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THE "THRACIAN PIG DANCE"

LILLIAN B. LAWLER AND ALICE E. KOBER

IN ATHENAEUS xiv. 629 d, appears a list of names of dances which the author says are *στασιμώτερα, ποικιλώτερα* (Kaibelemeuds unnecessarily to *πυκνότερα*), and *τὴν ὄρχησιν ἀπλουστέραν ἔχοντα*—i.e., more regular in form, more spectacular, and having simpler choreography than some of the dances previously mentioned. The list, without punctuation, is as follows: *δάκτυλοι ἱαμβικὴ Μολοσσικὴ ἐμμέλεια κόρδαξ σίκιννις Περσικὴ Φρύγιος νιβατισμός Θράκιος κολαβρισμός* (earlier editions, *καλαβρισμός*) *τελεσιάς*. Editors have differed as to the punctuation of the list and as to the number of separate dances which are here mentioned. For the purposes of this paper we shall look particularly at the two words *Θράκιος* and *κολαβρισμός*.

Some translators and commentators have treated each of these words as referring to a separate dance—e.g., the translator of the Bohn Athenaeus (C. D. Yonge, *The Deipnosophists, or Banquet of the Learned, of Athenaeus* [London: Bohn, 1854], III, 1004) says: "... the Thracian, the Calabrismus, the Telesias." Others have taken the two words together—e.g., F. A. Wright (*The Arts in Greece* [London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1923], p. 29): "... a Thracian dance called the Colabrismos." Still others have attempted to translate *κολαβρισμός*.¹ Since it could be derived from a word *κόλαβρος*, defined by some as "little pig," Charles B. Gulick (*Athenaeus, the Deipnosophists* [London: Heinemann; Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1930–37], VI, 395) renders

the two words as "the Thracian pig-dance."

κόλαβροι appears in Athenaeus (iv. 164 e; xv. 697 c), where the context shows it must have the meaning "lascivious verses" or the like. This suggests another interpretation of *κολαβρισμός*, a rather obvious one, which, however, the commentators seem not to have noticed. One might easily think of the dance accompanying such verses as a sort of *κῶμος*, a development of primitive ritualistic obscenity of a type familiar in Athens and in other parts of Greece proper.

Pollux (iv. 100) also refers to the dance. *κολαβρισμός* *Θράκιον ὄρχημα καὶ Καρικόν*, he says, sustaining the editors, who unite the two words. He continues: *ἦν δὲ καὶ τοῦτο ἐνόπλιον*. This addition complicates the situation considerably. If the dance was a "pig dance," why and how was it done in armor?

In the main, Pollux and Athenaeus, when discussing the dance, stem from the same sources. Accordingly, it is just barely possible that Pollux, in the latter part of his comment, has inadvertently confused, or designedly associated, the *κολαβρισμός* with the *τελεσιάς*, which follows it in the list as Athenaeus gives it. The *τελεσιάς* was certainly an armed dance (cf. Athen. xiv. 630 a). Furthermore, armed dances were characteristic of the Thracians (Athen. i. 15 e; Xenophon *Anab.* vi. 1. 5–6).

Are we, then, dealing with a Thracian dance, a "pig" dance, a dance in armor, a *κῶμος* performed to obscene verses, or a combination of some, or even all, of these elements? Some further clarification of

¹ A later section of this article is devoted to this problem. All ancient references to words from which the name of the dance might have been derived are given there.

the nature of the dance may be derived from linguistic or archeological evidence.

The linguistic evidence is, unfortunately, slight and in several cases open to various interpretations. The words which enter into the discussion occur almost exclusively in scholia and glossaries that are fairly late. Then, too, these words were unfamiliar to the ancient scholars, who copy one another or invent their own etymologies, with the result that the original form and spelling of the words they cite are difficult to establish, even when, as in the case of Hesychius and Suidas, we have excellent editions of their work. In many cases allowance must also be made for the sad propensity of later scholars to base an emendation of the text of the author they are editing on what they assume is the reading of a similar gloss elsewhere, without ascertaining whether the reading actually exists or is itself an emendation.

κολαβρισμός, the name of the dance, is mentioned only in the passages from Athenaeus and Pollux quoted above. It must be derived from a verb, κολαβρίζω. This verb exists. It is defined by Hesychius, *s.v.* κολαβρίζειν· σκιρτᾶν.² Since σκιρτάω is used elsewhere of the jumping or leaping of young horses and goats, and also of Bacchantes, we may suppose that the dance itself was rather active and possibly somewhat orgiastic.

κολαβρίζω should be derived from a substantive *κολαβρ-, for which we have evidence in the existing forms κόλαβρος, κόλαβρον, κολάβρων, κολάβρους. It is generally assumed that these are all forms of the same word, but, as later discussion will

show, they occur in various authors and have several different meanings.

No etymology has been established for the word or words.³ Since the dance is connected with Thrace and Caria by Pollux (iv. 100) and the "verses" are mentioned by Athenaeus (xv. 697 c) in connection with Phoenicia and Asia Minor, we are probably dealing with a non-Greek and perhaps even a non-Indo-European word group. Technical terms connected with music, poetry, or the dance, and animal names as well, are frequently loan words; many Greek words of this type have been borrowed from a Mediterranean substratum. Calling a word a loan word does not, however, define it.

At least two, and perhaps three, different translations of κολαβρισμός are possible, depending on how we set up its derivation. The evidence of ancient scholars warrants our defining it as (1) a κῶμος; (2) a "pig dance"; (3) a "sword dance" (?). These meanings are, moreover, not mutually exclusive.

1. *A κῶμος*.—This possibility has already been suggested. Athenaeus refers, in two different sections of his work,⁴ to poems whose wanton and uninhibited nature is evident from the context. He speaks of them several times, using the forms κολάβρους and κολάβρων, both plural; the gender, however, is not indicated. The passages imply that these verses were used to make fun of individuals—a fact that fits in very well with the meaning "to be derided" attested for the passive of κολαβρίζω (see n. 2). This close semantic connection with the verb indicates that verses of this type may have been used in

² The verb is also used in the passive, meaning "to be mocked, derided" (LXX, Job 5:4). It was defined by Olympiodorus *ad loc.*, and by Hesychius *s.v.* καλαβρισθείσαν and κωλαβρισθείσαν (note the spellings!); Suidas connects it with κόλαβρος, *s.v.* κολαβρισθείη: χλευασθείη, ἐκτινασθείη, ἀτιμασθείη. κόλαβρος (variants, κόλαβρος, κόλαμβρος) γὰρ ὁ μικρὸς χοῖρος. ἀντὶ τοῦ οὐδενὸς λόγου ἄξιον νομισθείη.

³ It is listed only in the etymological dictionary of Leo Meyer (*Handbuch der griechischen Etymologie* [Leipzig, 1902], II, 429), and his comment consists of the words "dunkler Herkunft."

⁴ iv. 164 e, where the text actually reads κολάρους; and xv. 697 c, where the forms κολάβρους and κολάβρων appear.

connection with the dance; but it does not necessarily imply that the dance was named after the verses. We are not dealing with a term that has been defined as meaning "lascivious verses" but with one that apparently has this meaning in a certain context. It is likely, especially since only the plural is attested in this sense, that we have here a secondary meaning of the word (perhaps derived from the use of such verses in the dance, perhaps from the same word as the dance name). It is advisable to look further for the primary meaning.

2. A "pig dance."—This primary meaning may lie in the definition ὁ μικρὸς χοῖρος given for κόλαβρος by Suidas and Zonaras.⁵ The form cited is certainly nominative singular and probably masculine. It may be the same word as the one just discussed; morphologically and semantically, such a conclusion is permissible. It is not a far cry from pigs to the kind of verses involved. The use of χοῖρος frequently involves a *double entendre* (e.g., the extended puns in Aristophanes, *Ach.* 738 ff., where χοιρίδιον is also used), and a scholion on Aristophanes *Lys.* 202 has κάπρον· αἰδοῖον. Suidas, moreover, mentions κόλαβρος in explaining the meaning of κολαβρίζω in the passive, although he accounts for the relationship in a different way (see n. 2).

3. A "sword dance."—The evidence here depends entirely on an interpretation of certain glosses of Hesychius. He lists κόλαβρον· τὸ κοιλίδιον. Schmidt⁶ accepts the emendation κόλαβρον· τὸ χοιρίδιον, since this produces the definition "piglet," which is in conformity with "the small pig" of Suidas and Zonaras. If we agree, however, that the aim of emendation is to discover, not what an ancient scholar

should have written, but what he actually did write, there are certain objections to this correction. The gender of the form κόλαβρον of the gloss may be neuter; there is no indication that Hesychius considered it masculine. An examination of some of the words listed in juxtaposition may throw some light on what he had in mind, since he frequently groups his words together in such a way that it is difficult to escape the conclusion that he is etymologizing.

After the words beginning with κοκ-, Hesychius glosses κῶλα, κολαβρίζειν, κολαβρενομένη, κόλαβρος, κολάζειν. Let us consider these in order. For the first word the codex reads: κῶλα· ὅστᾱ· μέλη· ἢ ὅπλα· καὶ εἶδος ὀρχήσεως, ὁ καὶ ξιφισμός. Schmidt comments *ad loc.*: "κῶλα cod., ordinem turbatum restituit Is. Vossius coll. Cyr. 63: κῶλα· σκέλη πόδας. Confundit lexicographus κῶλα· ὅστᾱ μέλη ὅπλαί et κολέα (sive κολᾶ)· εἶδος ὀρχήσεως." The alphabetical order clearly calls for κολα (accent unknown, but Schmidt writes κόλα). It is likely that Hesychius confused several words, but the confusion may have been intentional on his part, since the definitions he gives are quite consistent with one another. The ὅπλα, "weapons," of his gloss go with ξιφισμός; ὅπλαί, "hoofs," would not. The first three words of his definition are all neuter plural nouns; the first and second mean "bones, members," or the like; the third is separated from them by ἢ, "or," which seems to indicate a deliberate change of meaning. Hesychius may have had in mind in writing *κολα· . . . ὅπλα a later gloss κολέος· ἢ θήκη τοῦ ξίφους, i.e., a "sheath" or "scabbard." A neuter, κολέον, with the same meaning, appears in Homer (*Il.* i. 194). Obviously, a scabbard is, next to the sword itself, the most likely piece of armor to be used in a ξιφισμός. His gloss ὅπλον· ἐνδύμα πολεμικόν, καὶ τὸ αἰδοῖον may further explain his use of ὅπλα in the

⁵ For Suidas see n. 2. Zon. 1230 spells the word κολαβρός, changing both the spelling and the accent.

⁶ M. Schmidt, *Hesychii Alexandrini lexicon*, ed. maj. (Jena, 1858).

definition, since the *ξιφισμός* certainly had sexual aspects.

κολαβρίζειν *σκιρτᾶν* has already been discussed.

The next gloss introduces a word that appears only here but must have been related to the foregoing: *κολαβρευομένη· κόλοις ἄλλομένη*. Schmidt accepts the emendation *κώλοις* for the first word of the definition, apparently interpreting it as "jumping with the legs," perhaps referring to something similar to the *entrechats* of a ballet dancer. It is possible, however, that Hesychius deliberately wrote *κόλοις*, repeating the initial *κολ-* of the word he was defining. Using the explanation of the first word in the series we are discussing, he might have meant "leaping (or dancing) with scabbards." Pollux, after all, tells us that the *κολαβρισμός* was an armed dance. The later glosses, *κολέα· ποιά τις ὀρχησις* and *κολία· ὀρχήσεως εἶδος*, tend to confirm this idea.

Passing for the moment over *κόλαβρον*, the next word in the series is *κολάζειν· περαίνειν. ὀγκᾶσθαι*. Dictionaries list no literary use of the word with this meaning. Schmidt comments *ad loc.*: "confundit *κολεάζειν* sensu obsceno et *κλάζειν· ὀγκᾶσθαι*." *ὀγκᾶσθαι*, "to bray," does not concern us here. Schmidt is, of course, right in saying that *περαίνειν* defines *κολεάζειν*, not *κολάζειν*. It seems, however, that, once again, Hesychius uses the spelling *κολ-* for the more normal *κολε-*. That he did it deliberately is shown by his gloss, *κολεασμός· τὸ περαίνεισθαι. πεποιήται δὲ ἀπὸ τοῦ κόλου καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦ καθίεναι εἰς τὸ κόλον· τοῦτο κολεάζειν ἔλεγον. κολεάζω* usually means "sheathe."

It is likely, since *κόλαβρον· τὸ κοιλίδιον* occurs in the midst of the other words, that he has also associated the *κολ-* of this word with the *κολ-*, "sheath," whose existence he seems to be establishing. In that case he must have thought of *-βρον*

as a diminutive suffix; the gloss, as it stands, is then quite possible. A "small sheath" (using the word in all its implications) might be described as a "small hollow or cavity."

What Hesychius meant to write in this gloss is of great importance for our inquiry. Whether he was right or wrong is not so important. If he meant to write the gloss as it now stands, he must have had some reason for associating *κόλαβρον* with "sheath." If, for instance, he knew that the *κολαβρισμός* was an armed dance, perhaps a "sword dance" in which the sheath played a part, that might account for the gloss. Since he does not gloss *κολαβρισμός*, only *κολαβρευομένη· κόλοις ἄλλομένη* can be cited as confirmation of the theory.

In spite of what has been said above, the meaning "little pig" for *κόλαβρος* is certain, even if Hesychius is not emended. Not only is this meaning for the word attested from Suidas and Zonaras, but there is a certain amount of rather curious evidence that the word may have been a compound and that one of the elements meant the "young of animals." This would account for the fact that all the definitions of the word stress its diminutive nature.

Hesychius lists *ιβρίκαλοι· χοῖροι*.⁷ At first glance there is not much similarity to *κόλαβρος*, but if we divide the words *ιβρί-καλοι* and *κόλ-αβρος*, it is evident that the consonants of the first element of one word and of the second element of the other (and vice versa) are the same. The parallel is even closer between *κολοβρός* (the form cited by Zonaras) and the word *ὀβρίκαλον* (neuter), which is used by Aeschylus (*Ag.* 143) of the young of wild animals. The existence of a word *ὀβρία*⁸

⁷ Cf. Zon. 1083: *ιβρίκαλος* [*sic!*]: ὁ χοῖρος.

⁸ Photius (s.v. *ὀβρία*) couples *ὀβρία* and *ὀβρίκαλα* and says that Aeschylus uses the terms of wolf-cubs. Eustathius (1625. 47) also couples them but says they refer to the young of porcupines, and in another passage (1395. 47) he tells us that *ὀβρίκαλα* are lion-cubs. Pollux (v. 15), using *ὀβρίκια* and *ὀβρίας* (accusative

suggests that the other words are compounds. This supposition is to some extent confirmed by what looks like another compound: *σύβρος· κάπρος* (Hesych. *s.v.*). On the basis of these, a word **ᾠβρος* (initial vowel dubious), meaning "young of animals," might be set up;⁹ it may form the second element of *κόλαβρος*. Eustathius (quoting Aristophanes of Byzantium, *ad Od.* 1817. 19) has a word *κολόβριον*, as a term for the young of wild swine. Inasmuch as *-ιον* is the normal Greek diminutive suffix, it is not surprising that it is found attached to a word whose persistently diminutive meaning must have puzzled later scholars.¹⁰

If the *κολαβρισμός* was named after a word for "small pig," this "pig dance" may have involved the carrying of small pigs. On the other hand, it may have been a fertility dance.

There is some indication that a "pig dance" may have been done in armor in the Hesychius gloss, *καπρία· εἶδος ὀρχήσεως ἐνόπλου*.

In short, it is quite conceivable that the *κολαβρισμός* involved all the elements implied by *κόλαβροι*, "lascivious verses"; *κόλαβρος*, "a small pig"; and even *κόλαβρον*, "a small cavity or sheath."

plural), respectively, for *ὀβρίκαλα* and *ὄβρια*, says that poets use these words of the young of all wild animals. For *ὄβρια* there is further evidence in Aelian (*Nat. an.* vii. 47), who quotes the word from Euripides and Aeschylus. All these statements differ from one another in details but obviously go back to the same source.

⁹ Perhaps Hesychius (*s.v.* *ὑμβρος· χοιρίδιον*) is pertinent here, although the word has an *m*. The troublesome term *ἄβρα*, "young female slave," may be connected with this group.

¹⁰ Aristophanes of Byzantium (*op. cit.*) also says that a word *μολάβριον* has the same meaning; and Eustathius, just before he quotes Aristophanes, tells us that *μολοβρός* and *μολαβρίτης* are used of the sow. Aelian (*loc. cit.*) mentions only *μολάβριον* as the word for the young of wild swine; Hesychius (*s.v.* *μολάβρια*) says that the word is used generally of the young of wild animals.

Since *κολόβριον* and *μολάβριον* differ only in the initial letter, it is probable that the spelling of *κόλαβρος* has been changed to *κολόβριον* to make it resemble the other word.

We come now to evidence of a different sort. In the body of facts known about ancient Thrace, from statements in Greek literature, and from objects found by archeologists, there is much that is of significance for the present inquiry. It is known, for instance, that the religion of Thrace¹¹ was primitive and that it was characterized by animism, a belief in the transmigration of souls, and animal-worship. Another feature of Thracian religion was a "sword cult." Tattooing had a part in Thracian ritual, and the picture tattooed upon the devotee was frequently that of a sacred animal. Prominent among the divinities of the country was Bendis, who was identified by the Greeks with Artemis (Herod. v. 7). The appropriate offering to Bendis was a pig. In later times there was even a *Bendideion* in Athens, where the goddess was portrayed as holding a pig. She was associated with the Nymphs, as was Artemis; and to both Bendis and the Nymphs mystery rituals were celebrated.

Closely connected with the religion of Thrace and Phrygia was the worship of the *Kabeiroi*; their mother, Kabeiro, is, in fact, actually called Thracian by Nonnus (*Dionys.* xiv. 17). The mysteries of the *Kabeiroi* were celebrated by the Greeks in many places, but particularly on the islands of Samothrace and Lemnos (near Thrace, of course) and in the city of Thebes. In these mysteries, dances played a large part—fertility dances, around a phallic symbol, and apotropaic dances, accompanied with bells and other noise-making devices, perhaps introduced originally to ward off the wild Thracian storms. The divinities became protectors of sailors and in the minds of the Greeks were somewhat confused with Castor and Polydeuces.

¹¹ Pauly-Wissowa-Kroll, *RE*, *s.v.* "Thrake—Religion" (Gawril Kazarow).

In the *Kabeirion* at Thebes there were found innumerable figurines depicting swine¹²—over two hundred in terra cotta and several in bronze and lead. In the same place there was found a number of vases portraying votaries wearing pig masks.¹³ These are regarded by many scholars as pure burlesques of the mysteries. However, the animal masquerade is an ancient and significant device for securing kinship with the divinity to whom the animal is sacred. It may well be that a pig dance was a feature of the mysteries of the *Kabeiroi* and that it entered those mysteries from Thrace.

In various regions around the Aegean there is further evidence for pig dances of one sort or another, from prehistoric times on down to the Hellenistic period. An "island gem," published by Ridgeway in 1931¹⁴ and now in the British Museum, portrays a human figure with the head of a sow and with wings. That the figure is meant to be real and not supernatural is indicated by the presence of a girdle about the waist, which evidently holds securely in place the combination mask, wig, and upper garment to which the wings are attached. The legs of the figure, although somewhat cramped by the small area of the gem, nevertheless show unmistakably rapid and violent motion. Elsewhere¹⁵ the belief has been expressed that such a pose is often used to represent a dance. Ridgeway is of the same opinion in this case, and he refers the dance to a Minoan-Mycenaean animal cult intermediate be-

tween totemism and anthropomorphism. One is reminded here of the giant winged boar of Clazomenae, used as a coin type by that city and also by Samos and regarded by Keller¹⁶ as a symbol of storm and hail (cf. Hesych.: ὄμβρος· χοιρίδιον, which may be a mixture of ὄμβρος· κάπρος and ὄβρος· χοιρίδιον).

Of Hellenistic date but reflecting the cult practices of a far earlier epoch—probably the Mycenaean age—is the carving on a piece of marble drapery found in the shrine of Despoina at Lycosura.¹⁷ Here eleven female figures wearing animal masks run along in a rapid processional dance, to the music of a cithara; and one of the women wears a pig mask. The marble drapery seems to be a votive offering and to portray features of the cult of Despoina.¹⁸ Despoina, of course, is a divinity associated with the great mother-goddess of prehistoric Crete and Asia Minor,¹⁹ who is also πότνια θηρῶν.

Of similar type but of uncertain provenance is a small terra cotta now in the Louvre.²⁰ It depicts a woman with a sow's head and with cloven hoofs instead of hands, beating a tympanon. Perhaps of some significance is the fact that near it is displayed²¹ a terra-cotta satyr, holding a wine cup and seated on the back of a sow.

¹⁶ Otto Keller, *Die antike Tierwelt* (Leipzig: Engelmann, 1909-13), I, 391.

¹⁷ Charles Normand, *Lycosura: second livre du corpus des monuments grecs* (Paris: Au Bureau de l'Ami des Monuments et des Arts, n.d.), pp. 26-27 and Pl. II.

¹⁸ See Pauly-Wissowa-Kroll, *RE*, s.v. "Tierdämonen" (S. Eitrem).

¹⁹ Martin P. Nilsson, *The Minoan-Mycenaean Religion and Its Survival in Greek Religion* (London: Oxford University Press, 1927), p. 434; Pauly-Wissowa-Kroll, *RE*, s.v. "Despoina" (Pauly); Lewis R. Farnell, *The Cults of the Greek States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1896), II, 455 ff., 473.

²⁰ Léon A. Heuzey, *Les Figurines antiques de terre cuite du Musée du Louvre* (Paris: Morel, 1883), Pl. 55, No. 2.

²¹ *Ibid.*, Pl. 55, No. 4.

¹² Paul Wolters, "Das Kabirenheiligtum bei Theben. IV. Gegenstände aus Terracotta," *Ath. Mitteil.*, XV (1890), 355-57; Botho Graef, "Das Kabirenheiligtum bei Theben. V. Gegenstände aus Bronze und Blei," *Ath. Mitteil.*, XV (1890), 365-74.

¹³ Margarethe Bieber, "Die Herkunft des tragischen Kostüms," *Arch. Jahrb.*, XXXII (1917), 69-70.

¹⁴ Sir William Ridgeway, *The Early Age of Greece* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1901-31), II, 485-87 and Fig. 19.

¹⁵ Lillian B. Lawler, "The Dance of the Holy Birds," *Class. Jour.*, XXXVII (1942), 353-55.

On a fifth-century amphora²² three masked dancers are portrayed, engaged in what Schnabel thinks is the *κόρδαξ*, the characteristic dance of Old Comedy. One of the figures wears a mask with pig's ears. Bent far over, with his two feet together, the dancer thrusts out his tongue maliciously and apparently shakes his thighs in the lascivious *schema* usually called *ῥικνοῦσθαι*. All three dancers are wrapped in cloaks, and the hands of two of them (including the one with the pig's ears) are thrust forward under the cloaks in the gesture which Schnabel thinks is the "sword-thrust," *ξιφισμός*. The tempo of the dance is obviously spirited. Some writers see in the pig mask a designation of the parasite. But perhaps more significant is the fact that one form of the *κόρδαξ* seems to have been a descendant of a dance to Artemis as *πότνια θηρῶν* and fertility goddess,²³ in which the dancers were costumed or masked as therianthropic demons. This primitive dance accounts, in all probability, for the presence of so many animal titles in Old Comedy—the *Gall-Flies*, the *Birds*, and the *Frogs* of Magnes; the *Goats* of Eupolis; the *Griffins* of Plato; the *Ants* and the *Nightingales* of Cantharus; the *Frogs* of Callias; the *Fishes* and the *Ass* of Archippus; the *Bees* of Diocles; the *Frogs*, the *Wasps*, the *Storks*, and the *Birds* of Aristophanes; and, significantly, the *Swine* of Cephisodorus. It is entirely possible that the figure on the vase actually portrays an old pig dance.

Demosthenes (*Crown* 260) speaks of an orgiastic dance through the streets by dancers crowned with fennel and white poplar, who shout *ὕης ἄττης ἄττης ὕης*;

²² Now in the museum at Tarquinia (see Louis Séchan, *La Danse grecque antique* [Paris: De Boccard, 1930], p. 199, Fig. 44; Heinz Schnabel, *Kordax* [Munich: Beck, 1910], pp. 3–6; 17–25, and Pl. I).

²³ Schnabel, *op. cit.* pp. 40–53; Lillian B. Lawler, *Ἰχθύες χορευταί*, *CP*, XXXVI (1941), 143–44.

Frazer²⁴ thinks that *ὕης* here is a form of *ὕς*, that the cry merely means "Pig Attis!" and that Attis, in whose honor the dance was performed, was originally worshipped in the form of a pig.

The ritualistic significance of the pig was very marked in antiquity. In many parts of Asia Minor, in Egypt, and in India the pig was regarded as unclean. Among the Greeks, however, it was believed to be the oldest of sacrificial animals and it was often used in purificatory ceremonies. It was a fertility demon in many cults and a charm against evil. Frazer thinks it was from early times an embodiment of the corn spirit.²⁵ Cook finds clear evidence for a "cult of the swine" in Minoan-Mycenaean times.²⁶ Schliemann found at Tiryns several terracotta figurines depicting standing women, each holding a small pig in the left arm.²⁷ Although of the classical and Hellenistic periods, these figurines may reflect cult practices of remote antiquity. Similar figures were found at Eleusis, Halicarnassus, Tegea, Sardinia, and elsewhere—chiefly in shrines of Demeter. Eitrem sees in the Crommyonian sow a demoniac significance.²⁸ The most prolific of animals, the pig was used in the classical period in the worship of Demeter, Kore, Dionysus, Aphrodite, Adonis, Artemis, Apollo, Zeus, and the Mother of the Gods (Paus. v. 16. 8; viii. 38. 8; iv. 8. 1; Schol. *ad* Aristoph. *Ach.* 747; Theoc. 24. 97)—practically all of which stem, at least in part, from the great Cretan goddess and her consort. It is possible that all of these divini-

²⁴ Sir James Frazer, *The Golden Bough* (London: Macmillan, 1907–18), I, 22.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, VIII, 16–33; so also N. W. Thomas, in *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, ed. James Hastings and others (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1922), s.v. "Animals," I, 484, 524–25.

²⁶ A. B. Cook, "Animal Worship in the Mycenaean Age," *JHS*, XIV (1894), 152–58.

²⁷ Henry Schliemann, *Tiryns* (London: J. Murray, 1886), pp. 361–63.

²⁸ *Loc. cit.*

ties may have been worshiped in earlier times by votaries wearing pig masks or skins,²⁹ particularly in mystic rites. As Thomas has said: "Where animals are sacred to a god, mimicry of their movements is equivalent to prayer and adoration."³⁰ If we can trust the word of Zenodotus (Athen. iii. 96 a), there was actually a festival to Aphrodite which was called *ὑσθήρια*, at which pigs were sacrificed, although some scholars think the historian was punning on *μυστήρια*. An inscription cited by Cook³¹ would seem to indicate that one of the priestesses of Demeter and Kore was called *ὑς*. Many writers think that the passage in the *Acharnians* of Aristophanes (738 ff.) in which young girls are called "little pigs" is an extended parody of some ritual to Demeter. Others connect the legend of Circe and her "swine" (*Od.* x. 282–83, 338, 390) with a primitive totemistic cult. The Artemis-Actaeon story belongs in the same category. Similar to both legends is the myth of Ishtar in Babylonia—the goddess who changed those who fell in love with her into animals, which she then hunted and wounded or slew. It is entirely possible that a part of her ritual was a mimetic dance in which worshipers represented the unfortunate man-animals of the myth.

We have noted a portrayal of a pig dance at the shrine of Despoina at Lycosura. Pausanias, describing the shrine, tells us (viii. 37) that below the images of Despoina and Demeter there were carved representations of the Curetes and, on the base, of the Corybantes. This is of great

significance in view of a passage in Athenaeus (ix. 375 f–376 a): Pigs, says Athenaeus, were sacred among the people of ancient Crete, because a sow suckled Zeus when he was born on Mount Diete, "where there is a secret rite"; the sow, he says, *moved about*, and by her grunting drowned the cries of the baby Zeus, so that passersby did not hear him. As a result, he goes on, the Cretans revere the pig and will not eat pork. On the contrary, the people of Praesus actually sacrifice to the pig, especially before a wedding.³²

The latter part of this account, of course, reveals a very old totemistic ritual, definitely connected with fertility. The earlier part of the story recalls strikingly the legend of the Curetes (or the Corybantes), who danced, clashing spear against shield, to drown the cries of the infant Zeus, so that his father might not hear him. Oddly enough, Pausanias tells us (viii. 38. 2) that on a sacred mountain near Lycosura there is a place called Cretaea and that the Arcadians say that *this* is the "Crete" where the child Zeus was reared! All of this, together with the carved figures of Curetes and Corybantes at Lycosura, points to a close connection between the Minoan and the Arcadian cults—a connection which becomes even more striking when we place side by side the pig-masked dancer of the Lycosura drapery and the winged pig dancer of the prehistoric "island gem." And, incidentally, *Orphic Hymn* xxxviii. 20–21 speaks of the Curetes and Corybantes as taking part in the rituals of the *Kabeiroi* on Samothrace.

Cook³³ has collected several instances of the pig in the cult of Zeus in Crete; and

²⁹ The importance of hides and garments made of skins, from Cretan times until late in the classical period, is very great (see Cook, *op. cit.*; Nilsson, *op. cit.*, pp. 132–36; D. M. Robinson, "A New Arcadian Inscription," *CP*, XXXVIII [1943], 194–95; A. W. Persson, *The Religion of Greece in Prehistoric Times* [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1942], p. 161).

³⁰ *Op. cit.*, p. 496.

³¹ A. B. Cook, *Zeus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1914–40), I, 784.

³² Sir Arthur Evans, in *The Palace of Minos* (London: Macmillan, 1921–35), IV, 711–24, gives illustrations of the use of the phonetic sign for "swine" in Cretan names. This would indicate, apparently, that the connotation was not derogatory.

³³ *Zeus*, I. 652–68.

it is interesting to note that he connects the Cretan worship of Zeus with Thrace and declares that the intervening islands served as "stepping stones" for the spread of the cult. Ridgeway³⁴ also connects the aboriginal Thracians with the inhabitants of prehistoric Greece. It is a matter of fact that double axes have been found in very early deposits in Thrace. Pollux (iv. 100) says that our dance is Thracian *and Carian*; and the link between the Cretan and the Carian civilizations has been well established.

It is clear that in prehistoric Crete annual ceremonies were held in commemoration of the birth of the son of the Great Goddess and that a feature of those ceremonies was an armed dance recalling that of the mythical Curetes, who had come to be thought of as fertility demons.³⁵ These dances were not war dances but rather noise-making dances, to frighten off evil spirits and to invoke the powers of fertility. Since metal makes more noise than other substances, the dancers clashed metal objects together; and since the handiest metal objects for male dancers were weapons, the ceremony naturally became an armed dance. It was characterized by energetic leaps, sympathetic magic to cause the crops to grow high. Similar dances are found among all agricultural peoples. In view of the story in Athenaeus and the representations at Lycosura and on the "island gem," it seems likely that a mimetic pig dance, with much "moving about" and "grunting,"³⁶ may have been used, along with the armed dances, at the "secret rite" on Mount Dicte. If this is so, we have a combination of an armed dance and a pig dance, in a fertility connotation;

and if Cook is correct, the combination appears in a cult which can be associated with Thrace.

Frazer³⁷ has given us descriptions of two native dances of Borneo which should be considered in connection with our "Thracian pig dance." In one—a good-luck dance at the new year—a priestess, wearing a panther skin and a helmet, danced around a group of tethered pigs, while on either side of her two armed priests cut and thrust at evil spirits in the air and other priestesses seized little pigs and danced with them in their arms. Later the pigs were slain. In the other—a dance to expel evil spirits—women flogged a small suckling pig which was carried along, tied in a basket, and clashed metal cymbals and bells to drive off evil. In this case, also, the pig was later killed. These, obviously, are pig dances of a different sort from those we have already noted. They are not mimetic but strictly ritualistic. Their purpose, however, would seem to be similar to that of the Greek and Cretan dances.

Whether the "Thracian pig dance" actually made use of a little pig or whether one of the dancers in it portrayed a pig or whether it was merely a *κῶμος* or an obscene dance to invoke the powers of life and to repel evil spirits we do not know. We can only say that there is precedent for all these types. In any case the pig dance must have been a fertility rite, and it seems to have been spirited, perhaps even orgiastic.

In conclusion, we should like to call attention to an Athenian black-figured amphora of the sixth century B.C., now in the Walters Art Gallery in Baltimore, which was published by Dorothy Kent Hill in the *Gazette des beaux-arts*, XXIV (1943), 183–89. One side of the amphora

³⁴ *Op. cit.*, II, 491.

³⁵ Persson, *op. cit.*, p. 147.

³⁶ See Thomas, *op. cit.*, p. 525: "In Wales, the grunting of a pig is imitated during an eclipse of the moon."

³⁷ *Op. cit.*, VII, 95; IX, 200–201.

portrays six armed men, all facing to the left—"three warriors kneeling behind round shields and three archers standing erect" and brandishing bows and, perhaps, clubs. Miss Hill correctly interprets the scene as an armed dance and correctly notes that the costume of the warriors is Thracian. She believes, however, that the scene portrayed is a Pyrrhic dance, by Athenians wearing Thracian costume to honor "the Thracians who were allies of the Athenians during the age of Peisis-

tratos when the vase was made." It seems to us more likely that the dancers are actually meant to be Thracians and that the dance is not the Athenian Pyrrhic but rather one of the many Thracian armed dances for which there is evidence in Greek literature. Whether it is our *κολαβρισμός* or not it is impossible to determine; no gestures appropriate to a "pig dance" are evident.

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