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“All the earth will dance . . .”

The Dance in Metaphor

Lillian B. Lawler

This paper was read by the Editor of the Classical Outlook before CAMWS at Richmond in 1940. I was waiting for the 'hoplite' to turn up in the war-dancing matter.

PEOPLES OF ALL RACES and of all times, apparently, have used the concept of dancing in their figures of speech, and especially in their metaphors. It has seemed perfectly natural to most of them, for instance, to speak of “dancing eyes” or “dancing curls”; of spirited steeds as “dancing” nervously under restraint; of waves of the ocean as “dancing” in the sunlight, or of shadows as “dancing” on the wall; in more modern times, of searchlight beams or the Aurora Borealis as “dancing” in the sky; of objects as “dancing” before the gaze of persons who are ill or under emotional stress; or to say that a person’s heart “leaps for joy,” or that his spirits “dance.” Some languages permit the metaphor of “dancing attendance” upon a person, or of “leading someone a merry dance.” “Visions of sugarplums” quite understandably “dance in the heads” of children. A Tennyson writes of daffodils as “fluttering and dancing in the breeze”; and an old Hebrew poet speaks of the “leaping” or “hopping” of hills and mountains, or, making use of a double figure, says with dignity and beauty, “The mountains *skipped*” (a Hebrew word usually implying human dancers) “like rams, and the little hills like lambs” (*Psalms* 114, 4). One of Emily Brontë’s characters¹ expresses the wish that all of nature may “sparkle and dance in a glorious jubilee.” The Russian novelist Dmitri Merezhkowski quotes an Italian Renaissance saying which his translator renders, “Hunger danceth, hunger pranceth, hunger sings gay little songs.”² Modern American writers apply the word *dance* to

activities ranging all the way from the flight of an aeroplane³ to the ordering of courses in our secondary schools—“For we have begun a dance of intellectual death, from which we can be saved only by the classics and by religion.”⁴ Even newspaper writers frequently speak of a graceful tennis player as “dancing,” and label a photograph of a tournament match “Ballet”; and advertising copy-writers entitle a dress “Dancing Ruffles,” with the explanatory note, “Pleated ruffles go dancing around the square neckline, set off by gay bows,” or “Whirlaway,” with the expansive comment, “Winsome eyelet embroidery dances its way around the two pockets”!

More extensively, whole books have been built upon the dance metaphor. In 1816, William Combe published *The Dance of Life*, a book of verse depicting man’s progress from infancy to old age. Somewhat different is *The Dance of the Months*, by Eden Phillpotts,⁵ a book consisting of twelve essays, each illustrated with a colored landscape depicting a characteristic scene on the moors of England in one of the months of the year; the book ends with a poem, “To the Months,” in which the metaphor of dancing is elaborated. The works of the philosopher Nietzsche are permeated with the concept that all the activities of life form a rhythmic dance. Perhaps best known, however, among writings of this type is Havelock Ellis’s book, *The Dance of Life*,⁶ the thesis of which is that “the rule of number and rhythm and measure and order” which is seen in the entire physical universe and in the life and thought of men (and of animals, also, to a lesser extent)

is really a dance. The metaphor is sustained throughout the book, and a great deal of historical and anthropological evidence is adduced to sustain its cogency.

It is not surprising, then, to find, when we turn to Greek literature, that it, too, boasts a rich array of metaphors bearing on the dance. What is arresting, however, is the amazing scope of these metaphors, and the wealth of imagination which creates and accompanies them.

One of the oldest figures involving dancing is the metaphor of the dance of the heavens. Lucian (*On the Dance*, 7) says that the art of the dance goes back to the creation of the universe, for the complex movements of the heavenly bodies form a cosmic dance. Libanius (*On the Dancers*, 12) says that the harmonious movement of the planets in their orbits was called a dance by the "wise men of old." In this connection it is interesting to recall that Urania, patroness of astronomy, was also one of the Muses, patronesses of the dance. Dio Chrysostom (xii, 34) gives us an extended metaphor in sublime tones, a comparison of the whole universe to a great initiation ritual, in which the gods dance around men, forever revealing to them the cosmic mysteries, while their "dance leader," Zeus, directs the mighty spectacle. On the shield of Achilles, the Pleiades, the Hyades, and other stars perform a heavenly dance (Euripides, *Electra* 467-8). Sometimes Dionysus leads the dance of the "fire-breathing stars" (Sophocles, *Antigone*, 1146). The majestic dance of the planets is in accord with the "laws of perfect music" (Philo, *On the Creation* I, xxiii, 70). The moon dances, and so does the upper air (Euripides, *Ion*, 1075-82). Comets dance through the sky, and their progress is called a "leap" (Aristotle, *Meteor.* i, 343 B, 23). Even the clouds "set the sacred dance for the Nymphs" (Aristophanes, *Clouds*, 271-2).

In Greek Christian writers, the earth, the sea, and the heavens dance in fear at the name of the Lord (*Pap. Mag. Leid.* W 17, 27; viii, 5 Dieterich). In medieval Britain the belief was strong that the sun danced on Easter Day, at dawn; and even in modern

times a flat vessel of water is often placed to catch its first "dancing" rays on that holy day.

This concept may have been taken over by the Greeks from other peoples, of more ancient culture than their own. Egyptian priests performed a complicated ritual imitative of the "dance of the heavenly bodies."⁷ It is possible that the Babylonians, too, may have had an "astronomical" dance. Some scholars believe that the Minoan Cretans thought of the sun as "dancing" through the heavens, and that one of their dances was an act of sympathetic magic to aid him in his progress.⁸ The influence of the Minoans upon the Greeks was, of course, very great, especially in the fields of religion and the dance.

Oddly enough, modern writers sometimes hark back to the same ancient metaphor. One of them⁹ says that the "limitless acres of night sky" swirl "like a dance of the imagination." Another¹⁰ calls the asteroids "dancers before the thresholds of the Great Worlds." And Merezkowski¹¹ speaks of the stars as "irrepressible dancers."

Somewhat different is the dancing of the earth, or various regions of the earth. "All the earth will dance," says Euripides (*Bacch.* 114), as Dionysus leads off his joyous choir; and Mount Cithaeron, according to the same author (*Bacch.* 726), dances with the Bacchantes. Here we recall, in a different connotation, *Psalms* xxix, 6, rendered, in the latest translation, "He makes Libanus dance like a calf, and Sarion like a young antelope."¹² "All Thessaly danced in fear," says Callimachus, when Ares struck his spear against his shield. We are reminded here of similar usages in modern English—for instance, in an account of the bombing of Warsaw, an author says that "the ground danced beneath their feet."¹³ In the *Hercules Furens* of Euripides (782-4), the streets of Thebes dance for joy. The islands around Delos, according to Callimachus (*Hymn* iv, *Del.*, 300-1), encircle it in a choral dance. The Roman Varro claims (*ap. Martian. Cap.* 928) to have seen the famous dancing "Islands of the Nymphs" in Lydia, which float out into the middle of a lake, "dance" in time to flute music, and

then move back near the shore. Pliny the Elder, perhaps under Greek influence, tells (ii, 94, 209, 96) how certain small islands at Nymphaeum are called "Dancers," because they move in time to the dancing feet of the choruses upon them.

Natural phenomena, too, are "dancers." The seasons "dance through the year" (Philostratus the Elder, ii, 34, 1). The dawn is a dancer, for she has a "dancing place" on the island of Aeaëa (*Odyssey* xii, 3-4). A violent storm, with snow, is called a "snow dance" of the gods of love in the sky.¹⁴ This is to some extent paralleled by the "red sand-ghosts" which in the work of a modern writer¹⁵ dance "in giddy spirals." An echo "bounds" (the word is one commonly used of a dance) from a smooth or hard substance (Plato, *Phaedrus* 255 C). And, with a combination of metaphor and simile, Tryphiodorus (559-61) says that Enyo "like a hurricane" danced all night through the city of Troy. Flames, also, leap and "dance," (Theophrastus, *De Igne* xi, 69) as they do in the works of modern writers. The "dance of the atoms" in Lucretius (ii, 133 and ii, 114-120)¹⁶ may be a Greek concept; here we are reminded of the "perpetual dance of entities known as negative electrons around a positively charged nucleus" in the play *Wings Over Europe*, by Robert Nichols and Maurice Browne.¹⁷

Even rivers sometimes dance. Achilles Tatius (iv, 18, 3), in his characteristically florid manner, says, "Our voyage seemed to be on a river that danced for joy." One recalls in this connection the "dancing water" of Sicilian folk tales,¹⁸ and the "dancing bubbles" of Scott's *Lady of the Lake* (Canto III, 12).

Various abstractions dance through the world. Evil, in particular, "dances" into cities or over the land.¹⁹ Jealousy (Oppian, *Hal.* iv, 214-5) and envy (Euripides, Fragment 394, Nauck) revel and dance among men, and bring them to destruction. Fear and "fear's dark daughter" dance in the soul of men (Sophocles, Fragment 695, Nauck). Love is a dancer (*Anth. Plan.* i, 288). Madness dances (Oppian, *Hal.* iv, 213-5; Euripides, *Herc. Fur.* 891-9); and human beings who go

mad are said to "dance" their madness.²⁰ More pleasantly, friendship, in the words of Epicurus (Fragment lii, Bailey), "goes dancing around the inhabited world, bidding us all awake to a blessed life." Similar metaphors are found in modern writers—as, for instance, the metaphor of Fame as "dancing to meet" someone.²¹

Demons of one sort or another dance over helpless men (Euripides, *Phoen.* 352). This usage reminds us of the striking double metaphor in Wilkie Collins' *The Moonstone*:²² "The devil's dance of the Indian Diamond has threaded its way to London." The Furies also dance (Aeschylus, *Agam.* 1189; Euripides, *Orestes* 582), sometimes weaving a spell which binds the victim with dread potency (Aeschylus, *Eumen.* 306-45), sometimes rushing into the victim's breast and leaping and whirling madly there (Philostratus, *Imag.* ii, 23, 4-5).

Rather persistently in Greek literature, war is spoken of as a dance or as a dancer. Zeus is leader of "the dance that slew the giants."²³ Ares leads the fluteless "accursed dance" of war, a thiasos of chariots and war-steeds (Euripides, *Phoen.* 791-7). Warriors are "dancers of Enyo" (Nonnus, 28, 275), or "dancers of war" (Nonnus, 28, 304). In fact, one definition of *orchestes*, the word which usually means "dancer," is, as given by Hesychius (s.v.), "one who moves about nimbly in war." In Lycophron (*Alex.* 493), in the account of the killing of Ancaeus by the Calydonian Boar, the hero is called a "dancer," *orchestes*, as if the word were a synonym for "warrior"—"smiting with inescapable blow the dancer's ankle-bone." Penthesilea "came to the dance of war" in Troy (Tryphiodorus 35-6). The Trojans, in their eagerness to drag the wooden horse into the city, danced the "dance of Ares," (Tryphiodorus 379) or imitated the "dance" of cranes flying through the air (*Id.*, 352-5). Enyo, drunk with blood, danced all night through burning Troy (*Id.*, 559-61). Centuries later, a dancing girl who mimed the tale of Hector's life and death was called a "dancing Enyo" (*Anth. Plan.* i, 287). Theseus threatened Thebes with the "shield-bearing

komos" of battle if the dead chieftains' bodies remained unburied (Euripides, *Suppliants* 390). The dying Neoptolemus, fighting against the darts which are overwhelming him, dances a "dread war dance" (Euripides, *Andromache* 1135). There is added significance in the fact that the word for "war dance" here is the word that denotes the Pyrrhic dance; and Neoptolemus' alternative name was Pyrrhus.

In a famous passage in the *Iliad* (xvi, 617-8), Aeneas says to Meriones: "If I had only struck you, Meriones, you who are a dancer, my spear would have quickly put an end to your dancing." This is usually taken to refer merely to Meriones' orchestric skill and to his agility on this occasion; but in view of the other passages cited it seems to have a particular aptness in a scene of combat. One recalls in this connection that a form of wrestling was actually known as *orchestopale*—"dance-wrestling."

In historic times the Mossynoecians, we are told, line up like choral dancers, and dance off, singing, against the enemy (Xenophon, *Anab.* v, 4, 12). Similarly, the well trained, well disciplined armies of the Persians are likened to skilled dancers (Xenophon, *Cyropaed.* i, 6, 18; iii, 3, 30). Demosthenes calls the war leader, Philip, a *choregos*, the technical term for a man who sponsored and trained a group of choral dancers and singers (ix, 60; xix, 216). In Polybius' time, *choregia* had become an accepted term for "supplies of war" (Polybius i, 16, 6; 17, 5; 18, 5; 18, 9; iv, 71, 10 etc.) and *chorego* for "furnish supplies for war" (*Id.*, i, 83, 7; iii, 68, 8; v, 42, 7). A late writer says that Alexander the Great "danced over everything under the sun" (Himerius, *Ecl.* ii, 18) in making his conquests. Another tells how a king, in battle against a Roman general, "danced the man-slaying dance of Enyalios."²⁴

In Thessaly, generals were called "chief dancers" (Lucian, *On the Dance* 14), and a famous inscription read: "This statue was erected at public expense to commemorate Ilation's well-danced victory."

Victory herself is a dancer, in both literature and art (Pausanias V, xi, 2). Peace, too,

dances. She is specifically called *despoina choron*, "Lady of the Dance" (Aristophanes, *Peace* 976). She brings the dance as her gift to men after war,²⁵ and she participates in it (Aristophanes, *Peace* 775-818 and *passim*).

When we come to human beings, we find words for "dance" used of them in an amazing variety of ways. It is difficult to tell at times whether the "dancing" is metaphorical or actual, in the mind of the Greek. To him, *orchesthai*, *choreuein*, and similar words seem to have meant something like "to make any series of movements, however simple, and involving any part or parts of the body, provided the movements be harmonious and rhythmical." He speaks of "dancing" (i.e., celebrating) a wedding (Euripides, *Iph. Aul.* 1057), and, of course, he calls the wedding procession a dance. The ceremonial wailing for the dead, with accompanying rending of the cheeks and hair, is to him a dance (Euripides, *Suppl.* 75). He tells of "dancing" (celebrating) the games (Polybius iv, 20, 9), and "dancing" (celebrating) the rites of the Muses (Aristophanes, *Frogs* 356). To reveal sacred mysteries, whether legitimately, in an initiation, or blasphemously, in violation of the oath of secrecy, is to "dance them out." A worshipper of a divinity is a "dancer" of that divinity (Plato, *Phaedrus* 252 D); to "dance" Phoebus (Pindar, *Isth.* i, 7) or Iacchus (Sophocles, *Antigone* 1154) is to worship those divinities; to "dance" Cithaeron is to honor that mountain with song and dance (Sophocles, *Oed. Tyr.* 1094); and "to dance," *choreuein*, is frequently a general term for "to engage in acts of worship" (Sophocles, *Oed. Tyr.* 895; Euripides, *Bacch.* 182). A Muse or a divinity is often invoked to dance with worshippers (Aristophanes, *Peace* 775-6; 816-7). Conversely, a divinity may "dance out" or "drive out" of the cult a votary who is not acceptable for one reason or another; Artemis, for instance, "danced out" Merope, and turned her into a deer (Euripides, *Helen* 381-3).

A messenger "dances" his news.²⁶ One who is well versed in something "dances" in it (Plato, *Theaet.* 173 C). A man captured by robbers who do not understand Greek

tries to plead with them by "dancing out his dirge" with gestures (Achilles Tatius iii, 10, 4). To burst into a house is to "dance" into it (Euripides, *Phoen.* 352; Plutarch ii, 772 F). To make a riotous assault upon something is to "dance against" it (Aristophanes, *Acharn.* 982). To go rushing off to other cities is to "dance into" them (Plato, *Laws* xii, 950 A), or to "dance out" of one's own city (Euripides, *Androm.* 603). To be desirous of a woman is to "dance the satyr" (Achilles Tatius ii, 37, 2). To treat despitefully or to insult is to "dance against" or "dance over" or "dance up to."²⁷ To jump in joy is to "dance up" (Euripides, *Suppl.* 719)—we say, "jump up and down." To exult is to "dance forth" (Heliodorus x, 38) or to "dance joy" (Euripides, *Phoen.* 316). To interrupt is to "dance in upon" (*Anth. Pal.* vii, 186, 3).

In a slightly different sense, to "dance away" or "dance out" is to lose something because of an improper dance, or to dishonor something or somebody with a dance. The prime example of the first of these is Hippoclydes, who by a long-continued and highly undignified dance offended his prospective father-in-law to such an extent that he lost his bride (Herodotus vi, 129). A good instance of the second is furnished by the Athenians whom Apollonius of Tyana publicly rebuked for "dancing away" the brave warriors of Salamis and other national heroes by their unseemly "writings" in the theater, at the festival of Dionysus (Philostratus, *Vit. Apoll.* iv, 21).

The dance is constantly used as a symbol of all that is harmonious, fitting, seemly; and the opposite to all of this is *achoreutos*—"unfitting for the dance." The story of Athena, the flutes, and Marsyas, for instance, is called idle, foolish, unworthy—*achoreutos* (Athenaeus xiv, 617 A).

The Romans, imitating the Greeks, have similar metaphorical usages. A poet speaks of his literary activity as "worshipping Helicon" and "entwining" his hands "in the Muses' dance" (Propertius iii, 5, 19-20). In a prose romance, a girl stirring a pot on the fire, and endeavoring to attract a young man's attention at the same time, sways her

shoulders and undulates her hips rhythmically; she is spoken of as dancing, although she is standing still (Apuleius, *Met.* ii).

Shakespeare, in *Henry VI*, Part II, Act IV, Scene 1, 127, seems at first glance to have a usage that recalls this loose use of the word *dance*; Suffolk says he would rather have his head "dance upon a bloody pole" than submit to indignity. The construction here, however, is rather an ellipsis than a metaphor; the reference is really to the dancing of an exultant enemy, carrying the severed head upon a pole.

Rhythmos and words derived from it are frequently used in a highly metaphorical way. For instance, we read of the "rhythm" of the shape of the foot (Theophrastus, *Char.* ii, 7), of surgical operations (Hippocrates, *In the Surgery* iv), of the reason (Callimachus, *Epigr.* 44, 5), of evil (Euripides, *Suppl.* 94), of murder (Euripides, *Cyclops* 398), of death (Euripides, *Electra* 772). The verb *rhythmizein*, "to bring into rhythm," is used to denote "educate children," "train the mind," "order one's thoughts," "prepare one's self for," "control one's grief," "make up the face," "arrange the hair," and innumerable other activities.

A *choregos* comes to mean one who supplies the costs for anything. Later, in astrological connotations, it means a "patron." In medical parlance it means a trunk vein (Oribasius 45, 18, 23, 24, 25), or a special bandage used in cases of trepanning (Oribasius 46, 19, 6 and 7). *Choregeion* is used for a school, or a treasury, or revenue. *Choregein* and its compounds come to denote "supply," "furnish," "minister to," "provide for," "support" (anything from a wife to a philosophical doctrine), "spend lavishly," and "take the lead." In Philostratus (*Imag.* ii, 3, 4), *choregia* is applied to something that "feeds" or augments an illness.

Similarly, *pedan*, *hallesthai*, *skirtan*, and other words meaning "leap," "skip," etc., usually denoting an actual dance, are often used metaphorically; for instance, lances "leap" in Euripides, *Herc. Fur.* 65-6.

Words for "dancer" or "chorus of dancers" are applied not only to worshippers of a god,

but also to a group of philosophers (Plato, *Theaet.* 173 B), disciples (Libanius, *Or.* 54, 38), listeners (Plato, *Protag.* 315 B), hunters (Euripides, *Hippolyt.* 55), boys, young men, friends (Plato, *Laws* i, 64 B; Euripides, *Troad.* 1184), children in a family,²⁸ citizens in a state,²⁹ or persons of a particular type—e.g., misanthropes (Plato, *Protag.* 327 D). In an interesting simile, Athenaeus tells (iv. 152 B) of the Celts sitting in a circle at dinner, with the most powerful or the richest man, “like a leader of the chorus,” sitting in their midst.

The human soul dances,³⁰ and the “germs of the soul” dance (Plato, *Phaedrus* 251 D). The spirit of a prophet dances as he speaks his words of prophecy (*Trag. Adesp.* Nauck 176). The mind dances in surprise (Athenaeus i, 21 A). We note the somewhat different modern usage of thoughts dancing, or facts or words or phrases dancing in a person’s mind.³¹ The heart dances in fear,³² foreboding (Euripides, *Bacch.* 1228), anger (Plato, *Timaeus* 70 D), excitement (*Ibid.*, 70 C), anticipation,³³ inspiration (Plato, *Symp.* 215 E), joy (Athenaeus i, 21 A; Euripides, *Bacch.* 1288), or love.³⁴

The human eye “dances” or twitches when something important is about to happen.³⁵ Frequently, of course, the eyes dance for joy (Philostratus, *Imag.* ii, 34, 3); compare the modern usage in Samuel Richardson’s *Pamela*.³⁶ “. . . joy danced in his silent countenance.” The mouth, moving along the reeds of a Pan-pipe, dances (Achilles Tatius viii, 6, 7). A row of teeth is a “chorus” (Galen, *Use of Parts* II, 8; Achilles Tatius 469). Throbbing arteries and veins dance;³⁷ and pain dances through the head of a dying man (Euripides, *Hippolyt.* 1351–2).

With grim imagination, both Greeks and Romans often called the writhings of a tortured person a dance. In fact, on one occasion the meaning of an oracle turned upon such a metaphor (Dionysius Hal. vii, 68, 3 to 69, 2). This gruesome figure recalls to mind the medieval, Renaissance, and modern jests in which the jerking motions of a hanged man are termed “dancing on the air.”³⁸ In the Septuagint (IV. *Macc.* 15, 20), a place where

a large number of Hebrew children were tortured is called, from their agonized contortions, a “dance place.” Less horribly, the involuntary movements of a man stung by a gnat are called a dance (Achilles Tatius ii, 22, 3).

Several proverbs and epigrammatic expressions involving the dance have come down to us. “Where in the dance are we?” (Plato, *Euthydem.* 279 C) is like our “Where in the world are we?” “A pig comes dancing in” (Diogenianus 8, 60) is similar to our expression “a bull in a china shop”; and “to dance into the bees” (Zenobius 3, 53) is equivalent to our “to raise a hornet’s nest.” “To look a Pyrrhic dance” is Aristophanes’ famous expression (*Birds* 1169) for “to look daggers”; and “the Pyrrhic dance of Cinesias” (Aristophanes, *Frogs* 152–3) is the excessive gesticulation of that poet, as he recites his own verse. The Romans imitate these Greek metaphors. Cicero, for instance, in speaking of the Greek Hegesias, says that he “dances,” that is, speaks jerkily (*Orator* 67, 226). Similarly, the Romans used *tripudium*, a word usually denoting a ritual dance, as a sort of technical term for a favorable omen in connection with the feeding of the sacred chickens; when the birds ate so greedily that the grain leaped from their beaks and pattered on the floor of the coop, the phenomenon was called a *tripudium* (Cicero, *De Div.* i, 15, 28; ii, 34, 73; ii, 36, 77). The “dancing” of eulogies to the emperor mentioned in Pliny’s *Panegyric* (54, 1) is probably literal rather than metaphorical, and reflects the exaggerations of the pantomimic dancers of his day.

Animals are frequently spoken of as dancing. Occasionally such references are to actual dances—as in Pliny (*Nat. Hist.* x, 30, 23, 58–60) and Tryphiodorus.³⁹ Of this type are the “dances” of the swans described in Philostratus (*Vit. Apoll.* i, v); the “dance” of owls as they lure their prey (Aelian, *Hist. An.* i, 29); the “dance” performed by monkeys in derision over a dead panther (Aelian, *Nat. An.* v, 54); and the dance of trained elephants (*Ibid.*, ii, 11) or horses (Athenaeus xii, 520 C). More truly figurative is the “dancing” of hunted leopards (Oppian, *Cyn.*

iv, 342), or that of the wild beasts of the forest, which join in the ecstatic orgies of Dionysus (Euripides, *Bacch.* 727; Pindar, Fragment 208 Sgndys). A savage lion, roaring and tossing its mane, is said to have "taught itself the dance of Rhea" (*Anth. Pal.* vi, 218). We read of a *chorus* of bees (Aelian, *Nat. An.* v. 13), a *chorus* of cicadas (*Ibid.*, i, 20; Plato, *Phaedrus* 230 C), a *komos* of doves (Euripides, *Ion* 1197), a *chorus* of migrating cranes (Oppian, *Hal.* i, 620-2), or a "wandering dance" of cranes (Tryphiodorus 352-5). The animals which followed the singing Orpheus are sometimes called a *chorus* (Plato, *Protag.* 315 B), as are also the sheep which "danced" joyously around the heroine of a Greek romance (Longus ii, 29, 1). Fish are often spoken of as "dancing" in the waves.⁴⁰ One of the Anacreontic lyrics (56 Bergk) is particularly noteworthy for this metaphorical usage. In it, a *chorus* of fish is mentioned, and dolphins are called *choreutai*, or "members of the chorus." In the *Helen* of Euripides (1454), a boat is called the *choregus*, or "director," of a *chorus* of dancing dolphins. In the *Electra* of the same writer (432-41), ships dance with Nereids and dolphins; and in Sophocles' *Oedipus Coloneus* (716-8), a boat "bounds along" in the water, following the Nereids. Dolphins also dance in the romantic pages of Achilles Tatius (i, 2, 13). Theopompus (*ap.* Athenaeus vii, 308 A) refers to a *chorus* of mullets. Aelian speaks at some length (*Nat. An.* i, 30) of the great intelligence of squills, which, when caught, twist and "dance," turning their saw-tooth probosces against their captors. When another fish tries to swallow them, he says, the squills "dance" in the larger fish's throat, and kill it. Oppian, in the *Halieutica*, makes frequent use of the figure. He speaks of a *chorus* of fishes (i, 65-6), and of a fish just taken out of the water as a "dancer" (i, 61). He says that fish leap as if in a dance when they see sea-birds approaching (i, 166); that when a storm is past they rush through the water as if dancing (i, 472); and that they "dance" to meet their feeder (iii, 250).

As in the case of human beings, parts of

the bodies of animals are sometimes spoken of as "dancing" when they twitch in pain or as a symptom of a disease (Aristotle, *Hist. Animal.* viii, 24, 2; Absyrt. in Hippiastr., p. 164).

Thus far we have been considering live animals. By an understandable extension of the metaphor, the Greek often declared that cooked food came "dancing" in to the dinner table. Athenaeus, for instance, quoting and distorting Sophocles (vii, 277 B), tells how a *chorus* of fish come "dancing" in to form part of a feast, wagging their tails at the casseroles. A sea-perch comes "dancing in with a swoop" (Athenaeus iv, 157 A; cf. Diph. 64, 4); and fish have been "presented with sauce by their *choregus*" (Anaxippus i, 35). The comic poet Euboulus sang of fish "dancing" with lambs' entrails in a frying pan (Athenaeus iii, 108 B). But fish is not the only food that makes so dramatic an entry. Even the lowly lupine "dances in" (Athenaeus ii, 55 D). An unknown comic poet, in a fragment preserved on a bit of papyrus,⁴¹ is expansive: "Truffle," he says, "comes dancing in," "artichoke makes an entrance," "beet keeps a certain rhythm," and all the beautiful foods "make an appearance." Sometimes a whole meal "dances" to the table—for instance, a luncheon, in Athenaeus (vi, 230 F).

Nor does the metaphor stop with food. Even the cooking pots and other utensils, harmoniously arranged in the well-ordered kitchen, form a "dance," according to Xenophon (*Oec.* viii, 3); and the same writer likens an orderly and well-managed home to the dancing of a chorus.

Plants, and growing things in general, are often said to "dance." Ancient legends of trees "dancing" to the music of an Orpheus (Apollonius Rhod. i, 26-31; cf. Euripides, *Bacch.* 561-4) or an Amphion are echoed in Tennyson's poem *Amphion*, especially lines 23-62. The movement of a tree in the wind is called "dancing" in both ancient and modern literature. The Greek even spoke of the arrangement of trees in an orchard as a kind of rhythmic dance (Theophrastus, *Causes of Plants* iii, 7, 9). Ivy, too, he thought of as "dancing" over a stone wall or other surface,

either with "twisted, creeping foot" (*Anth. Pal.* xi, 33, 1), or with "soft foot" (*Ibid.* vii, 36, 2). One of the most striking instances of "dancing" plants, however, occurs in a fragment of Isogonus of Nicaea (*Frag. Hist. Gr.*, Mueller, Vol. IV, 436). In Lydia, in a lake sacred to the Nymphs, says this author, there are many reeds; at a yearly festival there are sacrifices and dances on the shore of the lake, whereupon "all the reeds dance." A similar passage in Strabo (xiii, 626), dealing with the sanctuary of Artemis Kolone, near Sardis, presents textual difficulties; whether Strabo says that the "reeds" danced, or the "baskets," or the "apes," or the "goblins," he seems to have in mind the same sanctuary as that mentioned in Isogonus. A. B. Cook⁴² has treated the subject extensively. He connects the story of Strabo and that of Isogonus with the tales of "floating" and "dancing" islands in Pliny and Varro, and believes that the dancing of the votaries on the shore did "communicate vibrations to floating reed-mats on the lake, and set them in motion."

Inanimate objects of all sorts, under widely varying circumstances, are spoken of as dancing, even as they are in the works of modern writers. Athenaeus (vi, 231 D) says that in early times silver and gold were scarce among the Greeks, but that, later, silver "danced merrily in." In the *Iliad* (xiv, 455), a spear "leaps" (a word usually connoting a dance) from the hand of Polydamas. Achilles Tatius more than once uses the metaphor of boats "dancing" over the waves (iii, 4, 3; iv, 18, 3). At a dinner party, a cup of rich workmanship "dances in a circle" among the assembled guests (Antiphanes, *ap.* Athenaeus xi, 781 E); but apparently the general effect is somewhat different from the "dance" in Tobias Smollett's *Expedition of Humphrey Clinker*:⁴³ "The claret continued to circulate without interruption, till the glasses seemed to dance upon the table." Pratinas (i, 9-10 Bergk) bids a flute "dance" in honor of Dionysus. A Pan-pipe is a *chorus* of reeds (Achilles Tatius viii, 6, 4; Colluthus 125); and the pillars of a portico form a *chorus*, lined up side by side like dancers (Achilles Tatius i, 15, 1). A breastplate "has rhythm"

(Xenophon, *Mem.* iii, 10, 10); so have garments (Euripides, *Heracle.* 130), a sandal (Theophrastus, *Char.* ii, 7), a walking-stick (Athenaeus xii, 544 F), and the letters of the alphabet (Herodotus v, 58).

We have already noted the famous passage in Strabo concerning the sanctuary of Artemis Kolone, in Lydia. In that account, most of the manuscripts of the author contain the words, "They say that here the baskets (*tous kalathous*) dance." Eustathius, commenting on the *Odyssey* (1627, 49 F), speaks of "baskets like those of Demeter, which, so the story goes, dance in a certain mystery ritual in honor of Demeter." Whether we are confronted here with evidence of some sort of ritualistic hocus-pocus; or whether in both cults the "baskets" are young girls wearing headdresses representing reeds, rushes, or basketwork, as Cook thinks;⁴⁴ or whether the "baskets" were carried in a dance, we do not know. But there is certainly an element of metaphor deeply underlying both accounts.

The extent to which the ideal of the dance, as orderly, harmonious arrangement or motion of any sort, permeates all of Greek thought, is surely abundantly evident from the examples cited in this paper, random and scattering as they are. Perhaps the Greek was not actively conscious that most of these examples are actually metaphors; for to him the whole world did indeed dance.

NOTES

¹ *Wuthering Heights*, Everyman's Library, New York, Dutton, 1940, 212.

² *The Romance of Leonardo da Vinci*, translated from the Russian by B. G. Guernsey. New York, The Hermitage Press, The Hermitage Reprints, no date, pp. 428 and 536.

³ Anne Morrow Lindbergh, *The Steep Ascent*. New York, Harcourt, Brace, & Co., 1944, pp. 74-76, 77, 87.

⁴ Henry Harmon Chamberlin, "Classics or Chaos," *CLASSICAL JOURNAL* xl, 1944-45, 322.

⁵ London and Glasgow, Gowans and Gray, Ltd., 1911.

⁶ New York, The Modern Library, 1929.

⁷ Fritz Weege, *Der Tanz in der Antike*, Halle, Niemeyer, 1926, 19.

⁸ W. O. E. Oesterley, *The Sacred Dance*, New York, Macmillan, 1923, pp. 23 and 69-72.

⁹ Carter Dickson, *The Gilded Man*, New York, Grosset and Dunlap, 1942, 180.

¹⁰ C. S. Lewis, *Out of the Silent Planet*, New York, Macmillan, 1943, 174.

- ¹¹ *Op. cit.* (see note 2), p. 350.
- ¹² *Liber Psalmorum cum Canticis Breviarii Romani*, New York, Benziger Bros., Inc., 1945.
- ¹³ Helen MacInness, *While Still We Live*, Boston, Little, Brown & Co., 1944, p. 159.
- ¹⁴ D. L. Page, *Greek Literary Papyri*, Vol. 1, Poetry. Loeb Classical Library. Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1942. No. 140, line 86.
- ¹⁵ Robert Graves, *Hercules, My Shipmate*. New York, Creative Age Press, Inc., 1945, p. 396.
- ¹⁶ Cf. Clyde Murley, "Behavior Patterns of Atoms Among the Ancients," *Classical Outlook* xxiii, 1945-46, 71-72.
- ¹⁷ New York, Covici-Friede, 1929, p. 37.
- ¹⁸ A. B. Cook, *Zeus*. Cambridge, University Press, 1914-1940, Vol. II, 1008-1009.
- ¹⁹ Tryphiodorus, 313-314; Philostratus, *Vit. Apoll.* iv, 6; Plato, *Republic* vi, 491 C.
- ²⁰ Euripides, *Herc. Fur.* 879; cf. the story of the daughters of Proetus and that of the daughters of Minyas, who were visited with dance mania.
- ²¹ E. Barrington, *Glorious Apollo*, London, Harrap, 1935, p. 73.
- ²² Wilkie Collins, *The Moonstone and the Woman in White*, New York, The Modern Library, 1937, p. 156.
- ²³ Page, *op. cit.* (see note 14), Vol. I, No. 140 B, line 13.
- ²⁴ Page, *op. cit.* (see note 14), Vol. I, No. 144.
- ²⁵ Euripides, Fragment 453, Nauck, 7-8; Tryphiodorus 429.
- ²⁶ Aeschylus, *Agam.* 31; cf. Lillian B. Lawler, "The Messenger's Dance," *Classical Outlook* xxii, 1944-45, 59-61.
- ²⁷ Herodotus iii, 151; Euripides, *Orestes* 582; LXX, *Zach.* xii, 10; Plutarch ii, 46 B, 57 A.
- ²⁸ Euripides, *Herc. Fur.* 925; used also of the Asclepiads, in Aristides, *Orat.* xxxviii, 23.
- ²⁹ Stobaeus, *Peri Gamon* 73, 24; Hierocles the Stoic, p. 35 Praechter; Dio Chrysostom, *Orat.* 14, 4.
- ³⁰ Theognis 963; Archilochus xiv, 7; Plato, *Ion* 536 B, C.
- ³¹ Cf. Sir Walter Scott, *The Talisman*, Chapter IV.
- ³² Aeschylus, *Choeph.* 161, 166, 1023; Plato, *Laws* vii, 791 A; Athenaeus xv, 688 B; Plutarch ii, 83 B.
- ³³ Aristophanes, *Clouds* 1391-92; Aristotle, *Parts of Animals* 669 A.
- ³⁴ Achilles Tatius ii, 37, 10; cf. Robert Graves (see note 15), 283.
- ³⁵ Theocritus iii, 37; cf. Plautus, *Pseud.* i, 1, 105.
- ³⁶ Everyman's Library, New York, Dutton, Vol. II, p. 155.
- ³⁷ Plato, *Phaedrus* 251 D; Hippocrates, *Epid.* 7, 30; cf. Emily Brontë, *Wuthering Heights* (see note 1), p. 100.
- ³⁸ Merezkowski, *op. cit.* (see note 2), p. 345.
- ³⁹ 352-353. Cf. the "waltz" of the "three lunatic hares" in John Buchan's *Huntingtower*, Boston, Houghton Mifflin Co., 1922, p. 29. Cf. also the "dancing" of cattle in their stalls during the outbreaks of dance mania in medieval Europe; Alfred Martin, "Geschichte der Tanzkrankheit in Deutschland," *Zeitschrift, Verein für Volkskunde*, Vol. 24, 1914, p. 131.
- ⁴⁰ Aeschylus, *Agam.*, 299; Sophocles, Fragment 695; Arion 5; Achaeus 27.
- ⁴¹ Page (see note 14), Vol. I, 49, p. 236.
- ⁴² *Op. cit.* (see note 18), Vol. III, pp. 988-1015.
- ⁴³ New York, Everyman's Library, E. P. Dutton Co., No. 975, 1943, p. 217.
- ⁴⁴ *Op. cit.* (see note 18), Vol. III, 996-1012.

THE "AUTHOR" OF CHEEVER'S ACCIDENCE

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A SHORT/ INTRODUCTION/ to the/ LATIN TONGUE, For the Use of the Lower Forms in/ the Latin School./ Being the Accidence Abbridg'd and/ Compiled in that most easy and/ accurate Method, wherein the/ Famous Mr. Ezekiel Cheever taught;/ and which he found the most/ advantageous by Seventy years/ experience./ BOSTON in N.E./ Printed by B. Green, for Benj. Eliot, at/ his Shop under the Town-house. 1709.¹

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