



*DICCIONARIO
GRIEGO-ESPAÑOL*



III a.C. **Hymnus Curetum** (*Hymn. Curet.*)

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THE DICTAEAN HYMN TO THE KOUROS

I. TEXT AND TRANSLATION

- 5 Ἰὼ μέγιστε Κοῦρε,
 χαῖρέ μοι, Κρόνειε
 παγκρατές, γᾶν ὃς βέβακες
 δαιμόνων ἀγώμενος·
 Δίκταν ἔς ἐνιαυτὸν
 ἔρπε, καὶ γέγαθι μολπᾷ·
 τάν τοι κρέκομεν πακτίσι
 μείξαντες ἄμ' αὐλοῖσιν
 καὶ στάντες αἰίδομεν τεὸν
 10 ἄμφι βωμὸν εὐερκῇ.
 ἰὼ μέγισ[τε] Κοῦρε,
 χαῖρέ μοι, Κρόνειε
 παγκρα[τές, γᾶν ὃς βέβακες]
 δαιμόνων ἀγώμενος·
 15 Δίκταν ἔς ἐν[αυτὸν
 ἔρπ]ε, καὶ γέγαθι μολπᾷ·
 ἔνθα γάρ σε, παῖδ' ἄμβροτον,
 ἀσπιδ[.]
 παρ' Ῥέας λαβόντες †πολα
 20 κ[
 ἰὼ μέγιστε Κοῦρε,
 χαῖρέ μοι, Κρόνειε
 παγκρατές, γᾶν ὃς βέβακες
 δαιμόνων ἀγώμενος·
 25 Δίκταν ἔς ἐνιαυτὸν
 ἔρπε, καὶ γέγαθι μολπᾷ.

 (Three verses missing.)
 30 — υ]ας καλᾶς ἀδς.
 [ἰὼ μέγιστε Κοῦρε,
 χαῖρέ μοι, Κ]ρόνειε
 παγκρατές, γᾶν [ὃς βέβακες
 δαιμόνων]ν ἀγώμενος·
 35 Δίκταν ἔς ἐν[αυτὸν
 ἔρπε, κα]ὶ γέγαθι μολπᾷ.
 [. β]ρύον κατήτος,
 καὶ βροτὸς Δίκα κατήχε
 [.]ῖπ' ἔξω
 40 ἀ φίλολβος Εἰρήνη.
 [ἰὼ μέγιστε Κοῦρε,
 χαῖρέ μοι, Κρόνειε]
 παγκρατές, γᾶν [ὃς βέβακες
 δαιμόνων ἀγώ]μενος·

45 Δίκταν ἔς ἐ[νιαυτὸν
 ἔρπε, καὶ γέ]γαθι μολπᾶ.
 ἀ[λλ' ἀναξ θόρ' ἔς στα]μνία,
 καὶ θόρ' εὖποκ' ἔς [ποίμνια,
 κές λάϊ]α καρπῶν θόρε,
 50 κές τελεσφ[όρῳ οἶκος].
 ἰὼ μέγιστε Κοῦρε,
 χαῖρέ μοι, Κρ[όνειε]
 παγκρατές, γᾶν ὃς βέβακες
 [δαιμό]νων ἀγώμενος·
 55 Δίκταν ἔς ἐνι[αυτὸν]
 ἔρπε, καὶ γέγαθι μολπᾶ.
 [θόρε κές] πόλῃας ἀμῶν,
 θόρε κές ποντοπόρος νᾶας,
 θόρε κές ν[έος πο]λείτας,
 60 θόρε κές θέμιν κλ[ί]· . . .
 ἰὼ μέγιστε] Κοῦρε,
 χαῖρέ μοι, Κρόνειε
 παγκρατές, γᾶν ὃς βέβακ[ε]ς
 δαιμόνων ἀγ[ώ]μενος·
 65 Δίκταν ἔς ἐνι[αυτὸν]
 ἔρπε, καὶ γέγαθι] μολπᾶ.

Io! Greatest Kouros,
 hail, son of Kronos,
 master of all, who to earth art gone
 with the powers in train, now come again
 to Dicte at the year's wend
 and hear with gladness our refrain!
 We thread it with harps
 and blend it with pipes
 and sing as we stand
 round thy altar wall:
 Io! Greatest Kouros, etc.
 For here they took thee, child immortal,
 the shield[ed . . .
 took thee from Rhea, and [danced
 . . .
 Io! Greatest Kouros, etc.
 . . . of the fair day's light.
 Io! Greatest Kouros, etc.
 . . . abounded all years,
 and men were the servants of Righteousness,
 [and . . . was . . .]en out (?)
 by prospering Concord.
 Io! Greatest Kouros, etc.
 O [lord, spring up in the wine-j]ars
 and spring in the fleecy [flocks,
 and in the crop]s of the fields spring up
 and in the [house of ful]filment.

Io! Greatest Kouros, etc.
 Spring up in] our towns and peoples,
 spring up in the seafaring ships,
 spring up in the y[oung of the peop]le,
 spring up in the . . . order.
 Io! Greatest Kouros, etc.

II. NOTES ON TEXT AND LANGUAGE

1. K. Latte, *De saltationibus Graecorum* 44, notes the possibility that *κορε* was originally written, representing *κῶρε*. There are instances in the hymn of *ε* and *ο* representing secondary *ē* and *ō* (cf. on 5, 30, 38, 50), though we also find *κατῆχε* in 38. This orthography must go back to the original written text, and helps to date the composition, being found in a few Cretan inscriptions of the third century B.C. but not later (Bechtel, *Gr. Dial.* ii 680 ff.). Before the fourth century, *η* and *ω* were not used at all in Crete, so that if the hymn were as early as the fifth century, as Wilamowitz asserts (*Griech. Verskunst* 502) without giving his reasons, we should expect either *ε* and *ο* throughout or a uniform transliteration, not the distinction that is actually apparent between *η*, *ω* for original *η*, *ω* (also for *η* < *αε* and *εα*, *ω* < *εο*) and *ε*, *ο* for the contraction of *εε*, *οο*, and for *ε*, *ο* lengthened by compensation. The usual dating of the hymn to the fourth or third century thus receives confirmation.¹

If *κῶρε* was originally written, it may as well have represented *κῶρε* as *κοῦρε*. But *κοῦρος* is the normal form in choral lyric (Pindar, Bacchylides, Tragedy), and suits the language of this hymn, which is in general literary Doric koine.

3. Here and again in 13 the stone has *ΠΑΝΚΡΑΤΕC*, in 53 perhaps *ΠΑΝΚΡΑΤΕC*, in 33, 43 and apparently 63, *ΠΑΝΚΡΑΤΕC*. The character *N* or *N* is not *TI* corrected to *N*, as Bosanquet supposes (*BSA* xv (1908/9) 343), but *N* corrected to *Γ*.² The tau-like form of gamma is seen by itself in 33 *ΠΑΝΚΡΑΤΕΤΑΝ[OC*, 34 *ΑΤΩΜΕΝΟC*.

After *παγκρατές* the stone has *ΓΑΝΟC* with upsilon afterwards inserted between *O* and *C*. In the two other places where the word is preserved, 53 and 63, it has *ΓΑΝΟΥC*. This has hitherto been interpreted as *γάνος*, 'almighty brightness', or *γάνους*, 'lord of all that is wet and gleaming' (Murray, *BSA* xv (1908/9) 358). The latter is simply not Greek, apart from the fact that *γάνους* would be an Atticism. The former might be possible as Greek, though it is significant that the redactor of the article *γάνος* in *LSJ* had to create a special section to accommodate this passage. The decisive objection to it (an objection that applies equally to *γάνους*) is provided by the structure of the whole invocation in lines 1–6. Reading *γάνος*, we have (i) *χαῖρέ μοι* with a series of vocatives; (ii) an abrupt statement, without connexion: 'you have gone (or come)'—we are not told where; (iii) an abrupt appeal, again without connexion: 'come to Dicte'. By taking *παγκρατές* as masculine vocative and dividing *γάνος*, I avoid the difficult noun, supply the essential qualification of *βέβακες*, and restore the whole ephymnion to normal invocation structure with its typical relative clause following the vocatives.³ How well *γάνος* suits the sense will be seen presently. The insertion

¹ The history of its transmission is probably simple. The poet will have written it on a wax tablet or a piece of papyrus, from which it was copied on stone, like the Paean of Isyllus, Macedonius, Limenius, Aristonous and others (Powell, *Collectanea Alexandrina* 132–71), and the (hexameter?) hymn to the Idaean Dactyls (*ibid.*, 171–3). The practice of inscribing such hymns seems to have been common from the fourth century on. The Palaikastro inscription we have, which is dated to the third century A.D., will have been designed to replace the original inscription. It may not have been copied direct from stone to

stone, but by way of an intermediate pen- or stylus-written copy. Then it was apparently sketched out on the stone in some way, and the engraver slavishly followed the partly cursive lines of this sketch without understanding. See Bosanquet, *BSA* xv (1908/9) 346–8.

² Latte, 45 n. 1, takes it as an unexampled symbol for the nasal gamma.

³ The relative clause often refers to the place where the god is or may be. See Norden, *Agnostos Theos* 168 ff.

of the Υ was perhaps prompted by the misreading of a rough breathing above OC in the hand-copy.

$\beta\acute{\epsilon}\beta\alpha\kappa\epsilon\varsigma$: a Hellenistic form. See Powell, *Collectanea Alexandrina* 162.

4. $\acute{\alpha}\gamma\acute{\omega}\mu\epsilon\nu\omicron\varsigma$: this contraction of $\epsilon\omicron$ to ω is a peculiarity of East and West Cretan. (Buck, *Greek Dialects*, 3rd ed., 40 and 171 f.) The normal Doric would be $\epsilon\omicron$ or $\epsilon\nu$. This is the clearest example of a Cretan dialect form in the whole poem.

5. $\acute{\epsilon}\varsigma$: so the stone here and in 15, 55 (front), 65 (?); $\epsilon\iota\varsigma$ in 35, 45 and 55 (back). Probably $\acute{\epsilon}\varsigma$ (from $\acute{\epsilon}\nu\varsigma$, perhaps still pronounced with a nasalised vowel by the poet) is original, $\epsilon\iota\varsigma$ an orthographical modernisation.

6. $\acute{\epsilon}\rho\pi\epsilon$: common in poetry in the general sense 'come' or 'go', but also normal Cretan usage, e.g. in the treaty between Hierapytna and Lyttos, *GDI* 5041 (s. iii-ii) $\acute{\omicron}\delta\epsilon\kappa\acute{\omicron}\varsigma\omicron\mu\omicron\varsigma\tau\acute{\omega}\nu$ [*Ἱεραπυτνί*]ων $\acute{\epsilon}\rho\pi\acute{\epsilon}\tau\omega$ *Αὐττοῖ* $\acute{\epsilon}\varsigma$ τὸ $\acute{\alpha}\rho\chi\acute{\epsilon}\iota\omicron\nu$.

$\gamma\acute{\epsilon}\gamma\alpha\theta\iota$: simplified from $*\gamma\acute{\epsilon}\gamma\alpha\theta\text{-}\theta\iota$.

$\mu\omicron\lambda\pi\acute{\alpha}$: the stone has $\mu\omicron\lambda\pi\alpha$ here, 16 front, 46, 56 front and back; $\mu\omicron\lambda\pi\alpha\nu$ 16 back, 36, 66. The accusative (genitive plural is ruled out by $\tau\acute{\alpha}\nu$ in 7) is much rarer than the dative with $\gamma\eta\theta\acute{\epsilon}\omega$. The false addition of final ν is probably connected with its disappearance in pronunciation in Hellenistic times; it is often omitted in inscriptions and papyri.

10. The stone has $OY\epsilon P K H$ on the front, $CY\epsilon P K H$ on the back, the bow of C being squashed like that of an epsilon, not rounded like that of omicron. $\omicron\upsilon\epsilon\rho\kappa\eta$, accepted by Powell, has parallels in Cretan, such as $\omicron\upsilon\epsilon\rho\gamma\acute{\epsilon}\tau\alpha\nu\varsigma$, $\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\omicron\upsilon\theta\epsilon\rho\omicron\varsigma$. But it is unlikely that a provincialism like this would have been admitted by the poet; $\epsilon\upsilon\epsilon\rho\kappa\eta\varsigma$ was familiar from Homer, Pindar, etc. Cf. $\epsilon\upsilon\pi\omicron\kappa\alpha$ in 48. $\omicron\upsilon\epsilon\rho\kappa\eta$ perhaps reflects the pronunciation of the stonecutter.

17. A similar case is perhaps to be recognised here. The stone (back) has not $\acute{\alpha}\mu\beta\rho\omicron\tau\omicron\nu$ but $AMOP\ TON$. $\acute{\alpha}\mu\omicron\rho\tau\omicron\varsigma$ looks like a Cretan form for $\acute{\alpha}\mu\beta\rho\omicron\tau\omicron\varsigma$ ($< * \eta\text{-}\mu\eta\tau\omicron\varsigma$). $\mu\omicron\rho\tau\omicron\varsigma$ for $\beta\rho\omicron\tau\omicron\varsigma$ was known to Callimachus (fr. 467), and appears in the proper names $\acute{\alpha}\gamma\acute{\epsilon}\mu\omicron\rho\tau\omicron\varsigma$ (Lesbos), $\kappa\lambda\epsilon\acute{\omicron}\mu\omicron\rho\tau\omicron\varsigma$ (Syros), $\chi\alpha\rho\acute{\iota}\mu\omicron\rho\tau\omicron\varsigma$ (Aetolian, Polyb. xviii 38). The metathetic forms $\mu\omicron\rho\tau\acute{\iota}$, $\acute{\alpha}\phi\omicron\rho\delta\acute{\iota}\tau\alpha$, indicate a Cretan preference for $\omicron\rho$ over $\rho\omicron$. The metre allows either $\acute{\alpha}\mu\omicron\rho\tau\omicron\nu$ or $\acute{\alpha}\mu\beta\rho\omicron\tau\omicron\nu$. There are two possibilities: (i) the poet wrote the normal poetic form, and $\acute{\alpha}\mu\omicron\rho\tau\omicron\nu$ is due to the stonecutter, whether or not it was a form familiar to him: he read the (cursive) B before him as an O , and, bewildered, left a gap of one letter between P and T where he saw an O ; (ii) the poet wrote $\acute{\alpha}\mu\omicron\rho\tau\omicron\nu$, the man who sketched out the poem on the stone wrote $\alpha\mu\beta\rho\omicron\tau\omicron\nu$ and then corrected it to $\alpha\mu\omicron\rho||\tau\omicron\nu$, and the stonecutter just carved out the letters as they were, ignoring the erased one. For the front of the stone, where $\alpha\mu$ ends the line, $\alpha\mu$ [$\beta\rho\omicron\tau\omicron\nu$] should perhaps be inferred, since $\alpha\mu$ [$\omicron\rho\tau\omicron\nu$] would be a false syllabic division; though in the case of $\gamma\alpha\nu\omicron(\nu)\varsigma$ we find both $\gamma\alpha\nu$ [$\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$] (33, 43) and $\gamma\alpha$][$\nu\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$] (63).

18. The length of the lacuna can best be estimated from the front copy, where the eleven letters $\beta\rho\omicron\tau\omicron\nu\ \alpha\sigma\pi\acute{\iota}\delta + n$ are missing between the beginning of the stonecutter's line and $\pi\acute{\alpha}\rho\ \acute{\rho}\acute{\epsilon}\alpha\varsigma$. In the two preceding lines, in which the letters are of similar size, the equivalent space contained, respectively, 25 (or 26) letters and 23 letters plus 2-3 letters' space. So n should be 14 or 15. The reference is evidently to the shield-bearing Kouretes; but attempting to restore the actual words missing is *Spielerei*.

19. $\dagger\pi\omicron\lambda\alpha$: Bosanquet's $\pi\acute{\omicron}\delta\alpha$ is fairly probable, but $\delta\pi\lambda\alpha$ is another possibility.

20. The lacuna is here of indeterminate length, and supplementation is again unprofitable. Powell's κ [$\rho\acute{\omicron}\upsilon\omicron\nu\tau\epsilon\varsigma$ $\acute{\alpha}\nu\tau\acute{\alpha}\chi\omicron\nu$] does not accord with the metre in any of the other stanzas.

30.] $\alpha\varsigma$ $\kappa\alpha\lambda\acute{\alpha}\varsigma$ $\acute{\alpha}\delta\varsigma$: no other interpretation of these letters seems possible. $\acute{\alpha}\delta\varsigma$ is presumably genitive, not accusative plural: I know no instance of the word in the plural. $\omicron\varsigma$ is written for secondary $-\acute{\omega}\varsigma$ (from $-\acute{\omicron}\omicron\varsigma$). Bosanquet's supplement τ] $\acute{\alpha}\varsigma$ may be right; cf. 40 $\acute{\alpha}$ $\phi\acute{\iota}\lambda\omicron\lambda\omicron\beta\omicron\varsigma$ $E\acute{\iota}\rho\eta\gamma\alpha$.

37, 39. The lacunae represent the beginnings of two successive lines on the stone. In the three preceding lines and one following line, the supplements are certain, being parts of the refrain. For these four lines (*abcd*) the following equations can be formulated, where *n* represents the number of letters missing in verse 37:

$$(a) \quad n + 12 = 23$$

$$(b) \quad n + 7 = 17$$

$$(c) \quad n + 3 = 11$$

$$(d) \quad n + 19 = 29$$

It is reasonable to take 10 as the value of *n*. The number of letters missing in verse 39 is approximately $n + 4 = 14$.

Murray's interpretation of *κατητος* as an adverb formed by contraction from a stereotyped *κατὰ Φέτος* through *κατάΦετος* and *κατάετος* (p. 360) is hard to improve on.⁴ Bosanquet's *β]ρύον* is fairly certain, and his *ῥΩραι δὲ* attractive, though rather short, even allowing for the width of omega.⁵ Perhaps *καρποὶ δὲ*.

38. *βροτὸς*: it is uncertain whether this represents *βροτὸς* or *βροτὸς*. So with *ποντοπόρος* in 58. *-ōs* (written *-ους*, not *-ως*) is normal in choral lyric.

39. The letter which I transcribe as a xi is usually taken as a zeta. Its form, $\bar{\xi}$, is certainly that of a xi, though different from the xi written in 8 (front and back) *ΜΕΙΖΑΝΤΕC*.⁶ If $\xi\omega$ is right, the letter before *Π* must have been a short vowel, and iota is the only one that fits the preserved trace. *Πιτ'* presumably represents a verb. *ῥριπε* might do; for this aorist in a transitive sense cf. Nic. *Th.* 724.

47. The lacuna represents the end of a line on the stone, and can only be calculated approximately. But neighbouring lines that can be supplemented with certainty yield the following equations:

$$n + 6 = 21$$

$$n + 3 = 19$$

$$n - 10 = 5$$

$$n - 10 = 5$$

$$n - 9 = 8$$

Which suggest fairly unanimously that $n = 15-16$.

At this point, apparently, the chorus turns from narrative to prayer, and Wilamowitz's *ἀ[λλά* is exactly what is wanted.⁷ He continued with *βῶν θόρ' ἐς ποί]μνια*, which is unacceptable: *ποίμνιον βοῶν* is no more Greek than 'flock of cows' is English.⁸ The flocks must come in 48, therefore they cannot come here. Xanthudides' *δέ]μνια* is bizarre. Murray's *στα]μνία* is much the best proposal. *θόρ' ἐς* must have preceded it, and my *ἀναξ*, while not certain, adequately fills the remaining gap. The supplement amounts to 16 letters on the assumption that the two elided vowels were written.

48-49. The lacuna here is the *n* of 47 minus three = 12 or 13 letters. Murray's *κὲς λή]α* (amended by Latte to *λά]α*) is very probable. It leaves six or seven letters to be

⁴ The form *ΗΤΟΣ* for *ἔτος* on an Aetolian inscription, *IG* 9² (1) 2. 11, 31, 32, is probably to be interpreted as *ἥτος*: so Buck, *Greek Dialects* 19 and 54.

⁵ Unless one assumes indentation of the first word of the stanza, which is not found in the other places where this falls at the beginning of the line (7 front and back).

⁶ Against Murray's supplement *ἄμφεπε ζῶ'* is the fact that *π* is preceded by the top of a vertical. There is no other instance in the poem of elision between lines; this is also an objection to Wilamowitz's

δι]ῥπε ζώ<ι>, though it must in fairness be admitted that there is no instance of hiatus between lines either. The short vowel before *ζ* cannot be called impossible: there is an apparent example as early as Timotheus, *Persae* 189 f., where *ἀλλ' ἔτε, μηκέτι μέλλετε, ζεύγνυτε μὲν τετράορον ἱππων* should be taken as a dactylic sequence. Homeric *ἄστυ Ζελεῖς* etc. is a special case.

⁷ Denniston, *Greek Particles* 16, gives some parallels.

⁸ 'Freilich redet man sonst von *βοῶν ἀγέλαι*.' (p. 500.)

filled by the noun that εὔποκα qualified, so that ποίμνια (Murray) is preferable to πώεα (Wilamowitz). The assonance with σταμνία which it gives is a typical feature of an incantation.

Before ευποκ the stone has θορι, where ι is perhaps the corruption of an apostrophe.

50. κές: perhaps elision, κές, rather than crasis, κῆς (for κῆς). Cf. Cretan κέρσενος, Buck, *Greek Dialects* 80. On the back of the stone it is twice written καις.

The maximum length for the lacuna is about nine letters. τελεσφ[όρ- is certain; the noun can only be guessed at, but Wilamowitz's οἶκος is very attractive. He compares Hesych. τελεσφόρος οἶκος τοῦ γεγαμηκότος καὶ τεκνώσαντος, though of course the gloss cannot derive from this actual passage.

57. The supplement is Murray's.

πόληας: an epicism.

58. ποντοπόρος is Powell's correction of ποντοφόρος, which is unparalleled. The confusion of π and φ is common in the Imperial period. The corruption may have been aided by τελεσφόρος above. νᾶας is monosyllabic, and might as well have been written νᾶς. For the 'etymological' spelling cf. Hes. *Th.* 981 βροῶν.

59. The lacuna is of some six letters. Bosanquet's supplement is hard to improve on.

60. The whole lacuna, including ἰὼ μέγιστε] and a space before it, is about 15 letters long, and the space before and after the refrain is elsewhere (10-11, 16-17, 46-47) about three letters wide. Bosanquet's κλ[ειτήν (*debut -άν*) is rather too long. The metre is uncertain: this stanza is in ionics *a minore* (but see below), and this catalectic line may have scanned ∪ ∪ — ∪ — — — (as Eur. *Bacch.* 71, *Cycl.* 502), or ∪ ∪ — ∪ — ∪ — (as in Catullus' galliambics, e.g. 63.14 *uelut exules loca*, 35 *tetigere lassulae*), or ∪ ∪ — ∪ — — (as e.g. Eur. *Bacch.* 385, 536). Murray's κα[λάν would do, but if the letter after κ were alpha, one ought to be able to see something of the crossbar. Perhaps κλ[ηράν (Wilamowitz), or κλ[υτάν (*κλυτή Θέμις* Quint. Smyrn. 12.202).

57-60. There are several suspicious features about this whole stanza:

(i) The metre, ionics *a minore*, with anacalasis in 57 and 59 and catalexis in 60, is intelligible, but differs from the ionics *a maiore* of all the other stanzas.

(ii) From the point of view of sense, 57 and 59 go closely together, and 58 is an interruption.

(iii) The monosyllabic scansion which has to be assumed for νᾶας is unparalleled.

(iv) The structure of the clauses θόρε κές . . . is unlike that in 47-50, where we have [θόρ' ἐς . . .] καὶ θόρε . . . ἐς [. . . κές . . .] . . . θόρε, κές . . .

All these difficulties could be dealt with by the assumption of a dislocation in the text, such as the repeated θόρε might easily have caused:

κές πόληας ἀμῶν θόρε
κές νέος πολίτας θόρε
κές θέμιν (κλεεινάν) θόρε
κές ποντοπόρος νᾶας.

Besides the dislocation, one would have to assume that an extra θόρε was erroneously added before κές πόληας, and that whatever word followed θέμιν was replaced by something shorter. Latte (p. 46) avoids all but the second difficulty by supplementing simply κῆς in 57 instead of θόρε κές, assuming an abnormally large space beforehand.

III. INTERPRETATION

It is well known that the Zeus who was born in a Cretan cave was originally not the Hellenic Zeus but a pre-Hellenic vegetation- or year-spirit of the same general type as the

Semitic Adonis or the Egyptian Osiris. He was represented as a beardless youth;⁹ he was reborn every year,¹⁰ and he also died.

This god was identified by the Greeks with their Zeus long before Hesiod. But he retained his individuality, and his worship in Crete preserved many of its peculiar features. Our hymn, which comes from the site of the temple of Zeus Diktaios at Palaikastro, is a unique document from a comparatively late stage of that cult.

The god is addressed as 'son of Kronos', and is evidently thought of as Zeus. But the name Zeus is avoided. There may be no significance in this; but it may have been felt that it was not quite proper to call him Zeus. Instead he is called 'greatest Kouros'.

The birth of this Kouros was attended, according to myth, by the Kouretes. The name *Κουρήτες* means no more than *κοῦροι*.¹¹ They are of the same nature as he, but he is *primus inter pares*: the greatest Kouros.¹² Like him, they are nature-spirits. They grew as trees;¹³ they haunt mountain caves and wooded glens.¹⁴ When they dance wearing their armour, all the flowers bloom.¹⁵ They are *τροφῆες καὶ αὐτ' ὀλετήρες*,¹⁶ *ώροτρόφοι, φερέκαρποι*.¹⁷ They nourish and protect the flocks and herds.¹⁸

Except for the fact that they are male, the Cretan Kouretes are closely similar to the Greek Nymphs, who are often called *Κοῦραι*.¹⁹ These too are nature-spirits, dwelling in springs, groves, caves and mountains. They are forever dancing,²⁰ and they nurture both men and beasts.²¹ They were born together with the Kouretes, according to an early source,²² and they are invoked together with them in the treaty oaths sworn by Cretan towns.²³

⁹ *Et. magn.* 276.19 s.v. *Δίκη* . . . *ἐνταῦθα δὲ Διὸς ἄγαλμα ἀγένοιον ἴστατο*. Compare coins from Phaistos (s. v-iv; Head, *Hist. Num.*² 473) showing a boy labelled *FEΛXANOC* sitting in the branches of a tree, with Hesych. *Γελχάνος*: *ὁ Ζεὺς παρὰ Κρησίν*. (*κρισω* cod.). Welchanos, who is known to have been worshipped in classical times at Knossos, Lyttos and Gortyn, in other words in the areas round Mt. Ida and Mt. Lasithi, may have been the original 'Minoan' name of the Cretan Zeus. His festival the Welchania fell in the spring, cf. *Inscr. Cret.* I. xvi 3.2 (Knossos), I. xviii 11.2 (Lyttos); A. B. Cook, *Zeus* ii 948. It is possible that he is identical with the Etruscan Velxans (but hardly with Latin Volcanus); see W. Meid, *Indog. Forsch.* lxvi (1961) 259-66.

¹⁰ Ant. Lib. 19 (from the *Ornithogony* of 'Boios') *ἐν Κρήτῃ λέγεται εἶναι ἱερὸν ἄντρον μελισσῶν, ἐν ᾧ μυθολογοῦσι τεκεῖν Ῥέαν τὸν Δία, καὶ <οὐκ> ἔστιν ὅσιον οὐδένα παρελθεῖν οὔτε θεὸν οὔτε θνητόν. ἐν δὲ χρόνῳ ἀφωρισμένῳ ὁράται καθ' ἕκαστον ἔτος πλείστον ἐκλάμπον ἐκ τοῦ σπηλαίου πῦρ. τοῦτο δὲ γίνεσθαι μυθολογοῦσιν ὅταν ἐκζέῃ τὸ τοῦ Διὸς ἐκ τῆς γενέσεως αἷμα*. The 'blood' that 'bubbled up' was perhaps the sap that returns to vegetation in the springtime; while the fire that blazed forth from the cave I imagine to have been annually contrived by priests as a sign to the worshippers that the god was born again.

¹¹ Cf. Homeric *κούρητες* 'Αχαιῶν = *κοῦροι* 'Αχαιῶν.

¹² The *Qōrēs* of the very early inscriptions on Thera (*IG* xii.3 354, 355, 371) is perhaps to be identified with him. Thera had particular connexions with Crete from the Bronze Age on. From Thera the cult was carried to Cyrene, from where we have dedications to the *Κωρής* in the fourth-third

century, one of them, significantly, to the 'Koures of Crete' (*SEG* ix 108 *Κωρῆς Κρήτης*).

¹³ Mel. adesp. 67 (b) *7 δενδροφυεῖς ἀναβλαστροντάς*.

¹⁴ Cf. the Euhemeristic account of them in Diod. v 65 *κατοικεῖν δ' αὐτοὺς τῶν ὀρῶν τοὺς συνδένδρους καὶ φαραγγώδεις τόπους . . . διὰ τὸ μήπω κατασκευὰς οἰκιῶν εὐρῆσθαι*.

¹⁵ *Orph. Hymn.* xxxviii 13.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 14.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 25.

¹⁸ *GDI* iv p. 1036 (from Hagia Varvara, below Ida) *Ἐρταῖος Ἀμνάτου Κωρήσι τοῖς πρὸ καρταῖπῶδων ἀρὰν καὶ [χα]ρί[σ]τήμιον*.

¹⁹ *Od.* vi 122, Pind. *P.* iii 78, Eur. *HF* 785, *Rhes.* 929, Call. *Hymn.* iii 66, Ap. Rhod. iv 1349, Theodoridas *Anth. Pal.* vi 156, *Orph. Hymn.* 51.13, Nonn. *D.* ix 315, xxxvii 21; conjectured also in Hes. *Th.* 346, cf. *CQ* N.S. xi (1961) 137.

²⁰ *Cypria* fr. 5 Allen, *Hom. Hymn.* xix 19 ff., Ap. Rhod. i 1221 ff., etc.

²¹ E.g. sch. Dan. *Virg. Ecl.* x 62 *sane ab ouibus nymphae perimelides . . . ab alimonia infantum curotrophae nominantur*, Ant. Lib. 31.3 *μυθολογοῦσιν οὖν ἐν τῇ Μεσσηλίῳ γῇ παρὰ τὰς λεγομένας Ἱερὰς Πέτρας φανῆναι νύμφας ἐπιμηλίδας χορευούσας*, Hes. *Th.* 347, sch. *Il.* xx 8, sch. Ap. Rhod. iv 1322, Paus. viii 4.2; *Orph. Hymn.* 51.12-13 *αἰπολικάι νόμιαι θηρσὶν φίλαι . . . πολυθρέμμοι ἀξίτροφοί τε*.

²² [Hes.] fr. 198 Rz. *οὔρειαι νύμφαι θεαὶ ἐξεγένοντο καὶ γένος οὐτιδανῶν Σατύρων καὶ ἀμχανοεργῶν Κουρήτες τε θεοὶ φιλοπαίγμονες ὄρχιστήρες*.

²³ *GDI* 5041 *ὁμνῶ τὰν Ἑστίαν καὶ Ζῆνα Ὀράτριον . . . καὶ Ἀρεα καὶ Ἀφροδίταν καὶ Κωρήτας καὶ Νύμφας καὶ θεὸς πάντας καὶ πάσας*.

It was from among these nymphs, the βαθύκολποι κοῦραι Ὠκεανοῦ, that Persephone, the greatest Kore, was carried off by Aidoneus.²⁴ She, like the Cretan Kouros, was a nature-spirit who vanished below the earth in the winter months and returned in the spring.²⁵ Originally she may have been said to die and be reborn. In classical times she was not actually said to die, but her descent to the realm of Hades and her marriage to him amount to something as near death as classical Greek religion allowed a deity to suffer.

This feeling that a god could not be said to die also affected the cult of the Cretan Kouros. The tomb of Zeus in Crete was very famous from Euhemerus onwards; but it is only the tomb that is spoken of, not the death, which ought to have been the greater paradox.²⁶ This state of affairs fits very well with what we find in the Palaikastro hymn. The Kouros has not died, he is not being reborn, he has 'gone to earth' and is now being called to return to Dicte ἐς ἐνιαυτόν.²⁷

δαιμόνων ἀγώμενος is almost certainly to be taken with βέβακες, not with what follows: Δίκταν is the emphatic word that begins the new clause. Who are the δαίμονες who have followed the Kouros to earth? One thinks first of the Kouretes who form his entourage; as nature-spirits, they are likely enough to disappear with him, returning in time to prepare for his advent. In themselves, the words suggest that all the gods departed with him; and perhaps the Kouretes are all the gods concerned in this religion. The Nymphs do not disappear in this way, as far as I know; the Kore leaves them picking flowers in the meadow. But their lives are intimately bound up with the lives of trees. When the tree dies, they die;²⁸ and the tree's vernal leafing and autumnal unleafing brings them joy and grief.²⁹

The mythical armed dance of the Kouretes is without doubt the projection of an annual ritual dance intended to promote fertility and growth.³⁰ It will have been executed by mortal kouroi, perhaps very young ones, who may have been called Kouretes themselves.³¹ In one interesting version of the myth, the Kouretes dance round a tree in which the Zeus-child's cradle is suspended.³² There is probably a connexion here with the repre-

²⁴ *Hymn. Dem.* 5 ff., 417 ff.; cf. *Orph. fr.* 49.19 ff., *Colum.* 10.268 ff., *Stat. Ach.* i 824 ff., *Paus.* v 20.3. Persephone was reared in a cave in the company of nymphs, according to *Porph. de antro Nympharum* 7.

²⁵ Nilsson's contention that it is in the summer months that she disappears (*Arch. f. Rel.* xxxii (1935) 105 ff. = *Opuscula Selecta* ii 576 ff.) goes against the explicit statement in *Hymn. Dem.* 401 (cf. 455), as well as the passages from late writers quoted by Nilsson himself, *Op. Sel.* ii 578 n. 96.

²⁶ The references are collected by A. B. Cook, *Zeus* ii 940-43 with iii 1173. In Alcidas' *Mouseion* (Pap. Flinders Petrie i 25, cf. *Certamen* line 100 Allen) the tomb of Zeus appears as something in the same class of unreality as 'the King of France'. Hesiod proposes a puzzle as follows:

Μοῦσ' ἄγε μοι τά τ' ἐόντα τά τ' ἐσσόμενα πρό τ' ἐόντα,
τῶν μὲν μηδὲν αἶεде, σὺ δ' ἄλλης μνήσαι αἰοιδῆς.
—a programme that Homer fulfils by declaring

οὐδὲ ποτ' ἀμφὶ Διὸς τύμβον καναχήποδες ἵπποι
ἄρματα συντρίψουσιν ἐρίζοντες περὶ νίκης.
So again in *Certamen* 121-3:
(puzzle) δειπνον δειπνήσαντες ἐνὶ σποδῷ αἰθαλοέσση . . .
(solution and counter-puzzle)

σύλλεγον ὅστέα λευκὰ Διὸς κατατεθνηῶτος . . .
(solution) παιδὸς ὑπερθύμον, Σαρπηδόνης ἀντιθέοιο.

In *Call. Hymn.* i 8-9 the death is inferred from the tomb:

Κρήτες αἰεὶ ψευσταί· καὶ γὰρ τάφον ὃ ἄνα σεῖο
Κρήτες ἐτεκτῆναντο· σὺ δ' οὐ θάνες, ἐσσι γὰρ αἰεὶ.

²⁷ ἐνιαυτός probably does not mean 'year' here, but the day that marks the end of a year, as often. So Latte, 47 n. 3. Differently in *Arat.* 34

ἄνθρω ἐγκατέθεντο καὶ ἔτρεφον εἰς ἐνιαυτόν
Δικταῖοι Κουρήτες ὅτε Κρόνον ἐφεύδοντο.

²⁸ *Hymn. Aphr.* 264 ff. with the note of Allen—Sikes—Halliday.

²⁹ *Call. Hymn.* iv 84-5

Νύμφαι μὲν χαίρουσιν, ὅτε δρύας ὄμβρος ἀέξει,
Νύμφαι δ' αὖ κλαίουσιν, ὅτε δρυοὶ μηκέτι φύλλα.

³⁰ Armed dancing for this purpose is attested. Cf. Frazer, *Golden Bough* (2nd ed., 1900) iii 123 n. 3.

³¹ Epimenides, the wonder-worker and priest of Zeus and the Nymphs (cf. *Theopomp.* 115 F 69), was called Κουρήτης and said to be the son of a nymph Balte or Blaste (*Plut. Sol.* 12.4; *Myronianus FHG* iv 454, fr. 1).

³² *Hyg. Fab.* 139.3 *Iuno autem Iouem in Cretensi insula detulit. at Amalthea pueri nutrix eum in cunis in arbore suspendit, ut neque caelo neque terra neque mari inueniretur, et ne pueri uagitus exaudiretur. impuberes conuocauit, eisque clipeola aenea et hastas dedit, et iussit eos circum arborem euntes crepare; qui Graece Curetes sunt appellati.* Compare the representations of Welchanos in the branches of a tree, on the coins mentioned above.

sentations in Minoan art of dancing before a sacred tree.³³ There are differences that cannot be ignored; the Minoan dancers are mostly female, and do not wear armour. There is, however, a signet ring in Copenhagen³⁴ which shows a female figure, apparently a goddess, being adored by four smaller figures, of whom two are male and have figure-of-eight shields behind them; one might speculate that they have just been dancing, and have thrown aside their shields on the epiphany of the goddess. The Kouros and Kouretes of classical times have another Minoan counterpart in the young armed god who sometimes appears on monuments beside the universal goddess. I would also identify as the Kouros the god armed with spear and thunderbolt who is shown emerging from the crown of an enthroned goddess's head on a relief pithos from Tenos (*AJA* lviii (1954) 240 and pl. 46, assigned to the late eighth century).

The dance may have been accompanied by a hymn of invocation, the ancestor of the hymn we have; and by the same token, our hymn, sung by a choir standing round an altar (verse 9), may have been preceded or accompanied by a dance executed by others.³⁵ The *βωμός εὐερκής* which is the focal point of the ceremony perhaps derives in a direct line from the walled-in tree which was the object of worship in Minoan times. For all we know, it may still have been crowned by some set-piece of living vegetation.

In verse 17 the chorus embarks upon a myth, which apparently extends to verse 40, twice interrupted by the refrain. The *ἐνθα* with which it is introduced refers to *Δίκταν* in 15 rather than the *βωμός* in 10, with continuity of sense between refrain and stanza as in 6-7: in the rest of the poem, the sense runs on from stanza to stanza without regard to the refrain. The god is reminded that this is the place of his original birth, when the Kouretes took him from Rhea and performed their armed dance round him. Most of the next stanza is lost. The reference to (a, the) *καλὰ ἄως* in the last line is obscure: it may mean 'fair Dawn (Daylight)' in general, or a particular fair dawn in the past.³⁶ At any rate we are still in narrative, as the past tenses in the following stanza (37 ff.) show. This stanza describes the age of peace, prosperity and righteousness that followed the god's birth. The picture is influenced by the Golden Age of Hesiodic tradition;³⁷ but the idea that such an age ensued upon the birth of the Kouros is a reflection of the fact that his annual rebirth is a precondition of fertility and prosperity, with which peace and righteousness are inseparably linked.³⁸

The description of that age concludes the myth, and forms the basis of the following appeal. Just as your birth then, O greatest Kouros, led to prosperity and peace, so spring up for us now, that we may enjoy those blessings this year too. The word which I render 'spring up', *θόρε*, can be used of gods being born; cf. *H.Aph.* 119 *ἐκ δ' ἔθορε πρὸ φώωσδε*, *H.Herm.* 20 *ὅς καὶ ἐπεὶ δὴ μητρὸς ἀπ' ἀθανάτων θόρε γυίων*. It is the springing up of the

³³ See Nilsson, *Minoan-Mycenaean Religion*² 262 ff.

³⁴ Nilsson, 280, fig. 140. I am warned that the ring may be a forgery: cf. Biesantz, *Kretisch-Mykenische Siegelbilder*, 1954, 120 f.

³⁵ Or the singers themselves may have begun to dance in the later part of the hymn. So H. Jeanmaire, *Couroi et Courètes* (1939) 432 f.

³⁶ Wilamowitz, 501. According to Nonnus, *D.* iii 61 ff., it is at dawn that the Korybantes, who for him are identical with the Kouretes, begin their dancing:

ἦδη δ' ἔκλαγεν ὄρνις ἐώϊος αἰθέρα τέμνων,
καὶ στίχες εὐπήληκες ἐρημονόμων Κορυβάντων
Κνώσσιον ἐκρούσαντο σακεσπάλων ἄλμα
χορείης . . .

(77) καὶ πατάγῳ κελάδοντι φιλοσπαράγων Κορυβάντων
πρώϊος ἔγρετο Κάδμος.

Bosanquet, 354 f., suggests that there may be a reference to a time when the regular order of night and day had not yet been fixed, or not yet understood by man; this seems less appropriate to the context.

³⁷ For the association of Dike and Eirene cf. Hes. *Th.* 902 (where they are both Horai), *Op.* 225 ff. *β]ρῶν κατῆτος* would fit better if *κατῆτος* could mean 'throughout the year'; cf. *Ov. Met.* i 107, 116-19, for eternal spring as a feature of the Golden Age. But *κατ' ἔτος* regularly means 'annually' (e.g. *Thuc.* iv 53, *Diod.* iii 2, *Ev. Luc.* ii 41), or else 'this year' (*SIG*³ 284.24, *OGI* 458.64, *CIG* 3641 b 5, 38). If we adopt the sense 'every year', the idea might be that the crops (*καρποί*) never failed.

³⁸ *Hom. Hymn.* xxx; in the opposite sense, Hes. *Op.* 225-47, *Od.* xix 109-14.

departed god and of the vegetation he represents that the Kouretes try to assist by their own leaping. The word has other associations with fertility: Aeschylus uses it like *θόρνυμι* in the sense 'impregnate', and *θορός*, *θορή* mean 'semen'. Sexual intercourse was believed to have an encouraging effect upon the growth of crops. This is what lies behind the myth of Iasion's sexual union with Demeter in a thrice-ploughed fallow field—in Crete;³⁹ and while that myth is the aition for a custom of ploughing-time, it is conceivable that a sexual act also played a part in the springtime ceremony with which our hymn is connected.

What the god is being asked to do, however, is to spring up from the lower world into the upper. He springs up not in a single spot, but everywhere; in the crops, in the beasts of the field, in men, and by a further extension of the original idea, in everything that is subject to success or failure, affluence or want: in the ships that bring merchandise, in the citizen body as a whole,⁴⁰ and in Themis, the principle of order and regularity that both men and nature do best to obey.

It is evident that 'spring up' has become a stereotyped prayer in the cult of the Kouros, and that his influence has outgrown its original bounds. He is on the way to becoming a universal god, and it is in accord with this that he is praised as *παγκρατής* in the refrain. This is what he had in common with the Hellenic Zeus, that justified the identification of the two. In most respects they were, originally, utterly different. And yet, if the idea of a god who regularly rises from the lower world and returns to it seems entirely alien to the idea of Zeus, we do find Zeus in the kingdom of the dead. From Homer to Nonnus we are confronted by the remarkable fact that the lord of the underworld, the consort of Persephone-Kore in Hades, is Zeus—often distinguished by the epithet (*κατα*)*χθόνιος*, but nevertheless Zeus. He is king of the dead, A. *Suppl.* 154 ff.:

εἰ δὲ μή, . . . τὸν γαῖον
τὸν πολυξενώτατον
Ζῆνα τῶν κεκμηκότων
ἰξόμεσθα σὺν κλάδοις
ἄρτάναις θανοῦσαι,
μὴ τυχοῦσαι θεῶν Ὀλυμπίων,

and 230 f.:

καὶ κεῖ δικάζει τὰμπλακῆμαθ', ὥς λόγος,
Ζεὺς ἄλλος ἐν καμοῦσιν ὑστάτας δίκας.

Ag. 1386–87 (cj.); Nonn. *D.* xxvii 77. For Euripides he is not *Ζεὺς ἄλλος*, but Zeus, fr. 912:

σοὶ τῷ πάντων μεδέοντι χοῦν
πελανόν τε φέρω, Ζεὺς εἴτ' Ἀΐδης
ὀνομαζόμενος στέργεις . . .
σὺ γὰρ ἐν τε θεοῖς τοῖς Οὐρανίδαῖς
σκῆπτρον τὸ Διὸς μεταχειρίζεις
χθονίων θ' Ἀΐδῃ μετέχεις ἀρχῆς.

It is he who greets Oedipus with an omen of thunder when he is about to become a hero.⁴¹ Like Persephone, he is connected with the growth of cereal crops. Hesiod bids the farmer, at the moment when he starts to plough his first furrow of the year, to pray to Zeus

³⁹ Hes. *Th.* 969 ff., etc. The child of the union was Ploutos, cereal wealth. Iasion was a farmer, according to Canter's certain correction in Nonn. *D.* xlviii 677. For the type of ritual cf. Frazer, *Golden Bough* (3rd ed.) ii 97–104 and xiii ('Aftermath', 1936) 153–6.

⁴⁰ Verse 57. This sense of *πόλις* is normal in Crete.

⁴¹ Soph. *OC* 1606. For Zeus Chthonios as a god of thunder cf. Nonn. *D.* xxvii 93.

Chthonios and Demeter that the crop may be abundant.⁴² This aspect of his power is more fully expressed in the eighteenth Orphic Hymn, 3-5:

Ζεὺ χθόνιε σκηπτοῦχε, τάδ' ἱερὰ δέξο προθύμως,
Πλούτων, ὃς κατέχεις γαίης κληῖδας ἀπάσης,
πλουτοδοτῶν γενεὴν βροτέην καρποῖς ἐνιαυτῶν.⁴³

But it is not only the fertility of crops that depends on him: he has at least a negative influence over the fertility of men. When Phoenix seduced his father's mistress, his father called upon his erinyes to make Phoenix sterile;

θεοὶ δ' ἐτέλειον ἐπαράς,
Ζεὺς τε καταχθόνιος καὶ ἐπαινή Περσεφόνηα.⁴⁴

This Zeus who is lord of birth and death in both the animal and vegetable kingdoms, this Zeus who himself dwells both above and below the ground, shows affinities with the Cretan Kouros that cannot be fortuitous. If these were original features of the Hellenic Zeus, they would sufficiently account for his identification with the Cretan god. There is perhaps as much to be said for the hypothesis that the identification came first, and was responsible for the development of Zeus' chthonian aspect. Zeus could not be expected to become a dying god, to desert Olympus for half the year in favour of Hades. But some of the functions of a dying god could be fulfilled by an infernal counterpart of Zeus, a Chthonian Zeus who lived permanently in the underworld.⁴⁵

While Zeus accepted from the Kouros the condition of death, the Kouros, under the influence of Zeus, renounced the ignominy of dying, and became like Kore an immortal who 'went to earth' and returned each year. It is only in the light of this mutual influence between the two deities that we can approach a genuine understanding of the Dictaeon hymn.

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⁴² *Op.* 465 ff.; cf. *SIG*³ 1024.20 (Mykonos).

⁴³ Perhaps it was originally this Zeus who was the consort of Demeter and father of Kore.

⁴⁴ *Il.* ix 456 f. Compare the belief that sitting on a tomb at certain times may make a man impotent: *Hes. Op.* 750-2 (if that is what the lines mean). For the Erinyes in connexion with Zeus Chthonios and Persephone cf. *Orph. Hymn.* lxx 2, Nonn. *D.* xlv 258.

⁴⁵ The Cretan year-god might himself have been lord of the dead among his other functions; the case of Osiris shows that the two things may go together.

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