



Are They Dancing?

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NOTES

ARE THEY DANCING?

READERS OF the *Classical journal* are very much indebted to Cornelius Vermeule for his interesting and beautifully illustrated articles on Greek and Roman art which have appeared from time to time. I was particularly attracted by the description, *CJ* 59 (1964) 200-04 and Figs.11 and 12, of a fine black-figured hydria in the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. Vermeule suggests that the five women there depicted at a fountain-house "stand or work or dance," and he later speaks of them as "dancing maidens" (p.204).

Of the five women, the one at the extreme left stands before a lion-headed spout, quietly filling her hydria or water jar. The woman at the extreme right, with one foot resting on a step, likewise quietly fills a hydria—this time from a donkey-spout. The second woman from the left balances a filled hydria on her head, and obviously is to be interpreted as walking away from the fountain-house.

Of the two women in the center, the one on the left is clearly balancing a heavy filled hydria on her raised left knee, preparatory to lifting the jar to her head. There remains but one woman—immediately to the right of the latter figure—who might conceivably be thought of as dancing. This woman carries no hydria. I should like to suggest that a close scrutiny would indicate that she, too, is

not dancing, but is rather stepping quickly away, with left arm raised in alarm, for fear that the precariously held hydria of her neighbor may tilt and spill or flick water upon her "spangled robe" (p.200). The motif of "starting away in alarm" is seen frequently in vase paintings; further, a dance in a busy—and slippery—fountain-house would seem a little out of place.

I believe, therefore, that there are not really any "dancing maidens" on the Boston hydria.

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OTHO, VITELLIUS, AND THE PROPAGANDA OF VESPASIAN

SO MUCH HAS BEEN written on the various aspects of the propaganda of Vespasian that at first glance it would seem superfluous to add more.¹ It has long been

¹ Important works for the propaganda of Vespasian are M. P. Charlesworth, "Flaviana," *JRS* 27 (1937) 54-62; P. Derchain et J. Hubaux, "Vespasien au Sérapéum," *Latomus* 12 (1953) 38-52; J. Gagé, "Vespasien et la mémoire de Galba," *REA* 54 (1952) 290-315; L. Herrmann, "Basilides," *Latomus* 12 (1953) 312-15; R. Lattimore, "Portents and prophecies in connection with the emperor Vespasian," *CJ* 29 (1934) 441-9; K.