DIONYSIAC ELEMENTS IN SPARTAN CULT DANCES

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THIS PAPER IS AN ATTEMPT to investigate whether the literary and archaeological sources which apply Dionysiac features to Spartan ritual dancing correspond to actual cult practice. By examining the act of dancing as an integral part of Spartan religious and social life and by placing Dionysos at the centre of the picture, it aims to elucidate the connection between the above evidence and the Spartan attitude towards drama in general.

In the archaic period, Sparta was very famous as a dancing-place.[1] Homer describes the city as εὐρύχορος (*Od.* 13.414; 15.1): "with broad dancing place," an epithet implying an interest in this sort of artistic activity.[2] Nevertheless, εὐρύχορος could have been applied to Sparta as "a common decorative epithet of cities and districts," a meaning that "in view of the importance of the χορός in the religious life of the Greeks is perfectly acceptable";[3] but the abundant evidence for the city's achievement in dancing argues against this interpretation. Ion of Samos calls Sparta καλλίχορος, that is "with fine dancing places,"[4] where dances were performed accompanied by songs and music. In Pausanias' time the Spartan *agora* was called χορός and it was the place where the ephebes performed dances in honour of Apollo during the Gymnopaidiai festival (Paus. 3.11.9).[5] Χορός as well as χῶρος, i.e., dance and the place for the performing

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[1] See mainly Fitzhardinge 1980: 129 ff.; Calame 1983: xi–xxi (Introduction). But see also Pettersson (1992: 50, 55), who emphasizes that dance was "a fundamental feature of Spartan civilization for a period of more than a millennium." Sparta later became famous for her austerity, restricted in social, political, and particularly in military life. On Sparta's "peculiarity," especially in its political development, see Cartledge 1980: esp. 91; *idem* 1987: 413–420.

[2] For dancing at Menelaos' palace on the occasion of the wedding of his daughter Hermione, see Hom. *Od.* 4.15–19. This scene of dancing in Homeric Sparta accords well with later evidence which presents this city as a place of attraction for poets and musicians and of famous choruses performed during the Karneia, the Hyakinthia, and the Gymnopaidiai festivals: Webster 1970: 61–63; Easterling and Knox 1985: 128; Pettersson 1992: *passim*, esp. 48–56. For Σπάρτη εὐρύχορος see also Simonides fr. 7 (= Page 1975: 104–105).

[3] Heubeck, West, and Hainsworth 1988: 293 (on 6.4); cf. Heubeck and Hoekstra 1989: 190 (on 13.414). For the various meanings of χορός, see Lonsdale 1993: 114–121.

[4] Page 1975: 508–509. Thaletas, another lyric poet, "praised the Spartans for excellence in forming choruses" (Lloyd-Jones 1990: 230).

[5] According to Pettersson (1992: 42–43), the name "Gymnopaidiai" derived from the dance called γυμνοπαιδική performed during the cult and forming its nucleus. It is interesting that traces of this dance are found in Dionysos' worship. Dance was a civic activity and thus "despite their sacred nature,

of dances,[6] played an important role in cult and in social life in ancient Greek cities. And the dictum of Pratinas that the Lakonians were always ready, or rather well-made, for dances (fr. 2 Page [*PMG* 709]: Λάκων ὁ τέττιξ εὔτυκος ἐς χορόν), acquires, as we shall see below (26–28), confirmation in literary and archaeological sources.

In Sparta a great number of dances were associated with the cult of Artemis. Ritual dances of *parthenoi* were an essential feature of the goddess's cult in many parts of the ancient Greek world. In Delos the sacrifices in honour of her and her brother Apollo were accompanied by dances and the two gods were known as the "dancing deities," since they were particularly associated with various dances performed during festivals dedicated to them.[7] The fact that Apollo and Artemis were predominant deities at Sparta explains why dances were among Sparta's most important cultic features.[8]

Dancing took place in many different contexts in ancient Sparta. Spartan girls and boys and other age-groupings performed dances at festivals. Helots were forced to put on comic performances designed to create laughter. And Spartan choirs performed dances considered as preparations for warfare or commemoration of battles.[9] It has been argued that dancing was "valued because it was conducive to the sense of rhythm that could be important in hoplite warfare rather than used

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dancing grounds were typically located in civic space, in the agora ... the locus for dance, various cults, political assemblies, and judicial proceedings" (Lonsdale 1993: 117–120).

[6] See Boedeker 1974: 85–91 (Appendix: χῶρος and χορός) for the etymological association between the two terms and 55–58 for the earlier and general meaning of χορός as "enclosed area" or "yard"; the evidence from Greek epic (e.g., Hom. *Il.* 18.590–594; *Od.* 8.260–264) shows that the term originally referred to the "dancing-place," the "dancing-ground." Other developments in the meaning are the activity of the dancing itself, a type of dance or group of dancers. Thus several indications in the Homeric epics support the view that the original meaning of χορός was the place where dances were performed. These were open places so that the dancing act could be watched by the spectators. Moreover, comparative research on the Greek epic and early Indian poetry shows that the term χορός is a very archaic element of the traditional Indo-European poetic language. In the Indian hymns χορός—the common Indo-European origin/stem of the word is *gher—is associated with the light of the sun, while in Greek epic χοροί are the places where Eos rises (Hom. *Od.* 12.1–4). In epic, apart from Artemis, Aphrodite is particularly associated with the dance, especially in those scenes where the "world of peace" is contrasted to the "world at war," as well as where the erotic element is emphasized, which connects the role of Aphrodite as the goddess of love with the χορός, the place and the act when ἵμερος, the erotic wish, takes place; hence ἱμερόεις as an adjective qualifying χορός; see Boedeker 1974: 39, 51, 55–58, 85–88. On the dance as a medium of contact between both sexes and its role in facilitating courtship and marriage among the admiring spectators, see Lonsdale 1993: 210–218, 224–233. On the social function of dance in general, see Lawler 1964a: 121. For dance as a social mechanism and as a form of ritual behavior, see Lonsdale 1993; Gartziou-Tatti 1994 with extensive bibliography.

[7] Lawler 1964a: 104–106. On the essential role of dance in Artemis' cult, see Lonsdale 1993: 170–193.

[8] Constantinidou 1988; Hooker 1980: 47–70; Parker 1989: 142–172.

[9] See Calame 1977: *passim*. See also David 1989: 6–13. For a brief survey on the initiatory, educational, and religious aspects of Spartan dances, see Pettersson 1992: 44–56.

for private cultivation and amusement."[10] And the original institution of kingship at the foundation of Sparta is said to have been accompanied by dances (Thuc. 5.16.2). These were religious acts that were of primordial political significance too. In archaic times Sparta was a place of public choral performances.[11] Alkman's poems were designed to be performed in public and depicted a different image of Sparta from that by which she later became known: the image of a city flexible in its ways of life, "the other 'swinging Sparta,' care-free, beauty-loving, with wide intellectual interests and geographical horizons."[12] Therefore, his poems provide a focal point for an examination of the Spartan society in the seventh century B.C. Spartan dances have been discussed at length by C. Calame, J.-P. Vernant, R. Parker, E. David, and others.[13] My aim here is to focus in particular on the evidence which alludes to Dionysiac, and especially to maenadic, ritual dances in ancient Sparta.

ARISTOPHANES AND SPARTAN DANCES

It seems that the same tradition of ritual songs and dances continued in the following centuries and Sparta retained the fame for her achievement in dances. Aristophanes vividly refers to this in *Lysistrata* (1305–15):

ὡς Σπάρταν ὑμνίωμες,
τᾷ σιῶν χοροὶ μέλοντι
καὶ ποδῶν κτύπος,
ἇ τε πῶλοι ταὶ κόραι
πὰρ τὸν Εὐρώταν
ἀμπάλλοντι πυκνὰ ποδοῖν
ἀγκονίωαι,

[10] Cartledge 1987: 26–27. Cf. the epigram quoted by Parker (1989: 142): "'Those who honour the gods most finely with choruses are best in war' ('Socrates' fr. 3 West)." See also Wheeler 1982: 224–233, esp. 230 ff. On the role of the weapon dance in the preparation for manhood and military training, see Lonsdale 1993: 137–148, esp. 140. For Spartans as good dancers no less than good warriors, see Hdt. 1.66.2, with Huxley 1962: 65. Further evidence could be the depiction of Apollo himself as a warrior god in Lakonian art. The "dancing god" is also a warrior god, with helmet and spear, as represented in his cult statue at Amyklai. But such cult images of Apollo are known from other parts of the Greek world and, as Parker (1989: 146) points out, armed cult statues are not rare in early Greek religion. Moreover, other Spartan gods, like Aphrodite, for example, were represented armed and this was perhaps due to Spartan "conservatism as much as militarism." See also Plut. *Lyc.* 21 (cf. *Mor.* 238B): Πίνδαρος δέ φησιν· ἔνθα βουλαὶ γερόντων / καὶ νέων ἀνδρῶν ἀριστεύουσιν αἰχμαὶ / καὶ χοροὶ καὶ μοῦσα καὶ ἀγλαΐα. μουσικωτάτους γὰρ ἅμα καὶ πολεμικωτάτους ἀποφαίνουσιν αὐτούς (= Pindar fr. 199 Snell). Here Sparta is praised as the place for choirs, the Muse, and the splendour closely associated with bravery, the ideal of the Spartan citizen-warrior.

[11] See Segal 1985: 124; Calame 1977: *passim*; Kennedy 1989: 49.

[12] Fitzhardinge 1980: 129–135. For the cultural and social structure of Sparta in the seventh century B.C., see Calame 1977: 2.22–42. See also Huxley 1962: 61–65; Pettersson 1992: 52–54.

[13] See Parker's bibliography on the subject (1989: 150–152, esp. n. 45). For the importance of dance and song, the *choreia*, in the initiatory, educational, and religious process of Spartan society, see Pettersson 1992: 45–56, esp. 48.

ταὶ δὲ κόμαι σείονθ' ἅπερ Βακχᾶν
θυρσαδδωᾶν καὶ παιδδωᾶν.
ἀγεῖται δ' ἁ Λήδας παῖς
ἁγνὰ χοραγὸς εὐπρεπής.

that we may hymn Sparta,
which delights in dances in honour of the gods,
and in the stamp of feet,
and where beside the Eurotas
the maidens prance
like fillies, raising clouds
of dust with their feet,
and their hair bobs
like the hoar of bacchants who sport and ply the thyrsus;
and they are led by Leda's daughter,
the pure and comely chief of their chorus.[14]

These verses are part of the exit song of the play (1296–1315) and are in fact a hymn to Sparta. It is sung by a Spartan and certain pre-eminent Spartan deities are invoked by their local cult epithets (Apollo Amyklaios, Athena Chalkioikos).[15] The reconciliation of the Spartans and the Athenians is thus confirmed by the main Spartan gods. The whole scene focuses on Sparta and the song recalls its famous poet Alkman and his choral composition, especially lines 1307 ff., which are thought to rely on maiden songs, the *partheneia*.[16] In these lines the girls of Sparta dance beside the Eurotas. However, the themes of the song are known and explicable and it is possible to read the poet's intention here. Aristophanes has in mind Spartan cult and dances, although he embellishes them with interesting details that we shall discuss below. Does this literary evidence, then, reflect exact religious reality?

The passage from *Lysistrata* uses ritual language to describe acts of ecstatic dancing and the rushing motion of the chorus of Spartan girls who share a particular religious experience: ᾇ τε πῶλοι ταὶ κόραι ... ἀμπάλλοντι πυκνὰ ποδοῖν / ἀγκονίωαι, "the maidens prance like fillies ... raising clouds of dust with their feet"; ταὶ δὲ κόμαι σείονθ' ἅπερ Βακχᾶν / θυρσαδδωᾶν καὶ παιδδωᾶν, "and their hair bobs like the hair of bacchants who sport and ply the thyrsus." The language alludes to Dionysiac ritual and maenadic dances and may be compared to Eur. *Bacch.* 862–867: ἆρ' ἐν παννυχίοις χοροῖς / θήσω ποτὲ λευκὸν / πόδ' ἀναβακχεύουσα, δέραν / εἰς αἰθέρα δροσερὸν ῥίπτουσ', / ὡς νεβρὸς χλοεραῖς ἐμπαί- / ζουσα λείμακος ἡδοναῖς: "Will the time come when barefoot I tread the night-long dances, in ecstasy flinging back my head in the clean dewy air?

[14] Tr. Sommerstein 1990: 151–152.

[15] See Henderson 1987: 218 (on 1296–1315). Athena is a common pre-eminent deity in both cities, their citadel goddess and the deity directly involved in the reconciliation that occurs in *Lysistrata*, since the action takes place on the Acropolis.

[16] Sommerstein 1990: 223 (on 1296–1315); Henderson 1987: 218–219, esp. on 1305–6.

Like a fawn at play in the green joy of a meadow ...."[17] Similar vigorous movement, like the stamping of the feet and the hands, and descriptions of the flowing hair are known from vase-painting and other literature in connection with other gods, Artemis of Ephesos, for example.[18] And in Alkman's choral poetry the girls' posture, their movements in dancing, and their hair are similarly described (fr. 1.43–59, 3.8–9). Nevertheless, in the exit-hymn cited above Dionysiac ritual and symbols are introduced in purely Dionysiac cultic language, such as Βακχᾶν and θυρσαδδωᾶν, the latter term referring to the bacchant's ritual wand, the Dionysiac implement par excellence (cf. Eur. *Bacch.* 150; 240–241; 930–931).[19] Similar Dionysiac colour is found in Eur. *Helen* 1358–65. In *Lysistrata*, however, the reference to Helen as "the pure and comely chief of their chorus" (1315) provides strong evidence for the Dionysiac dimension that Aristophanes introduces into Spartan cult and the maidens' choruses there. Helen appears as the perfect image of an initiate into Dionysiac mysteries, a follower of Dionysos, as is presented in Eur. *Bacch.* 72–77: ὦ μάκαρ, ὅστις εὐδαίμων / τελετὰς θεῶν εἰδὼς / βιοτὰν ἁγιστεύει καὶ / θιασεύεται ψυχὰν / ἐν ὄρεσσι βακχεύων / ὁσίοις καθαρμοῖσιν: "O blessed is he who, by happy favour knowing the sacraments of the gods, leads the life of holy service and is inwardly a member of God's company ...."[20] Those who are communing with the god and have been united with him are pure and chaste; they are full of happiness, peace, and felicity (cf. *Bacch.* 379–381; 426; 910–911). This is the kind of blissfulness that the initiand into the mysteries seeks.[21] Thus in Aristophanes' play, as a comic parallel to the tragic female worshippers of Dionysos, Helen corresponds to the model Dionysiac follower in her state of mind and behaviour; she is a full and perfect initiand who has achieved a pure life: ἁγνὰ χοραγὸς

[17] Tr. Dodds 1960: 184–185; and note his comments *ad loc.* On Dionysiac imagery in Euripides, especially in the *Bacchae*, see Barlow 1971: 32–34, 112–114.

[18] For examples, see Henderson 1987: 221; cf. Eur. *Hel.* 1364–65. The moving hair is the effect of maenadic tossing of the head in ecstasy while maenadic dances "consisted mainly of running and jumping about" (Bremmer 1984: 278–282).

[19] See Dodds 1951: 270–282, esp. 273; *idem*, 1960: 99–100; Segal 1982: 23. For a systematic study of maenadic ritual, its distinction from myth, and the origin and function of maenadism, see Bremmer 1984: 267–286. For a thorough analysis of the Bacchic terminology and the description of the maenadic model in tragedy as a very important Dionysiac feature of this genre, see Schlesier 1993: 92–103.

[20] Dodds 1960: 75–76; *idem*, 1951: 76–77; Arthur 1972: 145–179; Seaford 1981: 252–275, arguing that in the *Bacchae* Euripides alludes to the Dionysiac mysteries and their ἱερὸς λόγος "for a dramatic effect dependent on the religiosity of his audience." New documents have enriched our knowledge of Dionysian eschatology; initiation ensures a blessed existence after death for the followers of Bacchos: see Graf 1993: 239–258 and Burkert 1993: 259–275.

[21] Vernant and Vidal-Naquet 1986: 265–270. Cf. Lesky 1983: 371. I shall not deal here, however, with the contradictory elements coexisting in Dionysos' divine figure and his worship and the paradoxes of Dionysiac religion (*ekstasis* and maenadic frenzy on the one hand and gentleness, beauty, and exhilaration on the other), for which see Segal 1982: 339–347; Goldhill 1990: 126–127; Arthur 1972: 147–153.

εὐπρεπής, "the pure and comely chief of their chorus" (cf. Eur. *Bacch.* 74–77; 692–693).[22]

However, I do not suggest that Aristophanes refers here to real Dionysiac rites performed in Sparta, as the text might allow us to conjecture. If that were the case, he would be a very important source. But it is known that the evidence for the cult of Dionysos at Sparta is scarce, indirect, and difficult in its interpretation. Such evidence will be discussed further below. But in connection with the passage from *Lysistrata*, I suggest that the intention of the poet was to apply Athenian characteristics to the Spartan cult (in particular Dionysiac elements) at the climax of the play, when the reconciliation of the two enemies had been achieved, and the priority given to the praise of Spartan religion in the *exodos* could not ignore one of the main gods of Athens, Dionysos, whose festivals had as a special feature the dramatic competition and the performance of comedies.[23]

Therefore, Aristophanes' imagination and dramatic art rather than religious reality created the details of the performance of a Lakonian choral song adopting a maenadic role for the girls of the Spartan chorus. Their ritual activities are thus enriched here with Dionysiac features at a time when Dionysos' cult was flourishing in Athens. However, at the end of the fifth century (411 was the year that *Lysistrata* was produced) Sparta's archaic rather than classical achievement in choral song and dancing is reproduced (or rather is praised) by the comic poet.[24] In lines 1309–10 "the maidens prance like fillies, raising clouds of dust with their feet."[25] Henderson suggests that the comparison of girls to fillies "derives from theriomorphic maiden-dances (like the arkteia)" that "were a famous and

[22] Purity was associated with initiation, and cathartic rituals seem to be part of the Bacchic mysteries as well: Graf 1993: 251–252. I do not think that the emphasis is being given here to the divine hypostasis of Helen in Sparta as the goddess protectress of maidens who are on the threshold of marriage (see Henderson 1987: 221; Sommerstein 1990: 224). Helen did indeed have such a role in Spartan cult and it is certainly known to Aristophanes, as the other details about Spartan religion in this play show; but without denying her divinity, for she is listed among the most important deities of Sparta (Apollo, Athena, Tyndaridai), Aristophanes presents her in a context where Dionysiac ritual predominates, as a follower of Dionysos. Moreover, reference is made here to her mortal origin, to her mother, Leda.

[23] Henderson 1990: 271, 286; Winkler and Zeitlin 1990: 3; Shlesier 1993: 89–92; Goldhill 1990: 97–129.

[24] Nevertheless, Cartledge (1990: 54) has argued that Aristophanes was not one of the "literary exponents of the Spartan 'mirage,' i.e., he did not subscribe to the idealised or imaginary visions of Sparta propagated by philosophers and politicians mainly in democratic Athens . . . ."

[25] His description of Spartan dances accords well with the vigorous and athletic character of both the performance and the performers, according to the classical Spartan tradition, while the beauty of the women of Sparta is represented in Aristophanes' verses by none other than the "beautiful Helen," the heroine/goddess of Sparta and the leader of her choruses. Ar. *Lys.* 82 refers to the Spartan dance βίβασις which, according to Pollux (4.102), was a dance with an agonistic character suitable for the exercised bodies of Spartan girls; a fact that Lampito verbally, if not in action, demonstrates. And in Ar. *Lys.* 1242–46 an Athenian confesses that he enjoys watching Spartan dancing, a pleasure that peace had ensured again. For other references to Spartan dances in Aristophanes, see *Lys.* 1247–78, 1296–1321: Lawler 1964b: 95–97. See also Henderson 1987: 77, 186, 210.

ubiquitous feature of Spartan culture."[26] A similar image of Spartan maidens dancing on the banks of the Eurotas or by the temple of Athena like fillies or with Leukippides and with Helen as their leader is found in Eur. *Hel.* 1465 ff. (cf. Theoc. 18):

ἦ που κόρας ἂν ποταμοῦ
παρ' οἶδμα Λευκιππίδας ἢ πρὸ ναοῦ
Παλλάδος ἂν λάβοις
χρόνῳ ξυνελθοῦσα χοροῖς
ἢ κώμοις Ὑακίνθου
νύχιον ἐς εὐφροσύναν.

You might come across Leukippos' daughters
on the banks of Eurotas
or by the temple of Athena
and after long join them in the dances
or festivities, in the nocturnal
celebrations in honour of Hyakinthos.

The tradition about the dancing Helen as the leader of the chorus, and thus the member most conspicuous and admired by the spectators, should also be linked to the myth of her abduction by Theseus with the collaboration of Peirithoos while she was dancing with other maidens in honour of Artemis Orthia (Plut. *Thes.* 31.2), a myth associated with Sparta. According to another story told by Pausanias, which possibly reflects a historical event, some Spartan maidens were abducted from a cult dance in honour of Artemis at Karyai (4.16.9; cf. Paus. 3.10.7). This will be discussed below in connection with Dionysos and Artemis. Lonsdale (1993: 183–186, 222–233) attributes the invention of the abduction stories, which usually take place at the dancing grounds of Artemis, "to the social concerns surrounding young females of marriageable age" or, in the case of Helen, who was not of marriageable age, considers it an expression of protection and concern on behalf of society against premature impulses towards marriage. Aphrodite herself was said to have been snatched away while she was dancing in honour of Artemis (*Hom. Hym. Aphr.* 117–120).[27]

Archaic Spartan poetry itself also refers to maenadic dancing. For example, a fragment of Alkman (*PMG* 56) compares the dancing of a Lakonian girl to that of a maenad. The Dionysiac imagery, such as the peaks of the mountains where the dance is set, and the ritual details that are described in the poem allude to a

[26] Henderson 1987: 221 (on 1307–8), with reference to Calame 1977: 1.350–357.

[27] Aphrodite's role in the dancing process is particularly important for a goddess of love. Words associated with χορός and implying sexual desire, sexual union, or fertility reveal how pre-eminent was this goddess's role in dancing (see Boedeker 1974: 51–63). The common experience of the two, their abduction while dancing, makes Aphrodite and Helen the divine and heroic models of female abduction. On the erotic function of dance as displaying the beauty and the skills of the dancers, see Lonsdale 1993: 225–233.

bacchic dance.[28] If this evidence reflects reality, it acquires a great significance in connection with the performance of maenad dances in Lakonia and the cult of Dionysos there, a god regarded as alien to the social Spartan system and of minor importance according to the standard view.[29] It has been argued that the god "had little prominence in Spartan cult" but he was not "wholly neglected."[30] Some aspects of his cult relating to women flourished in Sparta, although certainly not such public ceremonies as the Dionysiac ceremonies in Athens, involving much drinking and drunkenness (see Parke 1977: 127–128, 108–116).

There is more information, although it is not very explicit, about maenadism and maenad-dancers in Lakonia. Vergil's description of Mount Taygetus as *virginibus bacchata lacaenis* (*G.* 2.487–488),[31] for example, may only be a poetic fiction rather than rooted in actual rituals. There is also mention of rites performed by virgins, the Dionysiades, in honour of Dionysos Kolonatas (Paus. 3.13.7; Hesychius s.v. *Dionysiades*), while the god's cult at Bryseai (Paus. 3.20.3) seems to have been confined exclusively to women. To the above we may perhaps add the *Dysmainai*, the "choral maenads in Sparta" according to Hesychius (s.v.).[32] Athenaeus (9.392f = *PMG* 711) mentions that the *Dysmainai* or *Karyatids* was the title of a play of Pratinas: he thus identifies the *Dysmainai* with the maidens of Karyai, the Karyatids, who were famous for their dances in honour of Orthia.[33] These girls, however, are associated with a female divinity—whether or not we call her Orthia, probably the predecessor of Artemis or Artemis herself—whereas Hesychius' equation of the *Dysmainai* with maenads, the Spartan bacchants, associates them with Dionysiac *ekstasis* and the cult of Dionysos.

Therefore, the nexus of rites and the combination of sources referring to the *Karyatids* or *Dysmainai*, their identification with dancing bacchants, and the theme of Pratinas' play make it "likely that the ritual celebration of the Karya myth also had a Dionysiac dimension."[34] Dionysos' relations to the other gods have been defined as "ambivalent and indeed paradoxical."[35] Thus, despite his opposition to Artemis as a divine persona, in the area of cult in general the two gods have many parallels. The most significant is their *thiasos*, "a retinue of animated dancers, though the maenads of Dionysos are mature women and the nymphs of Artemis are young virgins; masks and even phallic costumes are found in dances for Artemis as well as in dances for Dionysos."[36] This interlinking of

[28] See further Webster 1970: 53.

[29] On Dionysos' cult and his relation to the Spartan pantheon, see Parker 1988: 99–101.

[30] Parker 1988: 99. For the relation of the god to Spartan social groups, see Pettersson 1992: 119–121, esp. 119.

[31] For a discussion and the ancient sources on Dionysiac rites in Sparta, see Parker 1988: 100.

[32] See Webster 1970: 59; Calame 1977: 1.116–117, 273–276: 2.85.

[33] See Pickard-Cambridge 1962: 68. Lesky (1983: 36) suggests that the reading Δύμαιναι should rather be accepted than Δύσμαιναι.

[34] Seaford 1988: 125.

[35] Burkert 1985: 222.

[36] Burkert 1985: 223.

rites related to the two gods is seen in the Karyai cult too. Burkert (1985: 223) refers to the story told by Servius (*In Ecl.* 8.29) about the seduction of a maiden associated with Artemis' cult there by Dionysos. The story, however, may reflect the opposition to the introduction of Dionysiac elements into Artemis' cult and the intrusion of Dionysos into the maidens' world.[37]

Further evidence about *Dymainai* (or *Dymaniai*)—this reading must be accepted rather than *Dysmainai*—which seems to be more significant than it has often been regarded comes from Alkman. The maidens from Δύμη, who were the daughters of Dymanes, one of the three tribes of Doric origin in archaic Sparta, formed the choruses who sang many of Alkman's poems called *partheneia.* Reference to them is made in the poems themselves but also in the commentaries surviving on papyri. As Calame points out, it seems that "certains des choeurs de jeunes filles pour lesquels Alcman écrivait ses chants avaient une composition correspondant à l'organisation politique du corps social spartiate."[38] The *Dymainai* chorus, then, who performed certain of Alkman's *partheneia* consisted of young girls; that makes their identification with the Karyatids and the association with the famous cult of Artemis at Karyai most probable.[39]

Allusions to dance-movements in other poems of Alkman (e.g., *PMG* 3.9, 3.70) and the employment of particular expressions that describe the grace of a dance, the elegance of the feet and consequently of the dance-movements (3.10: ἀπ]αλοὶ πόδες: "[my] soft feet [may dance]"; cf. 70: διέβα ταναοῖς ποσί: "she [Astymeloisa] passed on slender feet") but also the excited flinging of the girl's hair while dancing (*PMG* 3.9: ἄχι μάλιστα κόμ[αν ξ]ανθὰν τινάξω: "where I shall above all toss my golden hair"; cf. 73)[40] obviously refer to excited dancing in a language similar to that used in the Aristophanes passage discussed above. Akin is the style of particular verses in Alkman's *Great Partheneion* (*PMG* 1.51 ff.). It is not clear during which religious festival this choral poem was sung nor in whose honour. Various divinities have been proposed, such as Artemis-Orthia and Helen, and very interesting suggestions have been made concerning the nature of the religious rite.[41]

[37] Lonsdale (1993: 222) sees a variation of the abduction motif, especially associated with Artemis "in the realm of Dionysiac myth in artistic representations of the satyr's pursuit of the dancing maenad." For maenadism as not excluding the participation of the maidens together with mature women whom they accompanied carrying the thyrsus and having a part in the Dionysiac ecstasy, see Dodds 1951: 270. On Dionysos' "special affinity with women" as well as on his role in the *Bacchae* as the god who "symbolizes the repressed emotionality associated with the female but also because he himself spans male and female," see Segal 1982: 159–160. For the participation of unmarried girls in the maenadic ritual, see also Bremmer 1984: 282–284; cf. Eur. *Bacch.* 694.

[38] Calame 1983: 387–389 (Alkman fr. 24), 442 (Alkman fr. 81), 455–456 (Alkman fr. 82).

[39] But see Calame 1993: 389.

[40] See Easterling and Knox 1985: 136–137, and commentary in Calame 1983 *ad loc.*

[41] See, for example, Griffiths 1972: 7–30; Carter 1988: 89–98; especially Calame 1983: 311–349. For the interpretation that "the exclusively female choral medium of performance make it likely that the ritual served as a preliminary paradigm for eventual marriage," see Lonsdale 1993: 196–205.

Archaeology, too, provides some relevant evidence. A bronze statuette of a girl depicted in Lakonian style, now in the British Museum, was found at Prizren, although a provenance from Dodona has also been suggested. It is known as the "running girl," since it was seen as a depiction of a girl in running pose. However, more plausibly she appears to be dancing, because she is looking backwards—not normal for a runner—while the body above the waist has the movement and the elegance of a dancer. Although the legs are very open and at a distance from each other, a movement recalling that of a runner, this is probably because they were adjusted to the tripod whose ornament this dancing figure had been. This elegant piece of art thus represents a Spartan dancer, and has been compared to a dancing maenad found in Tetova.[42]

Any information then about maenad-dancers, or women dancing as maenads, in Lakonia becomes particularly important for the cult of Dionysos and the status of women there. However, men too may have been involved in Dionysiac rites, including songs and dances, for which the archaeological evidence is very significant. It consists of scenes of "padded dancers" in Lakonian iconography, sometimes associated with wine-bowls, that "may reflect indigenous ritual" according to Parker.[43] Yet, the absence of Dionysos from Lakonian iconography is worth emphasizing and becomes more remarkable when it is compared to his frequent presence in Athenian iconography. His neglect at Sparta, as far as the rites particularly applied to the god are concerned, like the ritual drinking of wine, should be linked not only to divergences between Dorian and Ionian cultures, but to Spartan ideology as well.[44] There is more evidence for ritual dance and satirical songs (the ἴθυμβοι) in honour of Dionysos (Pollux 4.104; Paus. 3.25.2; Hesych. s.v. ἴθυμβος), but the details are obscure.

Artemis too was associated with orgiastic dances performed in her honour by the *parthenoi* of Sparta. Nude or semi-nude dancers probably perfomed in such cult-dances in the Peloponnese as well as at Sparta, where her local epithet was Orthia. A komos scene with an obscene character on a Lakonian vase found in the Orthia sanctuary and dated between 580–575 B.C. has been interpreted as representing just such an orgiastic dance performance at a festival of Orthia. Among the male and female revellers appears "a hairy and ithyphallic creature which looks like a satyr."[45] The presence of phalloi and the love-making scenes, as well as the obscenity of the dancing-scene in general, points to a ritual of

[42] See Fitzhardinge 1980: 116, 117 fig. 148, who thinks that this is "a dancer rather than a runner"; see also Herfort Koch 1986: 94 and plates 6.6. The pose of the statuette is similar to that of the three women who are depicted on a Lakonian cup fragment of the sixth century found on Samos and interpreted as dancing women or women running away from someone: see Pipili 1987: 26–27 and fig. 38.

[43] Parker 1988: 100. For the iconography of the Lakonian vases see Pipili 1987: 52–54, 65–66, and the bibliography cited by Parker, especially Stibbe 1972: index s.v. *Komasten*.

[44] See further Parker 1988: 100–101.

[45] See Pipili 1987: 65, 66 fig. 95, 74.

fertility most probably in honour of the above goddess. It is for such goddesses that cult dances are performed, especially the circle dances which are associated with places where cults of fertility were prominent. Such were Crete, traditionally associated with sacred dances (see Hom. *Il.* 18.590–592), but also Delos, Cyprus, and Sparta.[46] Some other archaeological evidence (Geometric pottery with scenes of female and male dancers which comes from the Orthia sanctuary) confirms the goddess's association with this sort of religious expression, which is also emphasized in literary sources referring to the cult of Lakonian Artemis in general.[47]

Orgiastic and ecstatic dancing was, therefore, associated with both Dionysos and Artemis in Sparta. R. Parker has pointed out that " ... as a women's god rather than a god of wine Dionysus did have a place in liberated Laconia, by a neat symmetrical reversal of the situation in Attica where he was predominantly a god of the drinking man."[48] A parallel situation is observed as far as Dionysiac festivals are concerned. In Sparta there is nothing comparable to the popular Athenian festivals in honour of Dionysos in which the whole population of Attica participated, festivals open to everyone and to various forms of cultic expression such as drunkenness.

Dramatic festivals, likewise, were replaced by other forms of performance in Sparta: for example, by attendance at choral dancing. Sparta did have a *theatron*, but that was used for other purposes than for Athenian-style drama. Thus, dances were performed by choruses of naked boys, youths, and men in honour of Apollo in the *theatron* at the east of the city's agora during the festival of Gymnopaidiai (Hdt. 6.67.3; cf. Xen. *Hell.* 6.4.16; Plut. *Ages.* 29).[49] And in the place of comedy vulgar and grotesque songs and dances were performed by drunken helots at the *syssitia* as a form of comic *mimesis*.[50] So at Sparta comedy, one of the most important expressions of democracy in ancient Athens, was connected with helots and their social oppression and humiliation by the Spartans. The sources do not make clear, however, how the Spartans participated and behaved during comic

[46] Boedeker 1974: 45; see also Webster 1970: 6, for dances of women with linked hands. For a brief history of dancing and dancing-places in pre-Greek and early Greek religion see Boedeker 1974: 43–63. Lawler 1964a and 1964b are still very useful and informative on the subject, while Evans's work on Cretan dances is extremely important: see Warren 1984: 320–321. However, for a methodical analysis of all the evidence and the application of a critical anthropological approach in its discussion, see Lonsdale 1993.

[47] See Dawkins 1929: fig. 37 D, a scene which recalls Hom. *Il.* 18.594: ὠρχεῦντ' ἀλλήλων ἐπὶ καρπῷ χεῖρας ἔχοντες, "they were dancing, hand on wrist one of the other"; cf. *Hom. Hymn Aphr.* 196. See also Dawkins 1929: fig. 37 E, H; 38 Z, A. For the representations of dances on Geometric vases from Lakonia and especially from the sanctuary of Artemis Orthia, see also Pettersson 1992: 52.

[48] 1989: 151.

[49] Pettersson 1992: 48–51.

[50] Plut. *Lyk.* 28.8–9; see also above, n. 9. Although the origins of Athenian drama remain obscure, ecstatic dancing, revelry, and ritual miming may belong to the earliest stages in the development of tragedy and comedy (see Cartledge 1985: 118–119), something that seems not to have taken place in Spartan culture.

performances. Dances of the same character (vulgar, indecent, obscene), as well as orgiastic ones, could be attributed to Spartans too, since the evidence does not always clearly distinguish the performers in terms of social status.[51] But it seems most likely that the above were confined to the most unprivileged groups of Spartan society—Dionysos' cult was confined to marginalized groups too, i.e., to non-Spartan citizens like women, *perioikoi*, and helots—and it was another way of reinforcing Spartan superiority and the disparity between them and the others. The "tradition according to which the Spartans did not attend either comedy or tragedy so that they might not hear anyone speak either seriously or jestingly against the laws"[52] seems to reflect Spartan attitudes towards drama. From this point of view, therefore, the above-mentioned comic performances had nothing to do with real comedy, let alone with Dionysos, and even more to do with the Athenian conception of comedy's political and social role.[53]

Ritual was thus enriched in Sparta through the performance of dances, a significant feature of Spartan cult. Being integrated into the structures of Spartan society, these ritual dances were a vivid expression of the city's religious and social identity. However, the subordinate position of Dionysos in the Spartan pantheon and consequently in Spartan culture is reaffirmed by the scarcity of evidence for ritual dances traceable to his worship. At Athens, on the other hand, he was the "theatre god" and the leading divine figure of the city's festive life.[54]

APPENDIX: PRATINAS AND SPARTA

διετήρησαν δὲ μάλιστα τῶν Ἑλλήνων Λακεδαιμόνιοι τὴν μουσικήν, πλείστῃ αὐτῇ χρώμενοι, καὶ συχνοὶ παρ' αὐτοῖς ἐγένοντο μελῶν ποιηταί. τηροῦσιν δὲ καὶ νῦν τὰς ἀρχαίας ᾠδὰς ἐπιμελῶς πολυμαθεῖς τε εἰς ταύτας εἰσὶ καὶ ἀκριβεῖς. ὅθεν καὶ Πρατίνας φησί· Λάκων ὁ τέττιξ εὔτυκος ἐς χορόν. (Pratinas fr. 2 Page [*PMG* 709] = Ath. 14.632f–633a)

Of all the Greeks the Spartans have most faithfully preserved the art of music, employing it most extensively, and many composers of lyrics have arisen among them. Even to this day they carefully retain the ancient songs, and are very well taught in them and strict in holding to them. Hence Pratinas says: "The Spartan, that cicada ready for a chorus." (tr. Gulick 1959: 415).

[51] For such kinds of dances, see David 1989: 6–11. See also Ducat 1990: 107–108, 115–118, where emphasis is placed on the ritual and initiatory character of helots' drinking and dancing (in connection with Spartan boys) but also on the sub-cultural status that the Spartan citizens imposed on them.

[52] David 1989: 7 and 6–9. Public ridicule, jests, and personal abuse, on the other hand, meant for Athens the subjection of "'the rich, the well-born, and the powerful' . . . to a yearly unofficial review of their conduct in general at the hands of the *demos*' organic intellectuals and critics, the comic poets" (Henderson 1990: 293–307, esp. 307).

[53] For the social and political aspects of comedy, see Winkler and Zeitlin 1990, esp. the *Introduction* and the essays by Henderson (271–313) and Goldhill (97–129). Redfield (1990: 334–335), however, accepts an ambivalent social role for the comic poets. See also Henderson 1980: 153–218.

[54] Schlesier 1993: 89–92.

εὔτυκος / εὔτυκτος comes from τεύχω and means "well-made," "well-built" (*LSJ* s.v.). It is not, however, clear what exactly εὔτυκος means here, though Athenaeus' introductory text makes it more explicit. Rather than to the fitness of his body, to him as well-exercised, it refers to a Spartan's fondness for dancing and music, i.e., to choral dances, whose best representative is Alkman. We would agree, then, with the above translation: "The Spartan, that cicada, ready for a chorus."[55]

Pratinas, who is known for his satyr-plays, has also been associated with a fragment of fifteen lines (Pratinas fr. 1 Page [*PMG* 708] = Ath. 14.617b–f), probably part of one of his satyr plays.[56] In this fragment the members of the chorus (or rather the poet himself) protest against the predominance of the flute accompaniment over the words of the poem, complaining that music "has begun to dominate the vocal part of the chorus."[57] The protest, however, refers not only to music as dominating the performance of the choral song but refers also to dancing: τίς ὁ θόρυβος ὅδε; τί τάδε τὰ χορεύματα: "What is this noise? What are these dances?" The fragment (together with Athenaeus' introduction) runs as follows:

> Pratinas of Phlius, when hired flute-players and dancers dominated the orchestra, being angry because the flute-players did not accompany the choruses in the traditional manner but the choruses accompanied the flute-players, displayed his anger against those responsible by this *hyporcheme*: "What is this noise? What are these dances? Bromios is mine, mine. It is for me to cry, for me to make the noise, ranging the mountains with Naiads, like a swan leading the many-feathered song. The song is the queen appointed by the Muse, let the flute dance afterwards. For it is the servant. It can only lead the revel and the street battles of young drunkards. Beat the man with the voice of the spotted toad, burn the slave with the drilled body, the spittle-wasting reed, the heavy chatter, the slow discordant measure. See here I fling my right hand and my foot, Thriambodithyrambos, ivy-wreathed lord. Listen to my Dorian dance. (tr. Pickard-Cambridge 1962: 17–18).

The complaint, then, in Pratinas' fragment (if this belongs to his satyric plays) seems to be equally directed at dance and at the flute-music accompaniment. The importance given to the dance (as it seems by the protest in the first line: τί τάδε τὰ χορεύματα;) is also understood to spoil the expected effect of the choral song, which should give predominance to words, then to music, and probably in third place to dance itself. And it is exactly in this order that the three arts are presented by A. M. Dale, though not taken as an order of importance, since in her view

[55] See also Boring 1979: epigram ("The Spartan, that cicada! ready for a dance"); cf. also 42. The Spartans were also famous for retaining, at least for some of their dances, the traditional style of dancing, the κίνησις ἀρχαϊκή: see Pettersson 1992: 50.

[56] Some recent studies (see Easterling and Knox 1985: 242, 262) dispute the attribution to Pratinas, assigning it to a date late in the fifth century. See also Pickard-Cambridge 1962: 17–20, assigning the fragment to Pratinas and accepting its dating as not much later than 500 B.C. However, uncertainty over the authorship, the dating, and the genre of this fragment, and over the precise meaning of *hyporcheme*, still remains.

[57] Easterling and Knox 1985: 242.

"Classical Greek needed no Wolfian doctrine of 'poetic supremacy' because song, with its dance, was a function of the words themselves when they were alive—that is in performance. But the performance was generally one great occasion in all its bright splendour, its ἀγλαΐα, round an altar, or in the orchestra, or processionally. What survived for the record was the written word; musical scores, where they existed, seem to have been rare, and quickly lost."[58]

Song and dance are unseparated in choral lyric and Athenaeus' statement that Pratinas' poem is a *hyporcheme* contradicts in a way the chorus's attack against dance, even if this is done in terms of mockery.[59] An *hyporcheme* presupposes "song accompanied by dance." What is of interest to us here, however, is the special association of this kind of choral lyric with Sparta, where it was "at home."[60] This is further evidence for a connection of Pratinas with Sparta, though this should be assumed as an indirect one, through the involvement of the εἶδος χορικόν that was especially cultivated in Sparta (see above), but also through his statement that the Spartans were famous for dancing (fr. 2 Page [*PMG* 709]).

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[58] Dale 1960: 156–169.

[59] I agree with the presence of mockery in this fragment, expressed by an imaginary scene of an angered chorus (and the poet himself) against its flute-player, who is trying to give the words of the choral song a subordinate place: see Dale 1950: 34–40.

[60] Dale 1950: 39.

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