

Come, Let Us Dance Together

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Source: *The Classical Weekly*, Vol. 43, No. 1 (Nov. 14, 1949), pp. 3-5

Published by: The Johns Hopkins University Press

Stable URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4342589>

Accessed: 27-07-2020 19:07 UTC

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THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY

Published weekly (each Monday), from mid-November through the first week of April, except in weeks in which there is an academic vacation (Thanksgiving Day, Christmas, New Year's Day, Lincoln's Birthday, Washington's Birthday). A volume contains sixteen issues; Volume XLIII contains issues dated November 14, 28; December 5, 12, 19 (1949); January 9, 16, 23, 30; February 6, 27; March 6, 13, 20, 27; April 3 (1950).

Owner and Publisher, The Classical Association of the Atlantic States. Place of Publication, Hunter College, Bronx Buildings, 2900 Goulden Avenue, New York 63, New York.

Editor, Harry L. Levy, Hunter College, Bronx Buildings, 2900 Goulden Avenue, New York 63, New York. Associate Editor, Edward A. Robinson, Fordham University, New York 58, New York. Secretary-Treasurer of C. A. A. S., Eugene W. Miller, 3328 Cathedral of Learning, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh 13, Pennsylvania.

General subscription price, \$3.00 per volume in the Western Hemisphere; elsewhere \$3.50. Price to members of the C. A. A. S., \$2.50. All subscriptions run by the volume. Single numbers, to subscribers, 20 cents, to others, 30 cents prepaid (otherwise 30 cents and 40 cents). If affidavit to invoice is required, 60 cents must be added to the subscription price. For residents of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, and the District of Columbia, a subscription to THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY (or, alternatively, to the *Classical Journal*) is included in the membership fee of the C. A. A. S., whose members are also entitled to the *Classical Outlook* and the *Classical Journal* at special prices in combinations available from the Secretary-Treasurer of the C. A. A. S.

Entry as second-class matter at the Post Office at New York, N. Y. under Act of March 3, 1879 pending, on a transfer from Philadelphia, Pa. Acceptance for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in the Act of February 28, 1925, authorized October 14, 1938.

VOL. XLIII, No. 1

NOVEMBER 14, 1949

WHOLE No. 1103

"COME, LET US DANCE TOGETHER!"¹

"Come, let us dance together!" This exhortation is a familiar one in Greek literature. A choral lyric, in the drama or elsewhere, often begins with some form of the admonition; and frequently a god or the Nymphs or the Muses, or other supernatural dancers, are included in the invitation.²

But when a Greek says "dance"—that is, when he uses the words *orcheisthai*, *choreuein*, *rhythmizein*, and their compounds, or similar expressions—he is not necessarily referring to what we know as a dance. The Greeks speak of the movements of the heavenly bodies, the clouds, rivers, the seasons, the dawn, storms, flames, and echoes as dances. In their literature, evil and fear dance over the world, as do friendship and love. War is a dance, as are all sorts of processions and parades and initiations. Animals, plants, and parts of the human body are said to dance; and inanimate objects of all kinds, when in motion, are spoken of as dancing. In short, among the Greeks the dance is a concept of rhythmical movement, in the widest sense of the term. Also, in their writings the dance is constantly used as a symbol of all that is harmonious, well-ordered, civilized. Conversely, the person or thing which is "danceless" (*achoros* or *achoreutos*) is not only foolish and undignified, but even joyless, sad, and pitiable.

Accordingly, when at this annual meeting of the Classical Association of the Atlantic States I say "Come, let us dance together," I am not proposing a large-scale barn-dance, or other startling terpsichorean outburst. I am using "dance" in the Greek sense, and I am plead-

ing for concerted, harmonious activity in our profession.

To my mind, such harmonious activity is needed in the field of the classics, now more than ever before. In these post-war years we have new responsibilities, new challenges to meet. Also, in spite of a deceptive appearance of calm, and even detached friendliness, on administrative surfaces right now, there are small, almost imperceptible encroachments upon the classics here and there—encroachments which should be recognized, and opposed at once with all our collective power.

How may we attain such an ideal of harmony? In one way only: Through active membership in all our classical organizations. We are fortunate, in our field, in having many such organizations, large and small. A manifold approach, a repeated and varied attack, a defense from many angles—all this, unified by an essential harmony of purpose, will be ours, for use in any crisis, if we will but utilize to the full the resources of our associations. These associations are our professional bulwarks; we must work actively to keep them at maximum strength.

What, then, are our associations? They are of four types—local, state, regional, and national; and each of the four types has its own distinctive work to do.

Local classical associations are the various "area" clubs like the Classical Association of Pittsburgh and Vicinity, the Classical Club and the Classical Society of Philadelphia, the New York Classical Club,³ and the Classical Club of the District of Columbia. Classical branches and sub-divisions of the state teachers' associations may also be included in this category. The local classical clubs are invaluable for the opportunity which they furnish for individual participation. Since their membership rolls are not unwieldy, anyone who is genuinely interested can have a chance for self-

³ The words "New York" in this title refer to New York City.

¹ This was delivered as the presidential address at the Forty-Second Annual Meeting of the Classical Association of the Atlantic States, in Buffalo, New York, on May 6, 1949.

² Aeschylus *Eumen.* 307; Sophocles *Antig.* 152-54; Euripides *Electra* 859-61, *Herc. Fur.* 785-89; Aristophanes *Frogs* 448-52, *Thesm.* 947; Pindar *Ol.* x (xi) 16.

expression in these clubs. He can hold office, can serve actively on committees, can present papers, can take part in discussions on matters affecting his professional life. Above all, the local club has a real function in fostering good will and friendship among classicists in its own area—a function the importance of which has not always, I fear, been fully appreciated.

The state classical associations are, in many cases, large, flourishing, and influential bodies. The states of Pennsylvania and New Jersey have classical associations which have done excellent constructive work on syllabi, etc., on a state-wide basis, and have been tireless and relentless in resisting encroachments upon, and injustices to, the classical curriculum in their respective states. The state of Ohio, outside our territory, has an excellent Classical Conference which, among other things, sends a high-school teacher to Rome or to Greece each summer. I wish that every state in our regional area might have such a classical association.

The large regional classical associations are the Classical Association of the Atlantic States, the Classical Association of New England, the Classical Association of the Middle West and South, and the Classical Association of the Pacific States. They are long-established and powerful, and have done a tremendous amount of good. One readily senses the feeling of fellowship and of strength at the annual meetings of these organizations. They handle well the problems peculiar to their own regions—problems which their members understand, as residents of other parts of the country never could. These associations are large enough to include in their membership, and to use on their programs, outstanding authorities in special fields of the classics; yet they are “regional” enough to furnish to a large number of members an opportunity for active participation, and to enable even small-town teachers to attend meetings frequently.

The regional associations sponsor varied and worthwhile projects. They award classical scholarships. They send teachers to Rome and to Athens. They conduct educational experiments. Our association is one of two which have their own periodicals. We are justly proud of *THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY*; we read it, we may write articles and book reviews for it, we may send in personal items for its columns. It is *ours*, in a very real sense.

There are other activities in which we of the CAAS might engage, if we desired to do so. We might, for instance, have a “vigilance committee,” to watch for and combat all attacks on the classics, large or small, within our area. We might also do more with Latin Week, on a regional scale. The celebration of a Latin Week seems to have originated in our territory. In 1940, Miss Della Vance, of the West View High School, Pittsburgh, Pa., began using this name for her annual exhibition in collaboration with the Buhl Planetarium in Pittsburgh. The idea of Latin Week quickly spread

throughout Pennsylvania and New Jersey, and thence to other states. Our association might well consider instituting a standing committee on Latin Week, to coordinate and improve local celebrations, and to extend them throughout the six states of our territory.

National classical associations are the American Philological Association and, in a sense, the Archaeological Institute of America; the American Classical League; the Junior Classical League; and such honorary societies as Eta Sigma Phi. Those interested in scholarship and research will want to be members of the first two of these associations; and all of us, really, should be interested in scholarship, for that is our field. The American Classical League also needs and welcomes us all as members; its motto, we recall, is “*Vestra causa tota nostra est.*” With thirty-one years of activity behind it, the League is doing more right now for the teaching of the classics than any other national organization. Its committees study, on a national scale, every serious problem facing the classics, and have found solutions for many of them, over the years. For example, the shortage of classical textbooks has been mitigated to a considerable degree through the efforts of a League committee headed by Alston H. Chase, which has worked in cooperation with a similar committee of the American Philological Association. The League’s membership fee of one dollar, bringing with it *The Classical Outlook* and also the privilege of attending the Latin Institute and of using, throughout the year, the unique facilities of the Service Bureau for Classical Teachers, remains the bargain of the classical world.

The Junior Classical League is a national federation of high-school classical clubs. In many states it has also a state-wide organization. The Junior Classical League appeals to the adolescent love for “belonging,” while it allows complete local freedom of organization and action. Incidentally, it always increases Latin enrollment in the schools in which it has chapters.

Eta Sigma Phi and other semi-honorary classical fraternities have a similar appeal, on the college level. They have done fine work in creating good will for the classics on college campuses, in promoting fellowship among embryo classical scholars, and in increasing the number of potential teachers of the classics.

We can “dance together,” then, by joining all the associations in our field, and working for, in, and through them; also, by setting up chapters of the Junior Classical League, if we teach in high school, of Eta Sigma Phi, if we teach in college. If we do all this, I think that we shall discover, perhaps to our own surprise, that, like most dancing, this particular kind is not only good for us, but also highly enjoyable!

When we are working together harmoniously, on a large scale, there are many ideas which we might try out or develop further. Before the war, B. L. Ullman and others suggested experimentation on the educational possibilities of a language-centered curriculum. The

war necessitated deferment of this idea; but might it not be tried out now? Also, we have a high professional challenge right now in the strong demands, on the part of both educators and the public at large, for more and better work in the "humanities." Mrs. L. R. Hadley is experimenting in this field, on the high-school level; and a committee of the American Classical League, under the chairmanship of Norman T. Pratt, Jr., is also studying the subject. Several colleges are making tentative ventures into a "major" in classical civilization and ancient literature in translation; more exploration could be done along these lines. Also, we might experiment further with intensive courses in the ancient languages—which we talked so much about during wartime. Hunter College is doing some experimenting in this direction; Dr. Thelma B. DeGraff has for three years given a full year of elementary Greek in an intensive six-weeks' course in the summer, and has found it highly successful.

Audio-visual aids are claiming more and more attention. Richard Walker, a teacher of Latin in our own territory, is doing outstanding work in this field. The Archaeological Institute of America and the American Classical League, working jointly, are about to issue a booklet on the subject. Radio courses in the classical literatures in translation have been tried for several years, notably by Dorrance S. White, at the University of Iowa. More work could be done in this direction. Also, medical authorities are becoming louder in their demands for courses in Latin and Greek which will meet the specific needs of pre-medical students. The American Classical League has a committee working on this subject, under the chairmanship of L. R. Lind. Similarly, those who train prospective college professors of English are demanding more Latin and Greek for their students. A. M. Withers has done excellent work in directing attention to this opportunity for teachers of the classics.

All over the country, there is an increasing interest in classical archaeology and the history of classical art, in mediaeval and Renaissance Latin, in modern Latin. Our associations might well take official cognizance of this interest, and endeavor to meet and gratify it.

What might well be our greatest opportunity of all, however, lies in another direction. The need of an international auxiliary language was never greater than it is in the world of today. Several writers (themselves not classicists) have called attention to the fact that Latin was for centuries a world language, that educated people in most countries are already familiar with Latin, and that a simplified version of Latin, such as "Interlingua," perhaps, or even mediaeval Latin, might easily be made the vehicle of international communication. The suggestion certainly has possibilities; but it will come to nothing unless our classical associations act upon it. The importance of the matter is such, it seems to me, that every one of our organizations might well have a committee considering it. Meanwhile, as individuals, we

can at least talk about it, and get our students to thinking about it. If the plan were adopted, Latin would, of course, be taught, in some form, in all the schools of the civilized world; and once again, as in years gone by, the beauties of Latin literature would be within the grasp, at least, of every educated person.

It is a period of great challenge to teachers of the classics, this "brave new post-war world" of ours. Let us not be *achoroi*—devoid of harmony, "dance-less," sad, pitiable. Let us rather "dance together"—and watch some, at least, of our highest aspirations come true.

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SOME TRANSLATION TECHNIQUES¹

In this paper I shall attempt to explain some of the techniques of analysis and translation which, for the past several years, I have been trying to teach my students in our Latin reading courses at Hunter College. By 'techniques of translation' I mean a set of procedures intended as a guide for student self-help in working out difficult Latin passages. I should like to make clear here, as I do in teaching these procedures to my students, that the suggested techniques are not meant to be applied as a first resort: if the student can understand the passage without them, that is all to the good. As a matter of fact, the hope is that by applying these procedures whenever they are needed, the student will gradually acquire the habits of thought which the techniques reflect, and end by applying them unconsciously as he reads. To put it another way, the formulation of these techniques represents an attempt to reduce to a sort of code some of the almost intuitive processes of selection which are employed by the experienced reader of Latin.

One may well ask, "Is it not the purpose of our entire instruction in Latin grammar to give the student control of the word-patterns of the Latin language? Why then the need for special analytical techniques?" It is true that a sound course in elementary Latin will acquaint the student with the basic patterns in which the various cases and moods are employed. These patterns, however, seem most frequently to be learned as separate entities, not as functional components of the Latin sentence. Perhaps the remedy resides in the complete re-working of our elementary Latin instruction from the functional rather than from the classificatory standpoint. I note with interest that the Iowa Latin Workshop, under Professor Else's direction, is investigating new approaches to the teaching of grammar along functional lines. Pending the formulation, testing, publication, and acceptance of new teaching materials, I feel that there is much that can be done to render functional the knowledge that the student has acquired

¹ This paper was read at the Forty-Second Annual Meeting of the Classical Association of the Atlantic States, in Buffalo, New York, on May 7, 1949.