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## THE DANCE OF THE HOLY BIRDS

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In a much discussed and not too well preserved fragment of Alcman,<sup>1</sup> Spartan maidens engaged in a choral song and dance at the festival of the Thosteria, in honor of the goddess Orthia, apparently speak of some of their number as Peleïades or “Doves”:

ταὶ Πελειάδες γὰρ ἄμιν  
Ὀρθία φάρος φεροίσαις  
νύκτα δι' ἀμβροσίαν ἄτε Σήριον  
ἄστρον ἀφειρομέναι μάχονται. (vss. 60–63)

Many scholars have been reluctant to accept this interpretation of the lines, and have been troubled as to its implications. It is, however, a possible interpretation; and as a matter of fact it connects in a most interesting manner with certain bits of literary and archaeological information which we possess in the field of Greek religion and the dance. Of these bits of information some scrutiny might not be amiss.

During the historical period of classical antiquity it seems to have been no novelty for servants of a deity to be called by the names of animals. Little girls who danced in a ceremony to Artemis were called “Bears.”<sup>2</sup> The Pythian priestess at Delphi (Pindar, *Pyth.* iv, 60 and schol.) and the votaries of Artemis at Ephesus (*Et. Mag.* 383, 30; Pausanias viii, 13, 1) were sometimes called “Bees.” We may recall, also, the “Lions,” “Ravens,” “Griffins,” “Hawks,” “Eagles,” etc., of later Mithraic ritual.<sup>3</sup> For prehistoric

<sup>1</sup> Frag. 23 Bergk. Cf. J. M. Edmonds, *Lyra Graeca*: London, Wm. Heinemann (1922), i, 50–59; H. W. Smyth, *Greek Melic Poets*: London, Macmillan (1900), 175–182.

<sup>2</sup> Aristophanes, *Lys.* 645 and schol.; Euripides, frag. 767, Nauck; Suidas, s.v. ἄρκτος; Hesychius, s.v. Βραυρωπλαῖς.

<sup>3</sup> Porphyry, *De Abstinēt.* iv, 16; Pseudo-Augustinus, *Quaest. vet. et novi Test.* cxiv.

Greece we have a similar tradition. At Pelasgian Dodona, in connection with the oldest oracle in Greece, prophecies are said to have been uttered by three<sup>4</sup> priestesses called Peleïades.<sup>5</sup> To Dione, goddess of Dodona, doves were sacred (Silius Italicus iv, 106). The oracle itself was believed to have been established in remote antiquity by a "black dove," which may well have been a dark-clad priestess. Many scholars believe that such titles go back to a primitive totemic worship of the animal named.<sup>6</sup>

Orthia, a goddess especially honored in the Peloponnesus, was a very ancient divinity of fertility, fused, in classical times, with Artemis.<sup>7</sup> Both Artemis and Orthia were known as "Mistress of Animals," *πόρνια θηρῶν*. Birds seem definitely to have been associated with Orthia, and the quail was particularly sacred to Artemis. We know that mimetic animal dances frequently formed part of the ritual to Artemis. Akin to both these goddesses was a third, Despoina, or "the Lady."<sup>8</sup> In the famous shrine of the latter at Lycosura (also in the Peloponnesus, incidentally), was found a piece of marble drapery, carved richly with representations of dancing women apparently wearing masks or hoods in the form of heads of animals—of asses, horses, bears, etc.<sup>9</sup>

In this connection certain art representations which have not received much attention seem to me to be of great significance. On

<sup>4</sup> Some writers say there were two. Cf. Servius, *Aen.* iii, 466; Sophocles, *Trach.* 172.

<sup>5</sup> Pausanias vii, 21, 2 and x, 12, 10; Herodotus ii, 55, 57; Strabo vii, 329 and frag. 1; Sophocles, *Trach.* 171 f.; Dionysius Halicarnassensis, *H.R.* i, 14; Hesychius, s.v. *πέλειαι*. Lewis R. Farnell, in *The Cults of the Greek States*: New York, Oxford University Press (1896), i, 39 and note a; and Walter Miller, *Daedalus and Thespis*: New York, Macmillan (1929), i, 89, are skeptical of the "dove priestesses"; but the testimony of the sources seems definite. Cf. D'Arcy W. Thompson, *A Glossary of Greek Birds*: New York, Oxford Univ. Press (1936), 229 f.; Salomon Reinach, *Orpheus*, translated by Florence Simmonds: New York, Liveright (1930), 98; Pauly-Wissowa, "Dodona" (Kern) and "Taube" (Steier). Steier and Thompson summarize well the chief theories which have been advanced as to the Peleïades.

<sup>6</sup> Reinach, *op. cit.*, 98; Farnell (*op. cit.*, ii, 427) says that the cult of the primitive Artemis is "full of ideas of totemism and the clan-animal."

<sup>7</sup> Pausanias viii, 23, 1. See Farnell, *op. cit.*, ii, 439, 445, 494, 570–572; Pauly-Wissowa, "Artemis" (Wernicke), 1394–1395; Martin P. Nilsson, *The Minoan-Mycenaean Religion*: New York, Oxford Univ. Press (1927), 433.

<sup>8</sup> Pauly-Wissowa, "Despoina," (Kern); Farnell, *op. cit.*, ii, 455 f; 573.

<sup>9</sup> Charles Normand, *Lycosura—Second Livre du Corpus des Monuments Grecs*: Paris, Au Bureau de l'Ami des Monuments et des Arts (undated), 26–28.

the island of Corcyra, at the site of a shrine of Artemis as *πότνια θηρῶν*, there was found a large deposit of terra-cotta statuettes of the divinity, all of the archaic period.<sup>10</sup> Many of the figures show the goddess holding a dove. In the case of certain of the statuettes a dancing votary or priestess is carved in relief on the lower part of the garment of the goddess—on a small scale, so that the human figure may be suitably differentiated from her divine mistress. With arms up and out from the shoulders, and with head turned in the strong movement of her ritual dance, the young woman moves swiftly, apparently around the goddess. Simple as are the lines of the relief, the feeling of motion and of speed is unmistakable; and the position of the arms is oddly suggestive of the wings of a bird.

In the Homeric poems the goddess Athena frequently appears as a bird,<sup>11</sup> and in classical times the owl and other birds (especially the crow<sup>12</sup> and the sea-gull)<sup>13</sup> were sacred to her. A dance of maiden votaries of Athena at the Panathenaea,<sup>14</sup> performed at night to the accompaniment of the weird cries of the dancers, may just possibly have been an owl dance; but the evidence is not completely conclusive.<sup>15</sup>

We have considered Orthia, Artemis, Despoina, and Athena. It is significant that all of these divinities are recognized as being in part, at least, adaptations of the great goddess of the Cretans<sup>16</sup>—the “Dove-Goddess,” “Mistress of Animals,” “Mother of Mountains,” or “Holy Lady,” as she has been variously entitled. Likewise, many scholars<sup>17</sup> think that the cults of Dodona and of Cnossus may have been closely connected, and that Dione, the goddess of Dodona, may also bear some relationship to the great divinity of Crete. To the Cretan goddess birds were sacred—par-

<sup>10</sup> Henri Lechat, “Terres cuites de Corcyre,” *Bull. de corr. hell.* xv (1891), 69–72, and Plate VII, No. 2.

<sup>11</sup> *Iliad* v, 778; vii, 58; xix, 350; *Odyssey* i, 319 f; iii, 371; xxii, 239.

<sup>12</sup> Callimachus, *Hecale* i, 2–4; Ovid, *Met.* ii, 542–595; Aelian, *Hist. Nat.* iii, 9; Aristotle, *Hist. Animal.* ix, 1, 16; Plutarch, *Inn. et Od.* iv.

<sup>13</sup> Pausanias i, 5, 3; Hesychius, s.v. *ἐνδαρθῦα*.

<sup>14</sup> Euripides, *Heracl.* 770–783; *CIA* ii, 163; Callimachus, *Hecale*, frag. 3 (43).

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Lillian B. Lawler, “The Dance of the Owl,” *T.A.P.A.* lxxx (1939), 482–502, and especially 492–495.

<sup>16</sup> See Nilsson, *op. cit.* (in note 7), 418–460.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. Mary H. Swindler, *Cretan Elements in the Cults and Ritual of Apollo*: “Bryn Mawr College Monograph Series” xiii (1913), 18.

ticularly when she was thought of as close to human beings. Minoan shrines, tombs, paintings of religious significance, and cult objects of all sorts are rich in representations of dove-like birds, many of them just folding their wings, as if descending from flight; and similar representations are found in portions of the Peloponnesus which came under strong Cretan influence. It has been pretty well established that in Cretan art, as in the art of many primitive peoples today,<sup>18</sup> and as in the Homeric poems and the Homeric hymns,<sup>19</sup> divinities repeatedly manifest themselves to man in bird form; this seems especially true of the great goddess of the Cretans.

Now a familiar motive for a religious dance among many peoples is a desire to invoke a deity.<sup>20</sup> For that purpose peoples in all parts of the world, in a form of sympathetic magic, employ dances mimetic of a bird or animal sacred to the deity to be invoked.<sup>21</sup> In many cases the dancers wear animal costumes and masks, and think of themselves as partaking of the nature of the sacred animals.<sup>22</sup> We might expect, then, that among the Cretans there may well have been dances of "Holy Birds"—that is, of priestesses who endeavored to invoke their goddess in ritual dances suggesting the flight and descent of a bird.

But have we any evidence of bird dances in Crete, or in lands influenced by the culture of the Cretans? Strikingly enough, we have. First of all, there is a persistent literary tradition<sup>23</sup> of a dance called the *geranos* or "the crane," said to have been instituted at Delos by Theseus, when he, with the Cretan princess Ariadne and

<sup>18</sup> Nilsson, *op. cit.* (note 7), 285–294; Arthur J. Evans, "The Mycenaean Tree and Pillar Cult and Its Mediterranean Relations," *Jour. of Hell. Stud.* xxi (1901), 105.

<sup>19</sup> *Hymn to Delian Apollo* 114. So also Aristophanes, *Birds* 575 and schol. Cf. the Christian Holy Spirit "descending as a dove."

<sup>20</sup> W. O. E. Oesterley, *The Sacred Dance*: New York, Macmillan (1923), 23–25; Max von Böhn, *Der Tanz*: Berlin, Wegweiser-Verlag (1925), 14–18.

<sup>21</sup> James G. Frazer, *The Golden Bough*, One-Volume Edition: New York, Macmillan (1930), 464; also *Folklore in the Old Testament*: London, Macmillan (1918), I, 40 f.; A. B. Cook, "Animal Worship in the Mycenaean Age," *Jour. of Hell. Stud.* xiv (1894), 117, 118, 156; von Böhn, *op. cit.*, 12, 14 f. Cf. Athenaeus x, 424 E. It is interesting to note that Geoffrey Gorer, in *Africa Dances*: London, Faber and Faber (1935), 321f., comments upon the "rather Minoan designs" on the costumes of African bird-dancers.

<sup>22</sup> Fritz Weege, *Der Tanz in der Antike*: Halle/Saale, Niemeyer (1926), 7.

<sup>23</sup> Plutarch, *Theseus* 21; Callimachus, *Hymns* iv, 305–315; Pollux iv, 101.

the Athenian youths and maidens, was on his way home from Crete. In reality, as Evans and Nilsson<sup>24</sup> have pointed out, Ariadne was probably a nature goddess of the Aegean islands, and the dance must have been one in her honor. Greek writers describe the dance in general as a "labyrinth" dance, but nevertheless name it for the bird. I believe that the dance of the literary tradition was probably a fusion or confusion of two earlier dances, both Cretan; that one of these, probably the older, was a mimetic bird dance done by priestesses of a nature goddess; and that from it the dance of Delos acquired movements in some way mimetic of the bird. From the other dance I believe it derived a choreography suggestive of the windings of the Labyrinth. Like another Ariadne dance, the one of *Iliad* XVIII, 590-606, the Delian *geranos* is done by both youths and maidens—a rather exceptional feature in an early dance form. It is just possible that this mixing of the sexes is in itself testimony to the fusing of the two dances—a bird dance of women, and a labyrinth dance of men. The two dances may have had certain features in common which facilitated amalgamation. In any case, the tradition of the *geranos* definitely connects a kind of bird dance with Cretan civilization.<sup>25</sup> I hope to treat of the Ariadne dances further on another occasion.

We have, I believe, direct evidence of another type of bird dance in Crete. In 1901, D. G. Hogarth found at Zakro a large number of Late Minoan sealings,<sup>26</sup> on each of several of which appears a single figure of the type which both Evans and Hogarth call the "Eagle-Lady." In its most striking form it is seen as a bird-headed, winged woman, apparently engaged in a vigorous dance step. The breasts are prominent, and the dress is typically Cretan, with tight waistline and flounced skirt. Variants of the figure appear with a design like a double axe where the head should be, or even with an aniconic head; with a fan-shaped tail instead of a dress; or with vari-

<sup>24</sup> Arthur J. Evans, "The Palace of Minos—Provisional Report for the Year 1903," *Ann. of the Brit. School in Ath.* ix (1902-03), 111; Nilsson, *op. cit.* (note 7), 452.

<sup>25</sup> Louis Séchan, *La Danse Grecque Antique*: Paris, De Boccard (1930), 119-123; Kurt Latte, "De Saltationibus Graecorum Capita Quinque," *Religionsgesch. Versuche u. Vorarbeiten* xiii, 3. Heft (1913), 68-71; and Weege, *op. cit.* (note 22), 60-65, discuss the *geranos* at some length.

<sup>26</sup> D. G. Hogarth, "The Zakro Sealings," *Jour. of Hell. Stud.* xxii (1902), 76-93.

ous parts of the figure reduced to conventionalized schemes. Other sealings (p. 88) show what appear to be bird-masks. Evans had previously reported a similar Eagle-Lady figure "on some unpublished gems from Crete."<sup>27</sup> Hogarth definitely asserted (p. 91) that "few will maintain that the fantastic forms have anything to do with cult," and that they do not represent gods, priests, or votaries, but are purely imaginative art forms made under Egyptian influence. On the other hand, he specifically says (p. 77) that a Zakro sealing of a different type, found with the Eagle-Lady representations, "shows a descending deity." In any case, the double-axe head on one of the sealings gives one cult association, at least. Furthermore, the female figures with birds on the heads or arms found at such sites as Mycenae and Cnossus, and recently at Bairia in Crete (*A J A* XLIII (1939), 323), all in sacral settings, would confirm the hypothesis that the Eagle-Lady may have religious implications. It will be recalled that Minoan and Mycenaean art abounds in representations of animal-headed beings, some of which are certainly dancing. These are usually interpreted as nature daemons, and in fact many of them probably are meant to be just that; but the influence of the daemon concept upon cult dances must have been great.

The inference is not an illogical one, then, that the Eagle-Lady sealings may reflect a real cult dance. The fact that a single dancer is portrayed is not significant in the case of a sealing; it might indicate a solo dance, or, again, it might be the portrayal, for artistic reasons and in a limited space, of one typical dancer of a group. In any case, the sealings recall the Corcyra terra-cottas, not only in the matter of the single female dancer, but in the posture of the wing-arms, and also in the marked feeling of speed and vigor which the dancer imparts. Here we may note the tradition of liveliness as a distinguishing quality of the Cretan dance.<sup>28</sup> The eagle head and the wings might possibly be a part of the artist's convention for portraying a mimetic animal dance—in other words, a sort of therianthropic visualization of a ritual performance; however,

<sup>27</sup> Arthur J. Evans, "Further Discoveries of Cretan and Aegean Script," *Jour. of Hell. Stud.* xvii (1897), 370.

<sup>28</sup> Lucian, *De Salt.* 8; Euripides, *Bacch.* 120–134. Cf. Evans, *op. cit.* (note 24), 110.

the bird-mask sealings would suggest rather that we have here actual hoodlike masks and elaborately "winged" costumes. In this respect we are reminded of the *Lycosura* drapery.

A third piece of evidence for a Cretan bird-dance is the famous Palaikastro group<sup>29</sup>—three small terra-cotta women moving in a circle around a lyre player, their arms held out and up from the shoulders in the same "wing" pose that we have noted at Zakro and Corcyra. Some writers regard this pose as merely a gesture of adoration; however, the fact that six terra-cotta doves, apparently belonging to the group, were found with the figures, tends to confirm the initial bird-like impression given by the little dancers.<sup>30</sup>

We have, then, I believe, convincing evidence for the existence of a dance of the "Holy Birds" in Crete. It must have been highly mimetic, but richly varied to suit the taste and abilities of each dancer, as are dances in Greece and Crete today. Arm schemata suggesting the movement of wings must have been very important. Throughout there must have been an illusion of flight and descent, of swooping and of soaring.

Possibilities of the spread of the Cretan dance to the eastward are inherent in the nature of such dove cults as those of Semiramis, Ishtar, Atargatis, Meter Heipta, and others.<sup>31</sup> Furthermore, on the island of Cyprus certain early Iron-Age terra-cottas, depicting animal-headed votaries and animal masks, have been found in shrines; also, small ring-dance groups strikingly like the Palaikastro dancers have been unearthed.<sup>32</sup> The group numbered 2118 in the Cesnola collection in the Metropolitan Museum, New York City (Catalogue, p. 347), of three figures, probably female, wearing long gowns and dancing around a flute player, shows a particularly

<sup>29</sup> R. M. Dawkins, "Excavations at Palaikastro, III," *Ann. of the Brit. School at Ath.* x (1903-04), 216-220.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Lillian B. Lawler, "The Dancing Figures from Palaikastro," abstracted in *A J A* XLIV (1940), 106 f.

<sup>31</sup> Diodorus Siculus II, 4, 2; Lucian, *De Dea Syr.* 2; 14; Ovid, *Met.* iv, 47. Cf. Evans, *op. cit.* (note 18), 105; Pauly-Wissowa, "Taube"; Reinach, *op. cit.* (note 5), 36; Thompson, *op. cit.* (note 5), 244-246.

<sup>32</sup> John L. Myres, *Handbook of the Cesnola Collection of Antiquities from Cyprus*: New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art (1914), 150 f.; 340; 342; 347.



noticeable resemblance to the Palaikastro "Holy Birds." It will be recalled that the chief Greek divinity of the island of Cyprus was Aphrodite, who in her fertility aspects had close connections with the various Eastern goddesses whom we have mentioned; and that to Aphrodite, as to the Eastern goddesses, doves were sacred from earliest times (Herodotus I, 105; Pausanias I, 14, 7).

A large number of dances developed by the Cretans were taken over by the Greeks, especially those of the Peloponnesus. In fact, so great was Greek dependence upon Crete in this field of artistic activity that in Greek literature the Cretans are regularly given credit for the actual invention of the dance.<sup>33</sup> Nothing could be more natural, then, than that a swiftly-moving, colorful, spectacular bird dance should pass easily from Crete to Greece, be absorbed into Greek ritual, and be modified to suit Greek taste as time went on. Philostratus (*Imag.* II, 33) seems to describe just such a dance, by *ἰέπειαι Δωδωνίδες*, around a golden dove on the sacred tree at Dodona. I believe that the transfer did take place, and that the Alcman fragment preserves a memory of one of the earlier Greek forms of the borrowed dance.

A scrutiny of the Alcman poem confirms much that we have been able to deduce as to the nature of that dance. It is done by maidens, at a festival of a fertility goddess. The meter upholds the evidence for a swift tempo.<sup>34</sup> The fact that the poem is written in strophes suggests the use of changing and recurring dance motifs—perhaps a procession, interrupted at regular intervals by a circle formation. During the performance the singers and dancers probably uttered cries (vss. 85–87). That the dancers thought of themselves as birds may be indicated by the use of *γλαύξ* in vs. 87; however, the sentence is metaphorical, and we cannot be too sure. Some light is thrown upon the matter by a fragment (No. 70, Edmonds) from another partheneion of Alcman: *οἶδα δ' ὀρνίχων νόμῳ πάντων*.

One editor (Edmonds) thinks that some of the dancers, at least,

<sup>33</sup> Lucian, *De Salt.* 8; Diodorus Siculus V, 66; Athenaeus V, 181 B; Strabo 481, 18; Schol. Pindar, *Pyth.* II, 127; Proclus 246.

<sup>34</sup> However, we must not forget that folk-dancers sometimes keep their own tempo and rhythm, quite apart from that of the singers—a phenomenon which I myself have observed at the Easter Monday dances in modern Megara. Cf. Curt Sachs, *World History of the Dance*: New York, Norton (1937), 176.

were costumed as doves. This would fit in with another fragment (No. 19, Edmonds) of Alcman, in which somebody is spoken of as "garbed in the skins of beasts." The Cretan and Cypriote art representations might attest the use in some of the dances of a mask, and of a costume imitative of wings at the top, but resembling from the breast down the fashionable dress of the day. There is, however, no specific evidence on costume in the Alcman fragment itself.

The poem yields a few new details as to the Greek form of the dance: It was apparently competitive on some occasions, with two sets of dancers involved (vss. 60–63). Perhaps, also, as in dances of modern Greek women, the singers and dancers formed separate groups (*cf. τὰ Πελειάδες γὰρ ἄμυν . . . μάχονται*). With the dance went a presentation of a robe to the goddess (vs. 61). The dance was apparently performed at night (vs. 62).

This brings us to a significant point. In addition to their association with fertility magic, birds (and deities to which they were sacred) seem in antiquity to have had chthonic associations as well.<sup>35</sup> We have noted nocturnal dances to Athena. There seem to have been many dances performed to Artemis at night. It may be that "Holy Bird" dances were often used in chthonic ceremonies at night, as well as in invocations at other times.

Mimetic animal dances, and especially bird dances, among peoples in all parts of the world, are frequently ecstatic.<sup>36</sup> It is quite possible that our "Holy Birds" danced until they reached a state of delirium and thought they beheld their goddess actually descending to them, either in her own form or in that of a bird. In this connection a recent article by G. W. Elderkin, "The Sacred Doves at Delphi" (*Class. Phil.* xxxv (1940), 49–52), is most interesting. Dr. Elderkin's thesis is that the dove is associated with wine, as well as with fertility, from remote prehistoric times; that the doves at Delphi (Euripides, *Ion* 1189 ff.) suggest divine in-

<sup>35</sup> Pauly-Wissowa, "Taube"; Evans, *op. cit.* (note 18), 105. Georg Weicker, in *Der Seelenvogel in der alten Litteratur und Kunst*: Leipzig, Teubner (1902), treats fully the ancient use of woman-headed birds to represent souls of the dead.

<sup>36</sup> Gorer, *op. cit.* (note 21), 305, 320–322; Oesterley, *op. cit.* (note 20), 26, 27, 37, 84, 108; William Ridgeway, *Dramas and Dramatic Dances of Non-European Races*: Cambridge, at the Univ. Press (1915), 396.

toxication in the prophecies of the Pythia, and perhaps also of the priestesses at Dodona; and that the doves connect with Delphi the worship of Aphrodite and of Dionysus. It might be added that the link between Apollo and Aphrodite might well be Artemis, who in many of her aspects overlaps Aphrodite and ultimately the Cretan goddess as well, to whom Delphi may at one time have been sacred; and that the association with Dionysus may have been helped along by the fact that the primitive Artemis seems to have been honored at harvest and vintage seasons, and that wine may have played a part in her ritual.<sup>37</sup> The association of Dionysus and Artemis further illuminates a situation which at first sight is very puzzling, *viz.*, the fact that in representations of Dionysiac dances women dancers frequently are shown with arms outspread in a winglike manner, and with one or both hands covered by, or twisted into, the garment.<sup>38</sup> This "wing-sleeved dancer," in fact, is one of the most characteristic features of portrayals of the Dionysiac dance. The pose may represent a religious desire to have the hands covered, or a realistic reminder of the fact that the Dionysiac dances often took place outdoors, in winter. It is just possible, on the other hand, that it may attest a borrowing by Dionysiac priestesses of some of the schemata of a bird dance formerly a part of the worship of Artemis as a goddess of fertility. The Thyiad dances were often nocturnal (Pindar, *Pyth.* III, 77).

There are numerous records in Greek literature and art of bird dances other than those we have considered. There are, *e.g.*, the several owl dances, probably done by men, originally Mycenaean tomb dances, later a part of the satyr play or of burlesque performances of one sort or another.<sup>39</sup> There were the swallow dances, done by boys at Colophon,<sup>40</sup> a city sacred to Artemis (Strabo 643). There is the Aegina astragalos (Brit. Mus. E 783),<sup>41</sup> on which little

<sup>37</sup> Pausanias III, 26, 11; Athenaeus XIV, 629 E. Cf. Heinz Schnabel, *Kordax*: Munich, Beck (1910), 44 f. Drugs were (and still are) used to produce delirium in ancient Mexican dances; see Auguste Génin, *Notes sur les danses, la musique, et les chants des Mexicains anciens et modernes*: Paris, Leroux (1913), 4. This work appears in translation in the *Mexican Magazine* (Mexico City), III (Jan., 1927), 7-33.

<sup>38</sup> Lillian B. Lawler, "The Maenads," *Mem. Amer. Acad. in Rome* VI (1927), 14, 17, 26 f. <sup>39</sup> Lawler, *op. cit.* (note 15). <sup>40</sup> Weege, *op. cit.* (note 22), 125.

<sup>41</sup> Cf. J. Six, "Auræ," *Jour. Hell. Stud.* XIII (1893), 131-136. Bird-dancers suspended

ladies with "wing-sleeved" arms dance as if suspended by cords. Certain aspects of the astragalos paintings suggest that the dances may be connected with a dramatic performance. Is it too far-fetched a surmise, perhaps, that in the fifth-century Athenian theater, when stage machinery was being developed, a *geranos* dance may have meant something quite different from the Delian dance of the same name? Be that as it may, we have record in tragedy of the cock dance of Phrynichus (Aristophanes, *Wasps* 1490), and in comedy of the choral evolutions of the *Birds* of Aristophanes and of Magnes, and perhaps also of "birds" in the *Theria* of Crates. In addition, we have the famous bird-comus representations of the British Museum oenochoe and the Berlin amphora,<sup>42</sup> and we may remember the odd coincidence of Euripides' words (*Ion*, 1197): κῶμος πελειῶν.

All of these dances, however, differ obviously from the dance of women votaries or priestesses which we have been considering. Perhaps by the classical period the ancient dance of the "Holy Birds" may have survived chiefly in a few rituals the ultimate purpose of which was half-forgotten; and other bird dances of various sorts may have come to be used often (as is the Eagle Dance of our own Indians today) simply as a beautiful and graceful mimetic spectacle.

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from cords can still be seen in the Mexican "volador," an ancient dance to a god of fertility. See Génin, *op. cit.* (note 37), 9; English version, 22; V. Kelsey and L. Osborne, *Four Keys to Guatemala*: New York, Funk & Wagnalls (1939), 108 f.; F. M. Brown, *America's Yesterday*: Philadelphia, Lippincott (1937), 162.

<sup>42</sup> Illustrated in Roy C. Flickinger, *The Greek Theater and Its Drama*<sup>3</sup>: Chicago, Univ. Press (1926), fig. 12 (p. 32) and fig. 13 (p. 38).