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“THE LILY” IN THE DANCE.

Among the figures, or *schemata*, of the Greek dance, the names of which have come down to modern times in tantalizingly vague connotations, is the “lily”—*κρίνον*. Athenaeus (III, 114 f), after speaking of the word as the name of a kind of loaf of bread, remarks: *καλούμενον καὶ σχῆμά τι χορικῆς ὀρχήσεως παρ’ Ἀπολλοφάνει ἐν Δαλίδι*. Hesychius (s. v.) notes the curious (probably slang) use of the word to mean a beggar, a corpse, or a refugee, and adds: *καὶ σχῆμα χορικῆς ὀρχήσεως*. Eustathius (1018) mentions the word as denoting a cake, and then quotes Athenaeus. Most modern writers on the dance merely make the comment that the nature of the dance or *schema* so designated is unknown.

Even the origin of the word *κρίνον* is uncertain. Its synonym, *λείριον*,¹ and the cognate Latin *lilium*² seem to be derived from some Mediterranean language as yet undetermined. Under these circumstances, one naturally thinks of Crete as a possible source for both the *schema* and the word that designates it.³ The Greeks, as we know, preserved in many phases of their dance certain elements which had been Cretan; and, in fact, they looked upon the Cretans as “inventors” of the art of the dance. In particular, many Greek dances which were lively, or spectacular, or ecstatic were said to be of Cretan origin. There seems to be no doubt but that the dances of the Cretans were spirited, and strikingly beautiful to look upon.

Among the Cretans, as Evans and other scholars have demonstrated convincingly, the lily is “preeminently the sacred flower.”⁴ It appears, usually in conventionalized fleur-de-lis

¹ Émile Boisacq, *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue grecque*² (Heidelberg, Winter, 1923), s. v.

² A. Walde and J. B. Hofmann, *Lateinisches etymologisches Wörterbuch*³ (Heidelberg, Winter, 1938), s. v.

³ Cf. Alice E. Kober on the word *κρίνον*, *A. J. P.*, LXIII (1942), pp. 323-4. It may be of some significance that Apollphanes, the writer whom Athenaeus cites as his source on the word, wrote a play called *Κρήτες*. The scholiast on *Iliad*, XXII, 391 says that one of the Idaean Dactyli was named Krinoeis.

⁴ Arthur J. Evans, *The Palace of Minos* (London, Macmillan, 1921-35), II, pp. 776-7; 792; 473; Martin Möbius, “Pflanzenbilder der Minoischen Kunst in Botanischer Betrachtung,” *Jahrb.*, XLVIII (1933), pp. 2-6.

form, on innumerable art objects. It is to be seen on the crown and collar of the Priest-King.⁵ It is offered to the Great Goddess by her votaries,⁶ and the Goddess herself carries it or wears it in her hair.⁷ It is portrayed on rings, on jars, jugs, and vases, on a bronze basin, on an ivory plaque, on a larnax, on the back of a statuette, and on frescoes. In art representations from the mainland of Greece, presumably made under Cretan influence, or even by Cretan artists, it is hardly less frequent. There are lilies in gold foil and in repoussé work, on signet rings and on sword blades; and a stately lady on a fresco from Thebes carries lilies in her hand.⁸

But is there evidence of a "lily" dance figure in Cretan art? We have noted the representations of women bringing lilies to the Goddess. In antiquity, rhythmic processions were regarded as dances; and "offering" dances were not uncommon. In Greek times, dances of young girls who pluck and carry flowers or garlands are abundantly attested, particularly at the Anthesphoria, a spring festival to Persephone (Strabo, 256, 393; Pollux, I, 37; Athenaeus, XII, 554 b); at the Ersantheia (Hesychius, *s. v.*) in the Peloponnesus; at festivals of Hera Antheia (Pausanias, II, 22, 1; Pollux, IV, 78), of Antheia (Hesychius, *s. v.*) or Aphrodite in Crete, etc. Furthermore, the *ἄνθεμα*, a dance in which two half-choruses approached each other singing *ποῦ μοι τὰ ρόδα, ποῦ μοι τὰ ἴα, ποῦ μοι τὰ καλὰ σέλινα; ταδὶ τὰ ρόδα*, etc. (Athenaeus, XIV, 629 e), is well known. Was the *κρίνον*, then, a phase of one of these dances, in which young women carried flowers? Probably not, for the *κρίνον* was but a *schema*, not a whole dance; and if the dancers carried lilies they would probably do so throughout the dance, and not in one figure alone. Besides, our sources mention the *κρίνον* quite apart from such words as *ἄνθεμα*, *ἀνθροφόροι*, etc., as if it were a separate thing.

On a famous gold ring found at Isopata, in Crete, there is a representation of a ritual dance, performed by three women,

⁵ Evans, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 778, 781, and frontispiece; H. T. Bossert, *The Art of Ancient Crete* (London, Zwemmer, 1937), fig. 255.

⁶ Evans, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 777, 786.

⁷ Evans, *op. cit.*, II, p. 473; A. B. Cook, *Zeus*, II (Cambridge Univ. Press, 1925), p. 49, n. 1.

⁸ Evans, *op. cit.*, II, p. 748 and fig. 483; Bossert, *op. cit.*, fig. 40.

apparently as an invocation of the Great Goddess, who, even as they dance, descends to them. This dance takes place in a field of lilies.⁹ Was the κρίνον perhaps an invocation dance of this type, to a Goddess of Flowers, in a field of lilies? Again the fact that the κρίνον was but a *schema*, and not a complete dance, presents difficulties.

In the northwestern part of the palace at Cnossus, Sir Arthur Evans found bits of a miniature fresco¹⁰ which proved to be a representation of a ritual dance, performed by women in a theatral area filled with a gala crowd of excited spectators of both sexes. Mackenzie¹¹ believed that the fresco portrayed a whirling "skirt dance." Evans associated it with the *geranos* and the dance of *Iliad*, XVIII, 590-606; but in those dances both men and women participate, moving in one long line, with hands joined. In the fresco the dancers are all women, and they seem to perform individually, with hands free. Naturally, so fragmentary a painting cannot be pressed too far as evidence. The whole center of the dancing place, in fact, is missing. Nevertheless, the fourteen dancers who remain, on the right side of the composition, do give some indication of a choreographic formation similar to the pattern of a conventionalized lily, as it commonly appears in Cretan art. The Cretan fleur-de-lis usually shows two curving volutes to suggest petals, and, between them, at the top, straight lines or dots to suggest stamens. In the alignment of the dancers of the miniature fresco, unmistakably documented by bits of coping, overlapping dresses, etc., the two characteristic volutes are quite clear; and at least one, and possibly three, of the women advance between the volutes to give the "stamen" effect. The whole of the "lily" is seen from the side, and a little aslant. It may be that other groups in the complete picture also formed "lilies"—the field would permit of perhaps three such formations, and the number three seems to have had a special significance in Crete. A pattern of this sort

⁹ Evans, *op. cit.*, III, p. 68 and fig. 38; II, p. 776; Cook, *op. cit.*, II, p. 49 and fig. 21; Bossert, *op. cit.*, fig. 397 f; cf. Sappho, Frag. 114 (Edmonds), and *Homeric Hymn*, XXX, to Ge, 14-15.

¹⁰ Evans, *op. cit.*, III, pp. 66-80, and Pl. XVIII; Mary H. Swindler, *Ancient Painting* (New Haven, Yale Univ. Press, 1929), pp. 82-3, and fig. 156.

¹¹ Duncan Mackenzie, "Cretan Palaces and the Aegean Civilization, II," *B. S. A.*, XII (1905-06), p. 248.

would be best seen by an audience seated a little above the dancers and looking down upon them; and this is exactly the arrangement of most of the spectators in the miniature fresco.

The "lily" *schema*, then, may have been one in which the dancers "made a picture" of a conventionalized lily and stood for a moment in that pattern, so that spectators might see it clearly. Such "pictures" or designs have been very common in group dancing, in all ages; and sometimes the steps of even a single dancer may outline a significant pattern.¹²

If the *κρίνον* was a *schema* of the Cretan dance, it must have been of a religious nature and have been performed in honor of the Great Goddess, to whom the lily was sacred. But where in the Greek dance would such a *schema* probably have been used?

We are told by many authors that in the mysteries at Eleusis,¹³ and even more distinctively at the festival of the Thesmophoria in Greek cities all over the ancient world,¹⁴ choruses of women danced a mimetic enactment of the story of Persephone. These dances, performed in the autumn, were quite distinct from the spring dances of women carrying flowers, performed to Persephone at the Anthesphoria and to other goddesses upon set occasions. The dances of the Eleusinian mysteries and of the Thesmophoria seem to have portrayed, by choreography and gesture, how Persephone plucked flowers with her companions in a green meadow; how she spied a lovely flower (or flowers) apart from the others, and, wandering away, was seized and carried off by Pluto; how her companions, and later her mother, sought her far and wide.¹⁵

¹² See Ted Shawn, *Ruth St. Denis, Pioneer and Prophet* (San Francisco, Nash, 1920), I, p. 31. A part of Miss St. Denis' Radha dance "follows the lines of an open lotus flower, the steps leading from the center of the flower to the point of each petal."

¹³ Lewis R. Farnell, *The Cults of the Greek States* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1896), III, pp. 173-81 and n. 218.

¹⁴ Farnell, *op. cit.*, III, pp. 87, 118. On pp. 326-33 of the same volume, Farnell collects the ancient evidence for the dances at the Thesmophoria. Naturally, Aristophanes in his *Thesmophoriazusae* gives no information on the secret mimetic dances, although lines 947-1000 do accompany a dance.

¹⁵ A "peering" *schema* of Cretan origin probably formed a part of this dance. See Lillian B. Lawler, "The Dance of the Owl," *T. A. P. A.*, LXX (1939), pp. 496-9, and n. 73. Cf. Shawn, *op. cit.*, I, p. 70: "The

Writers who tell the story of the abduction of Persephone usually name the flowers which she was picking at the time. *Homeric Hymn*, II, to Demeter (7-8) mentions, along with other flowers, *νάρκισσον* and *ἴα καλά*; and later (425-8) in the same poem Persephone herself names *λείρια* among the flowers. Columella (X, 270) says "*lilia carpsit.*" Claudian (*De Rapt. Pros.*, II, 128-9) says "*lilia fuscis intexit violis,*" and adds, in naming some of the other flowers, "*narcissum.*" There is, then, specific mention of the lily, along with other flowers, in connection with Persephone. The scholiast on Sophocles, *Oed. Col.*, 674 says that the goddess was gathering "*narcissos.*" Diodorus Siculus (V, 3, 2-3) speaks of *ἴα* among the flowers which are abundant the whole year around in the part of Sicily usually regarded as the locale of the story. Athenaeus, it is interesting to note, identifies *νάρκισσος* with *λείριον* (XV, 681 e) and both *κρίνον* and *λείριον* with *ἴον* (681 b).¹⁶

Nilsson¹⁷ has set forth convincingly the probability that there is much that was originally pre-Greek in the cult of Demeter, "the Mother," and Persephone, "the Maid"—in particular, the myth of the abduction of Persephone, and even her very name; and that both the Eleusinian mysteries and the Thesmophoria show Minoan elements. What, then, could be more natural than that a Cretan "lily" dance figure, of ritualistic significance and of spectacular beauty, should appear in a dance connected with such a cult? The appropriateness of the figure is even more conspicuous if Farnell was correct in his conjecture that the lily was a symbol of immortality among the Greeks.¹⁸ It is striking that Evans, on stylistic grounds, connects the miniature

story underlying all Siamese dancing is the great epic story of the Ramayana—the abduction of Sita by Ravar, and her rescue by Rama."

¹⁶ See Pauly-Wissowa-Kroll, s. v. "Gartenbau," cols. 770, 792-4. The point is made there that even today white lilies grow wild in great numbers near Henna, in Sicily.

¹⁷ Martin P. Nilsson, *Greek Popular Religion* (New York, Columbia Univ. Press, 1940), pp. 46, 53; *The Minoan-Mycenaean Religion* (New York, Oxford Univ. Press, 1927), pp. 455-6, 487, 490, 505-6. Axel W. Persson (*The Religion of Greece in Prehistoric Times* [Univ. of California Press, 1942], p. 118), and Valentine Müller (*C. W.*, XXXVI [1942], p. 59) believe that the mysteries were post-Mycenaean.

¹⁸ Lewis R. Farnell, "Pausanias V, 11, 1," *C. R.*, IV (1890), pp. 68-9. Cf. Pausanias, V, 22, 5. Cook, *op. cit.*, III, p. 955, n. 1, thinks it merely typified fertility in the vegetable world.

fresco with the designs on the "Ring of Nestor," which he believes (III, pp. 146-57) represent an initiation scene in the Land of the Blest.

In the mystic dances at Eleusis and at the Thesmophoria, the "lily" *schema* may well have been used to symbolize the flowery meadow in which the goddess was seized by Pluto. Such symbolic representations undoubtedly played a large part in Greek mimetic dances, even as they do in the performances of the Chinese theater, to transport the spectators in imagination to the mythological scene. It is interesting to note the insistence upon this same idea of a flowery meadow in, for instance, the songs of the Mystae in the *Frogs* of Aristophanes—cf. lines 351, 373-4, 440-2, 448-53; and 395-6, where they invoke the goddess who "often joins in our dances." Libanius (*On the Dancers*, 116) speaks of the dancer as leading the spectator into flowery meadows and uses the word *ψυχαγωγία*, with all its connotations of the leading of the soul to the realms of the blest. The same author (118) mentions, as characteristic activities of dancers, rapid whirling, sudden stops, and patterns made while the dancers are standing still—as if glued together!

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A NEW READING OF THE GERMANICUS PAPYRUS.

James H. Oliver's recent remark¹ that one short passage in the much discussed edict of Germanicus² had not yet been deciphered, though the writing is perfectly legible, has moved me to attack the puzzle. I have succeeded in reading in lines 42 f.: τὰ δὲ ἡμέτερα ἔνλογα παρεπ(όμενά) ἐστὶν τῆς ἐκείνων θεϊότητος, which I translate: "The things for which I receive credit are implications of their divinity." The letters ΠΑΠΕΠ and line representing A, written above ΕΠ, were seen by Wilamowitz, as was EN at the beginning of the preceding word. There is an

¹ *A. J. A.*, XLVI (1942), p. 388.

² Published with photograph by Wilamowitz and Zucker in *Berl. Sitzb.*, 1911, pp. 794-821. For the text see *Select Papyri*, with an English translation by A. S. Hunt and C. C. Edgar, in the Loeb Classical Library (Vol. II, pp. 77 f., no. 211).