary of beginnings and movement certainly points in this direction. See Becker 1937: 5 vs. Snell 1955: 320–32 and Harriott 1969: 65; also Asper's discussion (1997: 23–26). Snell is largely interested in the *Scheiderwege* as an aporetic image (following Panofsky 1930).

[13] This is the merest sketch, of course; for details see esp. Becker 1937: 50–100, who demonstrates the breadth and complexity of the Pindaric imagery; also Steiner 1986: 76–86; Asper 1997: 39–46; and Harriott 1969: 63, who compares Bacchyl. 5.176–78, 10.51–52, 19.1–8.

[14] This is a dominant image in *Birds*, where the action begins with a pondering over which path will lead to a better polity underpinned by a "finer" ethical sense.

use of the *Wegmetapher* most often takes aim at the "new music," that is, the dithyrambic poets who indulge in overly modulated, elaborate cadences.[15] Such decadent aesthetics render the poetry like ants' tracks: minutely articulated and thus difficult to discern, as Euripides' In-law complains of Agathon's effeminate trilling in *Thesmophoriazusae* (μύρμηκος ἀτραπούς, Ar. *Thesm.* 100; cf. frs. 31 and 155 PCG).[16] Asper's arguments encourage us to recognize that Dionysus' very search for the path to Hades may be itself born of a decadent desire for the newfangled styles, embodied in *Frogs* especially by Euripides. That said, other Aristophanic characters make mocking reference to the "path of argument/song" (*Eq.* 1015, *Pax* 733, *Av.* 1374), and the dramatic action often foregrounds as well "roads/ways" (ὁδοί) as a means of "getting somewhere" (e.g., in argument, in plotting, in utopian endeavors).[17]

In *Frogs*, variants of ὁδός roughly match occurrences in other plays, but here the "path" emphasized repeatedly at the outset of the play ultimately marks out a "way" of literary judgment.[18] While other plays frequently engage in parodic critique of poets and their poetry (esp. Euripides in *Acharnians*, *Clouds*, *Thesmophoriazusae*), only *Frogs* explicitly proceeds toward and then enacts a contest between dramatic poets that the chorus enjoins in terms that reiterate the action: "Step onto the contested path!" (ἔπιτε δαΐαν ὁδόν, 897). This may in fact be the sole extant moment in Attic comedy where the path of choice is clearly that of literary critique rather than poetic mode, even as it wryly echoes earlier poets' intersections of style and moral

[15] Asper 1997: 39–46.

[16] But cf. *Clouds* 75–76, where the ὁδοῦ ἀτραπόν denotes merely a clever plan.

[17] This is especially prevalent in *Knights* (demagogic plotting, 72, 253, 291, 621), and *Birds* (utopian planning, 4–29 *passim*, 994, 1004). Streets (ὁδοί) are also public stages, where citizens disport themselves in various embarrassing or manly postures (e.g., swaggering, clowning: *Knights* 348; *Clouds* 362, 964; *Wasps* 542).

[18] N.b. Aristophanes does not appear to use other terms from archaic poetry for paths and roads (e.g., *keleuthos* appears only once: *Thesm.* 1100).

compass. The irony reverberates, since the play targets poetic judgment itself as a fraught and debased practice, placing the contest alongside other rituals related to fertility that appear to represent a turn toward older sensibilities and to offer a rural corrective.

Thus the route out of the city also charts an implicit politics that at one level sets an earlier, more rustic, and conservative perspective on civic virtues off against a latter-day, urbane, and dissolute one.[19] In this scheme the city, to put it in reductive but clarifying terms, is a corrupting space of dissembling, overly clever argument, while the country remains a reminder and source of simpler, more manly pursuits (e.g., farming, fighting). Such contrasts initially appear to mock the polished Euripides in contrast to the rugged old Aeschylus, but those that frame the action of *Frogs* extend beyond the familiar one between city and country. Indeed, these contrasts ultimately give way to innovations on the older poetic tendency mentioned above, which associates styles of composing and writing and those who might actively judge them with significant rural settings. The hybrid figure that emerges in the course of *Frogs*, the poet-critic who may lay claim to a novel mode, accretes stylistic features from various stops along the way and thereby transcends the urban-rural divide.

Frogs is not alone among Aristophanes' plays in offering up the journey out of the city as a necessary distancing that reveals contrasts among city players and that thus would give the traveler (were he suitably aware) his ethical and aesthetic bearings. But what of Dionysus? If pastoral spaces traditionally afford inspiration and increased artistic authority, the countryside does not seem to serve him very well, because he remains a buffoonish figure throughout the play.[20] As the god

[19] See, e.g., McGlew 2002.

[20] As both Stanford and Dover have noted: Stanford 1983: xxix–xxx; Dover 1993a: 39, 42–43. This is against those who see some growth in Dionysus, as a result of ritual (esp. Segal 1961: 209–11) or more general to see character development (e.g., Silk 2000). See also Bowie 1993: 228–53; Lada-Richards 1999; and Edmonds' 2004: 113–17 correctives. Further, this "initiation of Dionysus," while it may map

of both dramatic poetry and fertility and thus a central figure in poetic and life-cycle rituals (including the Lenaea, the Anthesteria, and the local Mysteries), Dionysus should be a fitting pivot between these realms and thus singularly likely to make much of his rustic surroundings. Similarly, the rituals that structure so much of his passage out into the country and down to Hades should underscore the importance of the pastoral or rustic settings for the poetic contests. In aesthetic terms, Dionysus is the art's internal measure, inhabiting and in some ways coincident with the rural spaces shaped by the play. He is also the one on the move, literally and figuratively; and so he should be able to realize the long view needed for effective critical judgment. And yet, the play instead offers up a loosely interconnected clutch of comic adventures that do little to inform the god's aesthetic understanding, and neither of the tragic poets survives the contest unscathed. Because comedy thrives on repeatedly upending established attitudes, and because comic protagonists are so mischievous, no clear path of judgment emerges. Dionysus chooses Aeschylus for a silly reason but one central to comedy, as the poet's profundity is reduced to a "weight of words," while the play's own critical perspective has more in common with Euripidean refinements. The god of tragedy, though playfully established as judge and tastemaker from the outset of the action, makes a poor master of critical idioms; in the end it seems to be comic enactment itself that achieves the critique.

THE MARSH AND THE MEADOWLAND

If literary critical discourse does originate at least in part in Hesiodic and Pindaric judgments that map the path of words and identify sites of inspiration as rural, Aristophanes' foregrounding of pastoral metonymies would be quite traditional

stages of the Mysteries on a "rites of passage" model, does not account very well for how the journey and the contest fit together. See Moorton 1989 for an attempt to read the *Frogs* as a drama that illustrates van Gennep's ([1909] 1981) stages of initiation.

in a general sense. His turn on the critical topography, on the other hand, is extremely subtle and innovative, especially in the vocabulary that it foregrounds to differentiate stylistic categories. The scene with which I began is a good example of the ritual shading he gives the route, while the one that it follows on sets up some novel stylistic parameters. The play opens with an en route critique of typical comedies as full of clichéd physical humor, bandied as Dionysus and Xanthias are approaching Heracles' house (βαδίζω, 23); but when Dionysus reveals his desire (πόθος, 53) for Euripides, the comic and critical target shifts to tragedy. This sparks some aesthetic elbowing, in which Heracles scoffs at Dionysus' trashy tastes when the god of dramatic poetry explains with the peevishness of a frustrated reader (cf. ἀναγιγνώσκοντί μοι/ τὴν Ανδρομέδαν, 52–54) his aim to bring Euripides back. Heracles questions why Dionysus is not satisfied with poets who are still alive, and Dionysus responds with a set of significant distinctions that illuminate his preferences, predominant among which are that Euripides is roguishly up for anything (πανοῦργος, 80) and fertile (γόνιμος, 96).[21] While both Heracles and Dionysus associate Euripides with chatter and wordiness (cf. λαλίστερα, 91; στωμύλματα, 92, cf. 930ff.) – labels that Aristophanes uses to lampoon styles he finds effeminized and decadent – Dionysus regards this feature as evidence of stylistic boldness.[22] Without Euripides around, he says, there is no one who "might bark out a noble phrase" (ῥῆμα γενναῖον λάκοι, 97). For Dionysus this is a gloss on *gonimos*, as is his designation "whoever utters this sort of daring thing" (ὅστις φθέγεται/ τοιουτονί

[21] I.e., like a comic protagonist, perhaps. On the γόνιμος ποιητής, see Woodbury 1988: 181–82, who argues that this new coinage denotes not merely creativity but especially novelty; also Padilla 1992: 365–67. On *panourgos* sophistic types, see Worman 1999; at *Ran.* 1015 Aeschylus associates "marketplace wranglers" (ἀγοραίους).

[22] This vocabulary is typically used to categorize Euripides and his sort (e.g., Socrates, *Frogs* 1492; cf. 826–27, 841, 917, 943, 954, 1071). See O'Sullivan 1992: 131–33; Worman 2008: 96–110. Lossau 1987: 239–41 emphasizes the contrast as one of "light" vs. "heavy" (*leptos* vs. *barus*).

τι παρακινδυνευμένον, 98–99), which he follows with some choice figures of speech.[23] Heracles mocks these, calling them "tricks" (κόβαλα, 104) and "utterly base" (παμπόνηρα, 106), but Dionysus is adamant in his support.

Thus before Heracles tells Dionysus where to go, he effectively tells him where to get off, opposing his decadent taste for Euripides with a tough guy's commitment to more traditional styles. But countering this staunch rejection is the enthusiast's love of novelty: Dionysus asserts a newfangled profile for his favorite poet, which combines boldness, invention, and a "fertile" mode. As careful readers of these terms have noticed, this combination is a hybrid and unusual one; for instance, a phrase like ῥῆμα γενναῖον sounds more suited to the elder poet Aeschylus' elevated modes, just as a label like *gonimos* would seem a fitting label for his fulsome style.[24] But Aristophanes appears to be redefining terms, and thus offering the possibility of a new type of daring, fertile style, one that he and Euripides share.[25] This mini-debate, the first of the literary critical contests in the play, anticipates important distinctions not only in the agon in Hades but also in Dionysus' iambic competition with the Frogs and sing-along with the Initiates. As a debate on the fly, en route to other bucolic and Mysteries-infused settings, it serves to initiate the action as literary critical and thereby shape the comic plot as essentially forged by such judgments.[26]

Insofar as it makes certain key stylistic claims, the debate also initiates questions as to where the fertile and roguish

[23] This notion of a style being daring or dangerous is influential; cf. Arist. *Rhet.* 1405b5–11; Demetr. *De eloc.* 80; DH *Dem.* 2.28–31; Ps.-Long. 32.3.

[24] See, e.g., Lossau 1987; Lada-Richards 1999: 242–47.

[25] See further below and in the final section. Woodbury 1988 recognizes the redefinition, but draws different conclusions from it.

[26] The pursuit of a poet, particularly Euripides, for help with the plot is a very typical Aristophanic ploy; cf. Dicaeopolis' pursuit of Euripides (or rather his props) in *Acharnians*, Trygaeus' appropriation of a Euripidean plot at the opening of *Peace*, and Euripides' own recourse to Agathon in *Thesmophoriazusae*.

Euripides belongs in this passage out of the city, past the Frog chorus' suburban pastorale, and through the flowering meadows of the Initiates, singing their anthems. And what about old Aeschylus, for whom Dionysus has not a thought? Or to put it another way, what does the marshy river setting have to offer stylistically, as opposed to the meadowland in flower?

Euripides and the Marshes

When Dionysus crosses the marsh, the Frog chorus parades its pastoral, Ur-poetic status. It is beloved of the Muses and fosters the reeds that make the instruments of Pan and Apollo:

> Ἐμὲ γὰρ ἔστερξαν εὔλυροί τε Μοῦσαι
> καὶ κεροβάτας Πάν, ὁ καλαμόφθογγα παίζων·
> προσεπιτέρπεται δ' ὁ φορμικτὰς Ἀπόλλων,
> ἕνεκα δόνακος, ὃν ὑπολύριον
> ἔνυδρον ἐν λίμναις τρέφω.
>
> For the well-lyred Muses love me
> and horn-footed Pan, the player on the reed;
> And Apollo with his phorminx delights still more,
> for the sake of the reed, which watery
> lyre-bridge I nourish in the marshes. (229–34)

The setting of the chorus' song and the content of its claims are both very wet and patently bucolic. The "watery lyre bridge" (ὑπολύριον/ ἔνυδρον, 233), which is echoed in the second strophe by the "watery dance" in the swampy depths (ἔνυδρον ἐν βυθῷ χορείαν, 247), frames this style as one among the range suggested by rivers and streams. This one is light, bubbly, and playful rather than full flowing – that is, it is in keeping with both Aristophanic and Euripidean styles.[27] And yet it is also a "country" mode: the reeds go to make the shepherd's pipes of the woodland Pan and Apollo's phorminx, the instrument

[27] See Biles 2002; Ruffell 2002.

that Hermes made from a tortoise that he found outside the door of his mountain home (cf. δόνακας καλάμοιο, *HHerm.* 47; φόρμιγγα, 64). What could this have to do with Euripides, who is represented later in *Frogs* as quintessentially urban? We might notice first that the song that the Frogs sing is metrically reminiscent of Euripides' preference for simple iambs and trochees, with a high degree of resolution and some "lekythia" endings.[28] Second, both of the Frogs' strophes contain echoes of Euripidean choral odes, and one depicts the Frogs' style as overly modulated like that of Euripides and other purveyors of the "new music."[29]

I want to consider this cluster of effects in more detail. It is an odd mix, with its little sing-song endings for which Aeschylus will later tease Euripides, as finishing off his iambs with domestic ditties: "a little sack, little bottle, little fleece" (καὶ κῳδάριον καὶ ληκύθιον καὶ θυλάκιον/ ἐν τοῖς ἰαμβείοισιν, 1203–04). Some scholars have seen a sexual joke here, one more suggestion, in this play full of them, that Euripides' style is lacking in manly force.[30] But this meter also shapes a marshy poetics that one might be inclined to call *gonimos*, because its tutelary deities are the riverside Muses,[31] a rustic Apollo, and the horned Pan, playing on his reed pipes.

The figures that consolidate the Frogs' claim to poetic authority feature also in some Euripidean choral odes that associate a sparkling pastoral style with young women's rites of passage. This locating of a particular song and dance type is especially vibrant in odes from Euripides' *Ion* (492–505) and *Iphigenia in*

[28] See Parker 1997: 465–66.

[29] Despite Segal 1961: 22, who thinks that the compounds suggest an affinity with Aeschylus. Cf. Radermacher 1954: 171–73.

[30] So Dover *ad loc.*, citing ληκᾶν; cf. O'Sullivan 1992: 110, 150 on the complications of the imagery (*lekythos* sound may be deep and resonant elsewhere, e.g., Call. fr. 215 Pf.), but this does not at all fit the scene, despite O'Sullivan's careful relating of it to the "bombast" of tragedy (110).

[31] Pausanias deems the Muses celebrated by the river "daughters of Ilissos"; see further below in the third section.

Tauris (1125–31) that describe ritual spaces on slopes of the Acropolis. The *Ion* offers the fullest scene:

> ὦ Πανὸς θακήματα καὶ
> παραυλίζουσα πέτρα
> μυχώδεσι Μακραῖς,
> ἵνα χορεύς στείβουσι ποδοῖν
> Ἀγλαύρου κόραι τρίγονοι
> στάδια χλοερὰ πρὸ Παλλάδος
> ναῶν συρίγγων
> ὑπ' αἰόλας ἰαχᾶς
> {ὕμνων} ὅτ' ἀναλίοις
> συρίζεις, ὦ Πάν,
> τοῖσι σοῖς ἐν ἄντροις,
> ἵνα τεκοῦσά τις
> παρθένος μελέα βρέφος
> Φοίβωι....
>
> O seats of Pan and the rock
> abutting the cave-pierced Long Cliffs
> where the three daughters of Aglauros
> trod the dances with their feet
> in the green courses before the temple
> of Athena, when you, O Pan,
> with the dazzling shouts
> of the syrinxes' [hymns]
> pipe in your caves,
> where a certain maiden
> unhappily bore
> an infant to Apollo.... (492–505)

Here we have Pan piping, the daughters of Aglauros dancing and singing on green courses (στάδια χλοερά), and caves associated with both Pan and Apollo. The topography described is that of the area below the Erechtheion on the north slope, where there were caves dedicated to Pan and Apollo and a sanctuary of Aglauros (cf. *Ion* 936–38), as well as of Aphrodite.[32]

[32] Wycherley 1978: 176–79. On the significance of the Acropolis and Aphrodite, see further below in section 3. Cf. E. *Hel.* 179–90, where Pan's rape of a nymph by the waterfall serves as an analogy for Helen's snatching by Hermes. The *Bacchae*, the play with which many scholars think *Frogs* is intricately engaged, also contains choral imagery tracing outside erotic spaces, especially 403–16, which invokes Aphrodite, the Erotes, the Charites, and Pothos.

Compare also a strophe from *Iphigenia in Tauris*, which reiterates the central theme and players:

> συρίζων θ' ὁ κηρόδετος
> Πανὸς οὐρείου κάλαμος
> κώπαις ἐπιθωύξει,
> ὁ Φοῖβός θ' ὁ μάντις ἔχων
> κέλαδον ἑπτατόνου λύρας
> ἀείδων ἄξει λιπαρὰν
> εὖ σ' Ἀθηναίων ἐπὶ γᾶν.
>
> Piping, the wax-bound reed
> of the mountain Pan
> will shout a beat for the oars,
> and Apollo the seer, holding
> the din of the seven-toned lyre,
> singing will lead you [Iphigenia] happily
> to the shining land of the Athenians. (1125–31)

Again the featured figure is the woodland, piping Pan (with his wax-bound reed) and now Apollo enters more fully into the song with his echoing seven-toned lyre; both are deployed as the Athenian welcoming committee – as facilitating, like the Frogs, passage to and from Athens. Such figures conventionally function as metonyms for older rustic modes that have been domesticated (i.e., brought inside the city) for Athenian ritual use.[33] While the actual terrain is not the same, both the Euripidean odes and the Frogs' song herald these rural deities as crucial to a vibrant transitional mode. The Frogs themselves

[33] Cf. Wilson 1999 on the *aulos*. Moorton 1989: 314 considers this echo of the *IT* ode part of Aristophanes' overall parody of Euripidean style; he emphasizes, however, that the Frogs accompany the opposite passage (i.e., away from Athens). Note also that Plato's Ilissos setting in the *Phaedrus* includes Pan, the Nymphs, and the Muses; see Rosenmeyer 1962. Also *Bacch.* 951–52. On Pan in Athens, see Borgeaud (1979) 1988: 140–41, 151–56; on his ties to Demeter, 141–50.

are more fully hybrid: they may lay claim to Pan's pipe, but their own style is a heady mix of new and old, of inside and outside the city walls.

The second strophe of their ode, which again combines trochees, iambs, and lekythia, furthers the impression of a "pastoral," light, and lively guise: their song is one of "many diving melodies" (πολυκολύμβοισι μέλεσιν), "sparkling dance" (χορείαν/ αἰόλαν), – recall the "sparkling" (ἀιόλας) shouts of hymns in the *Ion* ode quoted above – and multi-bubblings (πομφολυγοπαφλάσμασιν) (244–49).[34] All of these elements point to a vivacious, even girlish, and overly modulated style, one that sounds like those featured in the "new music" of the dithyrambic poets Timotheus and Kinesias, as well as Euripides' later lyrics.[35] Critics of this new style (including Aristophanes) depict it as decadent and effeminizing; by activating images suggestive of pastoral erotics these bubbly melodies use old lyric metonyms to trace a new, fluid, and animated mode.[36]

If it is accurate to regard the Frogs as singing a song that is at least somewhat "Euripidean," this would mean that the poet's style is in certain crucial aspects mediated by pastoral, or rather "pastoral" – that is, the poetic mode that in Athenian ritual signals erotic adventure, passages from inside to outside, and the incorporation of outside as "outside" within the

[34] Cf. the "Platonic" epigram, in which the frog is termed a "rain-loving, watery poet, servant of the Nymphs" (Τὸν Νυμφῶν θεράποντα φιλόμβριον ὑγρὸν ἀοιδόν, *Epigr.* 22 Page). On girlish play in erotic lyric poetry, see Rosenmeyer 2004.

[35] For connections to Euripides and the "new music" see Defradas 1969; Campbell 1984; Moorton 1989: 313–14; also Csapo 2004 for more general observations and Power 2010 for the associations with cithara music. Many of the metaphors that Aristophanes and others use to describe (and usually lampoon) this style involve the vocabulary of bending or twisting (i.e., cognates of *kamptein* and *strephein*); later in *Frogs* "twisting" is a technique that Euripides teaches (στρέφειν ἐρᾶν, 957; cf. *Frogs* 775, *Clouds* 331–34, *Thesm.* 53–62 and further in Franklin 2013).

[36] Note that Sappho is invoked later in the literary critical tradition as representative of this style (Demetr. *de Eloc.* 128–32, 167, DH *de Comp. Verb.* 23.1, 22.35).

city and/or within civic ritual.[37] I say this despite the fact that Aristophanes clearly figures Euripides as an urban type, in *Frogs* and elsewhere, and while recognizing that Aristophanes' critical discourse (with which Euripides is strongly associated) clearly has an urban and distinctly Athenian source. But Euripides himself serves as a mediating figure between city and country, just as this urban and urbane critical discourse makes use of pastoral details to show, with full comic irony, why Aeschylus' older, staunchly rustic, and "weightier" style might be valued more than the subtle, discerning style that Euripides shares with the critical mode itself. Aristophanes' association of Euripides with this space in between is both innovative and perspicuous, since if this is the space of criticism, Euripides is its perfect denizen, embracing as he does not only the rationalizing, refined mentality emphasized later in the play (cf. *Ran.* 954–58; cf. 1101–07) but also the feminized, agile, and "fertile" aesthetics that constitute this space's more subtle offerings. And yet given his alignment with this critical edge, Euripides cannot ultimately be Dionysus' choice for the poet to save the city, since the play also mocks the critical process as well as this judge's abilities to manage it to any effective end.

Aeschylus and the Meadowland

While Euripides' style may share features with marshy and feminine modes, and thus seem a liminal, newfangled creature (i.e., a literary-critical poet), Aeschylus clearly represents an older, grander, and more natural source of creativity. As Segal notes, the chorus and his interlocutors associate him with the Initiates and Mysteries ritual, and he follows suit. The Initiates' parodos, during which Dionysus travels with them through

[37] I use the terms "pastoral" and "bucolic" provocatively, since they usually mark a tradition that scholars take to start with Hellenistic poets and especially Theocritus, but the genre clearly shares features with erotic lyric, tragic choral odes (esp. Euripides'), and fourth-century epigram.

mimetic space, foreshadows Aeschylus' later invocations of Demeter and the Mysteries, as well as his use of elevated, hymnic modes and support of silent, pious entrances.[38] If we can detect a ranking between these two stops along the way, the Frogs' marshy setting may foster the reeds for the instruments of (pastoral) poetry, but the Initiates occupy the flowering meadows between the stream of "Acheron" and the door to "Hades," a paradise of a patently bucolic sort. The Initiates invoke the meadows repeatedly (344, 374, 449, 374; cf. 351[39]), sing a hymn to Demeter, and do so in an ionic meter with a rare feature (anaclomenon) used by Aeschylus.[40] Thus while the chorus may not retain their identity as initiates throughout the play, they do serve at this point in the play as decorous conductors of the god of poetry through the pastoral meadows and groves to Hades. The chorus calls upon Iacchos (the local Mysteries' ritual name for Dionysus) as the one who can complete the "long road" (πολλὴν ὁδόν, 402) of their ritual song and dance, a characterization that for some scholars must point to Eleusis. But, as we know from Hesiod, the "long road" may also suggest an elevated mode, both stylistically and morally, that would match with the more formal aspects of Aeschylus' grand style. By the end of the parodos the Initiates have entered meadows full of flowering roses where they "play" (παίζοντες) in the noblest choral style (τρόπον/ τὸν καλλιχορώτατον) (448–53). They also declare that they have sustained a pious manner

[38] See Segal 1961: 218; Lada-Richards 1999: 247–54.

[39] I.e., they seem to be moving through a number of flowery meadows in the course of the parodos. Dover compares the flowering meadows of Pindar's "paradise" (*O.* 2.70–75. fr. 29.3–5), but note that the hymnic strophes are answered by those full of comic play (*skôptein*, *paizein* used repeatedly, e.g., 374, 375, 393, 414, 417, 443, 452, vocabulary that infiltrates the "elevated" strophes by 440ff.). Thus language demarcates the space more as one of ritual procession (from marsh to meadow, meadow to grove, etc.), complete with play and *aischrologia*, important in fertility rituals involving Dionysus and Demeter (including the Eleusinian Mysteries). See Foley 1994: 45–46.

[40] Parker 1997: 468.

(εὐ-/ σεβῆ...τρόπον, 456–58), the repetition of the word linking poetic and religious practice (as well as song and dance styles) in a lofty mode.

The second half of the play confirms the sense that it is Aeschylus who belongs in the older, more traditionally celebrated pastoral setting. Despite the scheme that marks out the path of literary judgment and situates both poets' styles in quasi-rural spaces, the distinctions that the characters and chorus invoke in the agon indicate that Euripides' style also has low, urban features, while Aeschylus' is lofty and associated with deep-rooted rural ritual (e.g., 822–25, 836–39). Like the Initiates' hailing of the "seats" (ἕδραις [i.e., precincts]) of Iacchos, of Korê, and of Iacchos himself as "much honored" (*polytimêtos*, 324, 337, 398), before the agon Dionysus addresses Aeschylus as *polytimêtos*. This is in direct contrast to Euripides, whom he greets as "O mischievous one" (ὦ πονηρ'), an epithet that suits the younger poet's roguish (*panourgos*) type (851–52; cf. 921).[41] Good citizen of Eleusis that he is, Aeschylus then prays to Demeter, "nourisher of [his] mind" (ἡ θρέψασα τὴν ἐμὴν φρένα), that he might be worthy of her Mysteries (886–87).[42] Euripides offers instead a suitably newfangled prayer, one to the air on which he feeds, the "hinge of the tongue," and his "sharp-sniffing nostrils" (αἰθήρ, ἐμὸν βόσκημα, καὶ γλώττης στρόφιγξ, καὶ ξύνεσι καὶ μυκτῆρες ὀσφραντήριοι, 892–93).

Their very distinct prayers are fully in keeping with differences that the chorus and Euripides himself have already indicated between the light, urbane, feminine polisher of words (ἐπῶν βασανίστρια λίσπη, 826) and his weighty, "wild" elder (ἀγριοποιὸν αὐθαδόστομον, 837[43]). Later the chorus claims that Aeschylus composes "the greatest and most noble verses" (πλείστα / καὶ κάλλιστα μέλη) and deems him "the

[41] This is noticed by both Lossau 1987: 236–37 and Lada-Richards 1999: 248–49.

[42] Scholars have also puzzled over the suggestion in the scholia that Aeschylus revealed some of the secrets of the Mysteries (e.g., Bowie 1993).

[43] On Aeschylus' "sound-portrait" see Scharffenberger 2007.

Bacchic lord" (τὸν βακχεῖον ἄνακτα) (1254–59), associating his fulsome modes and raging demeanor with the god's inspired frenzy.[44] Euripides treats this wild style with disdain, declaring it weighty and overblown (οἰδοῦσαν ὑπὸ κομπασμάτων καὶ ῥημάτων ἐπαχθῶν, 940). This follows on a claim that Aeschylus' tactics aim at deceiving spectators who were already "fools raised in the school of Phrynichus" (μώρους λαβὼν παρὰ Φρυνίχῳ τραφέντας, 910), thus impugning older poetic styles as fostering simple-minded citizens.[45] Elsewhere in Aristophanes Phrynichus, Aeschylus' poetic predecessor, represents an earlier mode associated with rural spaces (e.g., *Vesp.* 220, *Av.* 748–50). Later in *Frogs* Aeschylus will himself invoke Phrynichus in order to oppose his own "pastoral" style – using a famous metaphor from archaic lyric of the poet as a bee feeding in the meadow (λειμῶνα, 1300)[46] – to Euripides' trashy urban Muse (1298–1303).

Euripides, in this scheme, is quintessentially citified: he chatters with Socrates in the Agora and encourages young men to do the same (1068–71, 1491–92). He is also a "twister" (892, 957) who slims down the tragic Muse (937–47), favoring a slender, "peripatetic" style (cf. the diet, e.g., ἐπυλλίοις καὶ περιπάτοις, 942). We might recognize, however, that this mobile, slimming mode is the urbane sister to erotic pastoral and the marshy modulations of the Frogs. The agon features a set of embodied styles that reconfigure and supplement the distinctions established along the path to Hades. Now Aeschylus emerges as not only of the Mysteries' meadows but more belligerently "natural," while the Frogs' "many-diving melodies" that recall Euripides' choral odes are capped by his light, feminized, and overly modulated monodies, as these are lampooned by Aeschylus.

44 See Lada-Richards 1999: 242–47; Bakola 2010: 26. This is, of course, one of the many places where Aristophanes echoes the *Bacchae*.

45 See, e.g., Rosen 2006; Worman 2008: 110–15.

46 Note that Aeschylus emphasizes his pastoral innovation: this is *not* the same meadow as that of his predecessor Phrynichus. Cf. Bacch. 10.10; P. *P.* 10.53–54; Ar. *Birds* 748–50; Pl. *Ion* 534b.

This is a complicated scheme. Euripides would appear to be both a "fertile," outlandish poet and yet one very much versed in the close-shaving modes of the city. Elements from Mysteries rituals and pastoral styles seem to converge especially upon the figure of Aeschylus, and this should dovetail nicely with the somewhat positive aesthetic judgment that the older poet eventually achieves. Yet most scholars of Aristophanes' literary critical and paratragic gestures notice that he is more interested in (and himself more stylistically similar to) Euripides.[47] Both younger poets are much more engaged with the discourse of literary criticism than is Aeschylus; but this discourse is itself tied in poetic convention to pastoral settings. While the association between the Frogs' imagery and rhythms and those of Euripides conflicts with the fact that later in the play Euripides is clearly figured as an urban type, it is also the case that *Frogs* frames rural spaces and their denizens as "rural" – appropriated by the urban discourse as metaphors or metonymies for critical interventions within the civic sphere. And yet the symbolic terrain that the play charts has its suggestive referents in actual places along the urban-rural divide. A closer look at these may aid further in understanding how to sort out the critical distinctions.

THEATRICAL SPACE AND RITUAL PLOTTING

While all of Aristophanes' extant plays reveal his bold and flexible use of mimetic space, *Frogs* achieves a shifting from place to place that is quite singular. In the first half of the play the mimetic scheme alters continuously, as Dionysus makes his way through marsh and meadow to Hades, the scene of poetic judgment.[48] The stage space is thus repeatedly overlain with

47 As Cratinus' coinage εὐριπιδαριστοφανίζειν (*inc. fab.* fr. 342) suggests; see Biles 2002, Ruffell 2002. Cratinus' tragic associate is, of course, Aeschylus; see Bakola 2010: 24–29 and further in section 4.

48 Russo (1962) 1994: 209–13 notes that this journey is unique in extant comedy and that it involves a continuous relabeling of the stage space.

adjacent fictional landscapes; and this changing topography brings together ritual practice, spatial "progress," and fitful glimpses of a literary landscape that highlights essential stylistic differences between the tragic poets.

Although readers of *Frogs* often disdain arguments that the play may also map actual spaces leading out of the city, the vibrant landscape details clearly point in this direction as well.[49] That said, the course that Aristophanes traces bears relatively few indications of Eleusinian topographies, the path that many scholars have favored. This journey would follow the road from Athens to Eleusis, and thus a route out of Athens along the Sacred Way (*Odos Hiera*) to the northwest and across the Cephisus River. The Frogs' altercations with Dionysus may be reminiscent of the "bridge insults" hurled at Initiates as they passed over the Cephisus, although the dramatic dynamic does not match very closely what we know of the ritual.[50] The choruses of Initiates (Mystai) also support the importance of Eleusis; but they are surrounded by elements that urge attention to the confluence of ritual and literary engagement in local spaces.[51] More significantly, the marsh scene bears no apparent relation to the Eleusinian Mysteries, while it does evoke a local celebration.

Thucydides identifies the area south of the Acropolis as part of the oldest ancient settlement and locates there the sanctuary of Dionysus Limnaios and the Anthesteria (*Hist.* 2.15–16). In the classical period this area along the Ilissos was a suburban

[49] For arguments in favor of this scheme see Gerhard 1858; Tucker 1904; Hooker 1960; Guarducci 1982; Slater 1986. Tierney 1934, Segal 1961, and Dover 1993a offer support for the prominence of local rituals in the play but do not think a particular topography is indicated, although many of Dover's remarks emphasize Eleusis.

[50] See Richardson 1974: 214; O'Higgins 2003: 57. But cf. Tierney 1934: 200–01, who points out that the Initiates themselves engage in insults, rather than serving as targets; Segal 1961: 235, who associates the *gephurismos* with the country (Lenaean) Dionysia; also Burkert (1977) 1985: 287, who thinks the "bridge insults" occurred closer to Eleusis. Cf. Edmonds 2004: 126n. 36.

[51] See also Moorton 1989; Edmonds 2004.

district that was home to many temples, dedicatory altars, and shrines, including those to the Muses, Aphrodite, Pan, and the Nymphs.[52] It also housed springtime rituals and rites of passage, such as those that took place at the precinct of Demeter and Persephone at Agrai and possibly that of "Aphrodite in the Gardens," although determining the site of the latter has proved difficult.[53] The *Frogs*' trip through the marshes and to the flowery meadows of "Hades"[54] repeatedly evokes the fertility rituals of the Lesser Mysteries and the Anthesteria, which included rites at the sanctuary of Dionysus Limnaios, as well as aspects of the Lenaean festival itself, in which the play was performed.[55]

Scholars have interpreted the topography charted in mimetic space onstage in various ways, while some disdain the idea that Aristophanes depicts anything more particular than "symbolic space" (e.g., flowering meadows = paradise). But were we to attempt to follow an actual route, it would look something like this. Dionysus visits Heracles at his "house," either at Kynosarges, just outside of the south walls and close to the Diomeian Gate, or farther to the north, at the temple of Heracles

[52] On Pan in Athens, see Borgeaud (1979) 1988: 140–41, 151–56; on Nymphs, Dionysus Limnaios, the Ilissos, and Agrai, see Larson 2001: 127–29.

[53] For some of the relevant details see Wycherley 1963, 1978; and further below.

[54] While Rogers 1919: xvi went so far as to characterize the *katabasis* scenes as "loosely tacked on" (cf. Russo (1962) 1994: 206–08), Segal 1961: 236–37 argues for connections between cultic practice and the dramatic festivals, most notably the Lenaea; in this he follows Tierney 1934. The theme of descent may itself augment the interconnections between pastoral spaces and poetry, since both Dionysus and Orpheus – the pastoral poet par excellence – make journeys to Hades.

[55] These occurred in late February and involved the drinking of "pitchers" (*choes*), some seasonal appreciating (i.e., of the new vintage and the transition to the festival of flowers [the Anthesteria proper]), and offerings of pots (*chytroi*) of seeds to the dead. See Segal 1961: 219–20; Moorton 1989: 314–16; Hamilton 1992; Bowie 1993. On the connections to the Lenaea, see especially Tierney 1934: 206–12.

Alexikakos on the eastern slope of the Hill of the Nymphs.[56] He then proceeds to his own sanctuary "in the marshes," which some scholars thought referred to an area between the Pnyx and the Acropolis but that most locate close to the Ilissos.[57] Dionysus successfully crosses these marshes (*limnai*), accompanied by Frogs who invoke the drunken celebration of the Anthesteria. After this crossing, he arrives at flowering meadows for the "play" associated with Lesser Mysteries rituals, amid blooms suggestive of the Anthesteria.[58] Finally, he knocks on the door of "Hades," perhaps at Agrai, an area on the south side of the Ilissos that housed the temple of Demeter and Korê/Persephone, where the Lesser Mysteries were celebrated and where some scholars locate the Lenaean theater.[59] Others doubt

[56] For Kynosarges, see DL 6.1.13. Wycherley 1978: 229–30 discusses possible locations and the site's use as a gymnasium; see also Judeich 1931: 419; Hooker 1960. A scholion to *Ran.* 501 locates the temple of Heracles Alexikakos in Melite, a district that some think included the eastern slope of the Hill of the Nymphs (see Tucker and Harrison 1904: 418; Wycherley 1959; Lalonde 2006: 86–87).

[57] This is in keeping with Thucydides' placement of the sanctuary to the south of the Acropolis (πρὸς νότον, *Hist.* 2.15–16), and no other area around Athens was known as marshy. He also identifies this area as the setting for the "Older Dionysia" in the month of Anthesterion; Ps.-Demosthenes (*Ag. Neaera* 76) confirms the temple's antiquity and its connection to the Anthesteria. See Bates 1899; Tucker and Harrison 1904; cf. Tierney 1934: 204. Also Hooker 1960; Dover *ad* 216f.; Slater 1986. Wycherley 1963, 1978: 169–74 charts Socrates' path in the *Phaedrus* as slightly upriver from this area.

[58] As opposed to the Eleusinian rituals, which took place in the fall, when meadows would be dry.

[59] Travlos 1971 places the temple of Demeter and Kore in Agrai, across the Ilissos above Kynosarges. Slater 1986 thinks the *Frogs* journey ends at the Lenaean Theater in Agrai and has more to do with comic rituals. This has proved impossible to determine; while it is not even clear that there was a separate theater, many readers of the evidence think that there must have been and that it would have been either in the Agora (e.g., Tierney 1934: 204) or outside the city walls. It may also be relevant that half of the responsibility for running the Lenaea fell to the same officials that oversaw the Mysteries, which indicates at the least that the socioeconomic arrangement assumes an institutional coherence between the comic *agôn* and the rites of Demeter (Dover 1993b: 183). In addition, Tierney points to evidence

the existence of a separate theater, however, and most assume that *Frogs* was performed in the Theater of Dionysus.[60]

If Aristophanes did in fact present *Frogs* on the south slope of the Acropolis, and this terrain along the Ilissos is at least one of those suggested by the play's action, then it is alone in having a curious meta-dramatic significance. It would have been visible in the distance to audience members seated in the higher seats of the Theater of Dionysus, which looked out over the city walls toward the Ilissos and Agrai – again, toward the Athenian district where the Lesser Mysteries and the Anthesteria were celebrated. Since *Frogs* was produced for the Lenaea of 405, and thus in the winter festival that fell between the Lesser Mysteries and the Anthesteria, it seems likely that the journey onstage is meant to intersect with the ritual settings visible beyond the walls.[61] The Dionysus of Aristophanes' play would thus be guided onstage along the local route that these celebrations would take. For the original audience, then, the play effected on one level at least a witty conflation of mimetic, ritual, and actual space, implicating the various Dionysiac rituals across one variegated landscape.

The connections between the Frogs' imagery and that of Euripides' choral odes introduce an additional ritual constellation, one also connected to fertility, but via girls' rites of passage. While we should not make too much of the Euripidean echoes in Aristophanes' vocabulary and token deities, the Frogs' strophes do deploy elements of Euripides' choral odes that depict "pastoral" song and dance involving young women in transition, young women dramatized by Euripides whose plights resemble Persephone/Korê, whose story was central to the Mysteries. The Mysteries thus intersect with bucolic imagery in lyric poetry through their core legend, that of a girl picking flowers in a meadow, getting snatched by a god,

that the Lenaea was ritualistically bound up with the Dionysus of the Mysteries (Tierney 1934; also Segal 1961: 219–20).

[60] Again, see Slater 1986; vs. Pickard-Cambridge 1927; Stanford 1957, 1958: x–xi; Segal 1961: 239–40n. 75.

[61] See especially Moorton 1989: 316.

descending to the Underworld, and eventually establishing the cycle of seasons.[62] Further supporting the idea that a local ritual constellation is being engaged here, Philippe Borgeaud has argued that the Athenian Pan – which, again, Euripides' odes celebrate – has important ties to the rites of Demeter.[63]

The presence of elements that recall archaic lyric and perhaps especially eroticized pastoral spaces not only suggests an association of Euripides' modes with these spaces but also crafts a connection between that style and a particular aspect of the Eleusinian Mysteries: Persephone's "plucking the flower."[64] As Calame notes, this kind of imagery is central to archaic lyric and indicates passage through the "meadow" of young girls' burgeoning sexuality into the civic sphere.[65] An additional presence in this variegated topographical scheme may further connect ritual landscapes and what Calame calls "the metaphorical spaces of love." Most tellingly, the sanctuary of Aphrodite "in the Gardens," which some scholars locate on the banks of the Ilissos, had ritual ties to that of Pandrosus (on the north side of the Acropolis next to the Erechtheion) in the form of practices regulating young girls' fertility that included a nocturnal descent into the garden precinct.[66]

Within the larger context of pastoral (or "pastoral") scenes of inspiration and judgment, this area along the Ilissos is unique in its association with both fertility rituals and elements related to poetry and aesthetic judgment. Not only does

62 Cf. Calame 1999: 153–74, 2007. The monodies of Helen (*Helen*) and Creusa (*Ion*) depict their rapes as from among the flowers, next to waterfalls. The imagery of the Frogs' song contains some echoes of the stasimon in *Ion* in which the chorus depicts the rape of Creusa.

63 Borgeaud (1979) 1988: 141–50.

64 Cf. also Eur. *Med.* 824–44, 1085–89, *Bacch.* 395–420, *IA* 543–67.

65 E.g., Archil. fr. S478a-b [Cologne Epode]; Anacr. frs. 346, 417 P; Sapph. frs. 96, 105b P. See Calame 1999: 165–67. On the gendering of ritual space, see Cole 2004.

66 Paus. 1.27.2–3. See Calame 2007 on "gardens of love;" also Calame 1999: 170–74. There are many problems with both the understanding of the rituals and the situation of the sanctuary; see Wycherley 1963: 94, 1978: 172; Travlos 1971: 228; Motte 1973: 121–37; Brulé 1987: 84–90.

it house sites dedicated to deities connected to poetic production in rustic settings, including an altar to the Muses in their guise as "daughters of Ilissos" (Paus. 1.19.6); it is also one of the famous sites that accrue significance in the literary critical tradition.[67] To put it in schematic relation to the spaces and their poetic inhabitants: the comic Dionysus fords the marshy expanse to the beat of a Frog chorus who claim a special role in the fostering of a bucolic mode; he then witnesses the chorus of Initiates singing among and about flowering meadows that are traditional metonyms for erotic pastoral modes in lyric poetry.[68] Finally, he enters Hades somewhere out there in the countryside, the nether realm associated with the nature poet Orpheus, where the tragic poets do battle at least in part by situating themselves along the urban-rural divide.[69] Further, *Frogs* employs semi-bucolic ("suburban") settings and more fully rural landscapes, both of which host Athenian fertility rituals and intersect with the route to the testing of tragedy. That is, these spaces and their details arbitrate between city and country modes, between Euripides and Aeschylus, and ultimately between tragedy and comedy. We might, then, recognize in *Frogs* an innovative appropriation of bucolic settings as a means of forging a new and distinctly hybrid critical

67 Others are Helicon and its Valley of the Muses, Olympus' Pierian vale, Olympia, the Acropolis and Hymettos caves of Pan and nymphs; see Worman forthcoming.

68 Cf. esp. Sappho fr. 2 L-P; Anacreon fr. 417 P; Ibycus fr. 286 P-D; *HDem.* In *Frogs* this conventional space also effectively conjoins aspects associated with Euripides (girls' songs) with those associated with Aeschylus (meadowland settings).

69 See Sperduti 1950: 213–17; Segal 1961: 221, 1989: 8–10, who points to the Hellenistic roles of Orpheus and Dionysus as fertility deities; as well as Bowie 1993: 230–34, who emphasizes the similarity in Eleusinian and Orphic settings. In the case of Orpheus, this aestheticizes earlier Orphic writings that depict the poet's song as calming and ordering nature, what Segal 1989: 10 calls, "a resonant harmony." Although *Frogs* does not explicitly refer to Orpheus, narratives of *katabasis* inevitably recall him, as Edmonds 2004: 10 has argued, following Tierney 1934: 218 and n. 74 and Bowie 1993: 230–32. See also Whitman 1964: 228–31 and Padilla 1992 on the relevance of Heracles to such themes.

rubric – call it "fertile" judgment. From this perspective, a central means for assessing poetic worth would involve judgments about its capacity for civic renewal through rural rites, something perhaps more closely connected to the older fertility rituals of which the Lenaean festival is an offshoot.

Thus the path through the marshes and fields outside of the city walls would also emerge as the proper "path" or mode of judgment, given that it ultimately gets the journeyer to the space and perspective from which he can hope to assess clearly what the city needs. One further factor may account for this emphasis on the rural or pastoral setting: the tendency in Attic comedy to send protagonists out into the countryside to fix what has gone wrong with the city. Aristophanes seems to have made the most frequent use of this pattern, which is especially evident in *Acharnians* and *Birds* but serves as a background for understanding *Knights*, *Peace*, and *Wealth* as well. When Aristophanes launches his assessments of Athens' ills, he usually opposes old, rural, bean-chewing ways (cf. *Eq.* 41, 805–08) to newfangled, louche, urban ones. Think, for instance, of the pastoral idyll in the Academy that the Stronger Logos offers dreamily in *Clouds* (1002–08), versus the urbane symposium for which Bdelycleon tries to gussy up his rustic (*agroikos*) father in *Wasps* (1131ff.; cf. 1320).[70] Such contrasts suggest that, despite its denizens' much-lampooned crudeness, the country may offer an older, more morally grounded context from which to judge the city's foibles, both aesthetic and ethical.[71]

Dionysus would, from this perspective, represent a version of the typically rustic comic protagonist whose unsophisticated literary tastes match his recourse to rural retreats for information and resolution. Things are not quite this simple, of course: Dionysus initially has an aesthetic crush on the urbane Euripides; and he is not very obviously cut in the "old

70 Wycherley 1978: 220 notes Aristophanes' portrait and emphasizes the Academy's park-like aspects.

71 Cf. also the staunch critique of the "rural" Dicaeopolis in *Acharnians*; see Rosen 2006 on the mockery of *agroikia*.

country" mold. But to the extent that Dionysus' character is more hybrid than the typical buffoonish hero, he matches in semiotic complexity both the critical idiom and its representative, Euripides. Since the resolution of *Frogs* must be achieved in literary critical (as opposed to, say, strictly political) terms and since literary convention had already appropriated semi-rural settings as "pastoral" – that is, as sites for the culling of poetic imagery for what are essentially urban (i.e, civic cultural) uses – it makes some sense that this poetry-loving protagonist would take this trek outside the city walls in search of a solution to his problem.

WHAT RIVERS CAN MEAN

While comic imagery would seem to associate critical practices with Euripides, the Agora, and city activities, in *Frogs* Aristophanes places them and the poet in the countryside. And, again, one of the routes indicated seems to pass along the Ilissos, the riverside setting that Plato uses to frame the action of the *Phaedrus*, a dialogue that appropriates the imagery of poetic inspiration and "nympholepsy" for use in judging speeches about love.[72] Like Aristophanes, Plato wryly depicts this quasi-pastoral setting as enhancing artistic sensibility and thus as a spur for and even necessary to the process of critical judgment. While both comic poet and philosopher treat their pastoral topographies with an engaged and delighted irony, they also effectively establish such spaces as discursively essential. Later theorists do not miss this emphasis: for Cicero and Dionysus of Halicarnassus in particular, the details of the Ilissos setting are symbolic of and provide crucial distinctions for the terms of critical judgment.[73]

Further, the fact that the *Phaedrus* is staged in this same general area suggests that the highlighting of this quasi-pastoral

72 For the setting see Wycherley 1963; Lind 1987. On the placing of nympholepsy see Connor 1988.

73 Cic. *De orat.* 1.28–29, 2.12–24; *De leg.* 1.1–4; *De fin.* 5.1–9; DH *Dem.* 5.5–17.

space, with its shrines to nymphs and the Muses, may serve as a fitting frame for the developing contentions among literary critics, rhetoricians, and philosophers about which practices have or ought to have civic benefits and which involve a retreat from the city and its corrupting concerns. Poetry may in comic representation still be called upon for its civic wisdom, but the practices by which its own value is assessed are faulty and in need of rustic correction. The reinvigoration of poetry may demand a return to country scenes of inspiration and authority, but in Aristophanes and Plato alike these settings have very ambiguous effects on critical judgment. Euripides and Socrates both bridge this divide, since they practice the deflationary, close-shaving measures of the Agora and yet bring into play the feminized spaces of ritual and erotic enactment beyond the city walls.

Landscape features such as rivers underscore these distinctions, charting stylistic continua that run from fluid and fertile to rough and roiling. A river's smooth flow can suggest a mode quite dissimilar to other bodies of water; and the Ilissos itself indicates a range of characteristics within the stylistic scheme, sometimes linking poetic modes with a watery fertility, at other times indicating excess. In an arid climate, water really is best, in that it alone gives life to dry land; but in the realm of poetry and literary criticism this fluid bounty is recognized as potentially too much of a good thing. Poets and critics often deploy water imagery to point up a fluidity of phrasing and word order, which may be like a clear or smooth and flowing stream (usually welcome) or a full and rushing river or flood (impressive but overwhelming).

In the last quarter of the fifth century the distinction between the great flood and a more restrained mode centers, at least in part, on an aesthetic and ethical debate between Aristophanes and his senior comic poet Cratinus; and it combines the notion of the big flood with drinking.[74] Aristophanes

[74] For the reception of this set of distinctions, see, e.g., Crowther 1979; Dunn 1989.

depicts his elder poet as marked by an unleashed, overly flowing style:

> εἶτα Κρατίνου μεμνημένος, ὃς πολλῷ ῥεύσας ποτ' ἐπαίνῳ διὰ τῶν ἀφελῶν πεδίων ἔρρει, καὶ τῆς στάσεως παρασύρων ἐφόρει τὰς δρῦς καὶ τὰς πλατάνους καὶ τοὺς ἐχθροὺς προθελύμνους.
>
> Then [he says that he] remembers Cratinus, who flowing with abundant praise, flooded the open plains and, sweeping them from standing, carried off oaks and elms and enemies, roots and all. (Ar. *Knights* 526–28)

Aristophanes joins this image to that of a gabbling, bibulous old age, so that "flooding" and "drinking" (i.e., wine in excess) are stylistically aligned. Scholars have taken a fragment from Cratinus' *Putinē* (*Wine Flask*) to be a rambunctious, self-mocking response to this unflattering portrait. Here the poet depicts a character overwhelmed by this superabundance of words:

> Ἀναξ Ἄπολλον, τῶν ἐπῶν τῶν ῥευμάτων.
> καναχοῦσι πηγαί, δωδεκάκρουνον τὸ στόμα,
> Ἰλισσὸς ἐν τῇ φάρυγι· τί ἂν εἴποιμί σοι;
> εἰ μὴ γὰρ ἐπιβύσει τις αὐτοῦ τὸ στόμα,
> ἅπαντα ταῦτα κατακλύσει ποιήμασιν.
>
> Lord Apollo, fountains of flowing words
> splash out, his mouth has twelve springs,
> an Ilissos in his throat – what can I say?
> If someone doesn't stopper his mouth,
> he will flood the whole place here with verses.
> (Crat. fr. 198 K-A)

Cratinus famously claimed that drinking water alone would foreclose any creativity (fr. 203 K-A), a contrast that seems to have enjoyed a piquant afterlife among the orators, especially in criticisms of Demosthenes' careful, polished style.[75]

[75] See Worman 2008: 108, 248–49.

This volubility presumably contrasts with Aristophanes' restrained orifice (στόμαθ' ἡνιοχήσας) at *Wasps* 1022, the drama that he produced in the following year and that may respond at least in part to Cratinus' *Putinê*.[76] With his drunken creativity and flood of words, Cratinus resembles Archilochus, whose stylistic heir he claimed to be and whose reception echoes this association. But *Frogs* offers us another roiling poet, in the form of Cratinus' own favorite tragic target Aeschylus, whom the chorus encourages in the *agôn* "boldly to release [his] fountain" (θαρρῶν τὸν κρουνὸν ἀφίει, 1005).[77]

The marshy riverside setting in *Frogs* seems to be in dialogue with this tradition, offering a new turn on what the "watery" style might be. If the bibulous, full-flowing associate of Aeschylus can boast that he has an Ilissos in his throat, perhaps the slighter mode of the Frogs, of Euripides – and indeed of Aristophanes – can lay claim to a different aspect of this river's fluid aspects. Although late in the drama Aeschylus' addition of "river" (ποταμέ, 1383) to the line he enters upon the scales of poetry gives it weight, as Dionysus explains (ὅτι εἰσθέθηκε ποταμόν, 1386), this may not be the kind of fertile source the discerning critic is after.[78] The early scenes of *Frogs*, like the opening of Plato's *Phaedrus*, suggest lighter associations for the Ilissos and its aesthetic qualities: again, that of

[76] Biles 2002: 189–201 focuses especially on the figure of Philocleon, in whose drunken behavior at symposium he sees a lampoon of Cratinus. See also Rosen 2000; Lada-Richards 2002: 85; Ruffell 2002; Bakola 2010: 20–33.

[77] This anticipates Callimachaen aesthetics, of course (e.g., *HAp.* 110–12). Cf. also Archil. fr. 120 W regarding the creative powers of wine, as well as, again, Cratinus' dismissal of the creative potential of the water drinker (fr. 203 K-A). The testimony 17 K-A seems to suggest that Cratinus consciously fashioned his poetic persona and style after Archilochus. Ps.-Longinus (33.5) deprecatingly compares Archilochus' style to an unleashed flood, an image that the careful and restrained Horace in his satires uses to denigrate his predecessor Lucilius' style (*Serm.* 1.4.21, 1.10.50).

[78] Lada-Richards 1999: 242–47, 2002: 85 aligns *gonimos* with Cratinus' and Aeschylus' "flood" of words; but the Aristophanic aesthetic revises such equations by associating Euripides and a lighter style with fertile modes.

the sparkling, fine-flowing stream versus the roiling river. The waters of *Frogs*, insofar as they may toy with the actual setting of the Ilissos, foreground the marshy qualities of a river overflowing its banks in springtime, while the gentle, cooling waters of the *Phaedrus* setting clearly describe the Ilissos in the heat of summer, when its waters would be lower and easily fordable (cf., e.g., *Phdr.* 238c5-d3). But neither the play nor the dialogue emphasize the thunderous qualities of a rushing river; rather, in both, watery elements indicate fluid, agile styles. Within this scheme Euripides' style falls on the side of light-flowing brooks and smooth streams, while Aeschylus' is embodied by the full and weighty river that he so proudly offers up in his winning line.

Aristophanes' drama of the path to Hades for the judgment of poets sets up a critical frame that is site-specific and ritually infused. As Dionysus takes his trip in search of the dexterous and fertile Euripides, both his poetic modes and those of Aeschylus accrete the tactile qualities of topographies inhabited by celebrants of the ritual spaces through which the god passes. In this way, the critique builds as the journey progresses; and while Dionysus remains irresolute, easily distracted, and taken in by cheap theatrics, the literary critical process itself emerges as one that clarifies distinctions between poetic styles by mapping ritual processions in significant spaces along the path out of the city. Perhaps it is only by means of the "distance" (conceptually and within mimetic space) created by the trip through the marshes and meadows that the proper literary judge can emerge: the comic *didaskalos*, with his quasi-rural roots, connections to suburban fertility rituals, and hybrid critical discourse. If poetic contests reveal themselves as flawed, as often based on silly criteria and assessed by foolish, ignorant judges, the play gestures toward the possibility of more discerning critical practices (e.g., well-"grounded" literary judgment) that could offer civic enrichment and renewal.

Plato, great admirer of Aristophanes that he was, highlights the attraction of such rural correctives, when he envisions in

the *Republic* how young citizens' constant exposure to the overabundance of art forms that characterize the lively city may be cured by a trip into the countryside. Socrates uses a "healthy meadow" topos to argue that the young should be "pastured" in a place where they will be exposed only to good impressions. Thus like well-tended cattle they will not run the risk of "grazing" on bad images coming from many different sources (ἵνα μὴ ἐν κακίας εἰκόσι τρεφόμενοι ἡμῖν οἱ φύλακες ὥσπερ ἐν κακῇ βοτάνῃ, πολλὰ ἑκάστης ἡμέρας κατὰ σμικρὸν ἀπὸ πολλῶν δρεπόμενοί τε καὶ νεμόμενοι). Instead, as with breezes that blow from a healthy setting, the young citizens will be nurtured from all directions if they are surrounded by examples of good actions, which may waft over them visually or aurally (ὥσπερ ἐν ὑγιεινῷ τόπῳ οἰκοῦντες οἱ νέοι ἀπὸ παντὸς ὠφελῶνται, ὁπόθεν ἂν αὐτοῖς ἀπὸ τῶν καλῶν ἔργων ἢ πρὸς ὄψιν ἢ πρὸς ἀκοήν τι προσβάλῃ, ὥσπερ αὔρα φέρουσα ἀπὸ χρηστῶν τόπων ὑγίειαν) (*Rep.* 401b1–d2). In keeping with the moral topography of *Frogs*, Socrates' analogies place the finer, nobler civic values and modeling for the young outside of the city, so that the rustic imagery configures a purer, simpler space and time. This fantasy space, which *Frogs* frankly recognizes as such, Plato takes up as a future ideal.

Aristophanes' literary critical journey to the space of judgment enacts a fusion of dramatic and religious rituals to renovate an old poetic convention that situates inspiration and authority in rural settings. It thereby fosters a long tradition in philosophy and rhetorical theory of the political, ethical, and aesthetic refreshment that this trip out of the city affords. Further, it grounds in concrete and influential ways an emerging set of distinctions between grand, imposing styles and light, subtle ones. Hellenistic and Roman writers elaborate on these stylistic differences frequently by supplementing classical landscape details with some of their own, so that rural imagery continues to signal delicacy at one end (e.g., flowering gardens, pure springs) and grandeur at the other (e.g., rough mountains, roiling rivers). Aristophanes' emphasis on these

pastoral spaces also encourages among the later critics the insight that natural settings may offer the most vibrant indicators of stylistic differences. What *Frogs* establishes, then, is not only that proper critical judgment necessitates a retreat from urban spaces, but also that all styles may have their rural roots. Thus even Euripidean dash and polish share features with the sparkle and flow of the river's stream, while the styles of older poets like Aeschylus and Phrynicus – that old meadowland bee – hail from farther afield.

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