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The Technical Vocabulary of Dance and Song

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The Classical Review / Volume 30 / Issue 01 / February 2016, pp 9 - 10

DOI: 10.1017/S0009840X00009513, Published online: 27 October 2009

Link to this article: http://journals.cambridge.org/abstract_S0009840X00009513

How to cite this article:

F. A. Wright (1916). The Technical Vocabulary of Dance and Song. The Classical Review, 30, pp 9-10 doi:10.1017/S0009840X00009513

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the two verses falls into its proper place in the interpretation of the thought. Even ἄσσω is brought to its rights. Cp. Soph. *Ai.* 32: κατ' ἵχνος ἄσσω. The hunter and his dog are pursuing the maidens: a few leaps over the field and they will overtake their quarry. Cp. Hes. *Op.* 619 sq.: εὐτ' ἂν Πληιάδες σθένος ὄβριμον Ὀαρίωνος | φεύγουσαι πίπτωσιν ἐς ἡεροειδέα πόντον, *Fr.* 74a, τρεχέτω δὲ μετὰ Πληϊόναν, ἅμα δ' αὐτῷ κύων, Schol. Pind. *N.* 2. 16. The two constellations are grouped also in the *Ion*: Πλειὰς μὲν ἦει μεσσοπόρου δι' αἰθέρος | ὃ τε ξιφύρης Ὀρίων (1152).

According to Busche, 'ist ein längerer Zwischenraum zu denken als 10 Minuten'—between the beginning of the play and the rising of the sun in verse 156. I consider ten minutes a very conservative estimate. Murray prints the prologue correctly. The time is a little earlier than the beginning of Sophocles' *Electra*: ἡλίου σέλας | ἐῴα κινεῖ φθέγματ' ὀνύθων (17 sq.). Cp. *I.A.* 9, *Ion* 82 sqq.

If we interpret *σείριος* as referring to a planet, ἄσσω is incomprehensible, for it could mean only *vibrans* (the quivering rays of starlight); and we know that the Greeks distinguished between the ἀστέρας παλλομένους and the non-twinkling planets. Cp. Arist. *De Caelo* 290 A: τοὺς δὲ πλάνητας μὴ στίλβειν . . . πρὸς δὲ τοὺς μένοντας

κραδαίνεται . . . ὃ δὲ τρόμος αὐτῆς ποιεῖ τοῦ ἄστρου δοκεῖν εἶναι τὴν κίνησιν. Even if we leave ἄσσω out of consideration, *σείριος* could not be applied to a planet, if we may believe Eratosthenes: τοὺς τοιοῦτους ἀστέρας σείριους καλοῦσιν διὰ τὴν τῆς φλογὸς κίνησιν. Moreover, an ἄσσω ἀστήρ is a shooting star: ἄττοντα ὥσπερ ἀστέρας (Plato, *Rep.* 621 B), ἀστέρες διάττοντες (Arist. *Met.* I. 4. 7), οἱ διατρέχοντες ἀστέρες οἱ καόμενοι θέουσιν (Ar. *Pax* 837). But ἄσσω can be applied to a fixed star, if that star is conceived as a hunter or a dog. Furthermore, there is no *raison d'être* for ἔτι, if the time is 'noch Nacht.' The poet means that all the other stars have vanished, φηγόντες εἰς νύχθ' ἱεράν (*Ion* 85), whereas Σείριος ἄσσει ἔτι μετὰ Πληϊόναν.

With the explanation I have given the adjective *μεσσήρης* too is brought to its rights. The poet is not thinking of the astronomical meridian (*μεσονράμιον*), but of the distance above the horizon. The whole group of stars is conceived as being *in mid* (heaven), the Pleiades being at the zenith; or, perhaps, as going in a path halfway between the northern and southern horizons (*μεσσοπόρου δι' αἰθέρος*, *Ion* 1152).

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THE TECHNICAL VOCABULARY OF DANCE AND SONG.

THAT dancing is the oldest of all the arts is generally acknowledged; the technique of the Greek lyric is inseparably bound up with the technique of the Greek dance, and in very many cases the special language of the art of sound is transferred bodily from the vocabulary of the earlier art of motion, suffering a somewhat violent change of meaning in the process.

We have the same phenomenon in English; 'catch,' 'fling,' 'round,' 'glee' are simple examples of such transferred meanings, and the confusion that may arise from these changes is illustrated by the history of the words 'arsis' and 'thesis.' But in some cases the very fact of this transference and the consequent change of meaning is

disregarded in our lexicons, and the same word is treated under two separate headings; for example, *μέλος* and *νόμος*.

The first and only original meaning of *μέλος* is 'limb'; it is commonly used in the plural and of the lower limbs, the legs. From the meaning 'a limb in motion,' 'a fling,' *μέλος* in its musical sense by transference comes; the movement of voice sound being expressed by the same word as expresses the movement of the body in the dance.¹

νόμος is more difficult, but in all its

¹ Mr. Allen (*Harvard Studies*, 4. 207) rightly identifies *μέλος* 'limb' with *μέλος* 'song,' and suggests the analogy between the four parts of a simple lyric with the four limbs of the body. The language of the dance offers a simpler explanation.

meanings it is one word, for the change of accent is accounted for by the transitive and intransitive meanings of the verb from which it comes. *νέμω* is both 'to arrange' and 'to range,' and is used alike of the man who gives and the man who takes the lot or place assigned. The noun consequently varies between an active and passive sense: it is defined and defining custom, law; a land with defined boundaries, a province; ground where men and cattle may move within limits, pasture; lastly, from this third meaning a rhythmical measure which gives to sounds instead of motions their allotted place, a nome. *νόμοι ᾠδῆς* and *οἶμος ἀοιδῆς* in the Homeric hymns both contain the same metaphor.

But there are many plainer examples of the debt that the art of music owes to its sister the dance. *δάκτυλοι*, fingers and toes, are the chief instruments of gesture; dactyls, as Professor Hardie has shown, were the sole instruments of the earliest metre, the heroic hexameter, and so to them the word was transferred. The other metrical subdivisions are all 'feet,' with the distinguishing adjectives such as *πόνος τροχάιος* the running foot, *ἱαμβος* the

flinger, *ἀνάπαιστος* the strike-back, *τρίβραχυς* the three short (steps), *προκελευσματικός* the hurry-up, *παίων* the striker; and in many cases the dances which gave them their names still persisted—the pyrrhic, the Ionian, the Cretan, the Molossian. The list indeed may be almost indefinitely extended: among the nouns that are used in a secondary sense as technical terms of metre, we have *κῶλον* a leg, *συλλαβή* a grip, *τρόπος* a turn, *ἁρμονία* a joint, *στίχος* a line, *στροφή* a twist; there are the adjectives *ὀρθίος* straight up, *βαρύνς* heavy, *σκολιός* twisted, and *σκάζων* limping; the verbs *παίω* to beat with the hand, and *κρούω* to beat with the foot.

There remains one inference; may not some of the more obscure terms of music be found to have a simple explanation in the movements of the dance? *διθύραμβος* must surely be 'the three-step,' and perhaps even the first meaning of *τραγικοί χοροί* was 'dancing places marked out for a transverse dance' (our square or country dance), as opposed to the *κύκλιοι χοροί* the circular dancing places of the dithyramb.

F. A. WRIGHT.

THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY IN LATIN VERSE.

THE practice of Latin verse has a long history in England. Either original composition or translation has occupied all orders and generations of scholarly men—Buchanan, Milton, the Marquess Wellesley long ago; the Master of Trinity and Lord Curzon to-day—so often has the schoolboy's task grown to be the poet's care and the statesman's pastime. The knowledge, the skill, the inspiration bestowed on the art at different times has been very unequal. But ignorance or disregard of the rules has not always spoilt the value of the verse. And to-day, when research has rendered our knowledge of minute technique so complete, it is melancholy that among the few (more power to them) who meditate the muse to-day, we discern less often that inspired

phrasing, that spirited ludicity, that impeccable finish.

There is still at the very heart of our kingdom a place where original verse in Latin is still written and declaimed with the old grace and point, whose Latinity ingeniously expresses our present without making itself unworthy of its own past. In times of peace, every year the King's Scholars of Westminster School deliver their tribute to the Camenae of iambic and elegiac verse in the prologue and epilogue of their play. In between goes a play of Terence. What purer and more lucid model of language could the writers want? Here with sentiment that is never maudlin and fun that is never malicious the events of the school and public year are reviewed before an audience which can