

### III.—The Hero Echetlaeus

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Pausanias, in speaking of the *stoa poikilê* in the Agora at Athens, describes the famous painting of the battle of Marathon, which is dated in the second quarter of the fifth century B.C.<sup>1</sup> He says, in part (1.15.3):

Here also are depicted Marathon, a hero after whom the plain is named, and Theseus, shown rising from out of the ground, and Athena and Heracles; for it was first by the Marathonians, as they themselves say, that Heracles was considered a god. Among the combatants especially conspicuous in the painting are Callimachus, who was chosen by the Athenians to serve as polemarch, Miltiades, one of those who served as *stratêgos*, and a hero called Echetlus, of whom I shall also make mention later.

It is this figure Echetlus or Echetlaeus whom I propose to consider.

The later passage (Paus. 1.32.4-5) occurs in a description of the deme of Marathon and the battle which took place on its plain.

The Marathonians worship those who died in battle, calling them heroes, and also Marathon, from whom the deme gets its name, and Heracles; they claim that among the Greeks it was first by them that Heracles was considered a god. They also say that a man happened to be present in the battle, in appearance and outfit a countryman. He killed many of the barbarians with a plow and, after the battle, disappeared. When the Athenians inquired of the [Delphic] god, he gave only this answer about him: he ordered them to honor Echetlaeus as a hero.

The assistance of gods and heroes in battle is a familiar phenomenon. I need only mention here the Aeacids whose help had been asked before Salamis and who, as armed men, seemed to stretch out their hands from Aegina before the Greek triremes (Plut., *Them.* 15, cf. Hdt. 8.64 and 84), while the hero Cychreus of Salamis appeared in the form of a snake on the Greek ships (Paus. 1.36.1).

<sup>1</sup> On the date and the disputed authorship of the painting see E. Pfuhl, *Malerei und Zeichnung* (Munich 1923) 2, pp. 637, 660-62. On the location of the Stoa see E. Vanderpool, *Hesperia* 18 (1949) p. 130, fig. 1, and p. 136; on the recently discovered architectural fragments see H. A. Thompson, *Hesperia* 19 (1950) 327-9.

Before the same battle, a cloud of dust from which issued the Iacchus cry of the Eleusinian mysteries moved towards the Greek camp, testifying to divine support for the Greeks and the impending doom of the Persians (Hdt. 8.65). Other examples are at hand from all over the Greek world.<sup>2</sup>

If we consider who the figures are who give aid at such crises, we see that the heroes usually have some special connection with the place or the people, as in the case of Ajax and Telamon on Salamis (Hdt. 8.64) and the seven *archêgetai* of Plataea (Plut., *Arist.* 11), or they have to be fetched to the spot as Aeacus and the rest of the Aeacids had to be brought from Aegina (Hdt. 8.64, 84) and were sent on another occasion by the Aeginetans to Thebes (Hdt. 5.80–81). Gods in the classical period gave help from a distance, as did Pan at Marathon (Hdt. 6.105.2–3), and it is probably in this way that we should understand Athena's position in this painting; but even so the gods with local attachments were more likely to be of service.<sup>3</sup> Here, Marathon and Heracles were worshipped locally for we know, besides what Pausanias tells us, that the Athenians camped on Heracles' precinct (Hdt. 6.108 and 116) and that games were held at Marathon in his honor (Pindar, *Ol.* 9.134 ff., with scholiast). Athena and Theseus are the champions of the nation, and there is the legend of Theseus and the bull of Marathon (Plut., *Thes.* 14, Apollod., *Epii.* 1.5, Paus. 1.27.10); Plutarch knew

<sup>2</sup> E.g., the Dioscuri (Hdt. 5.75) and Asclepius (*IG* 4<sup>2</sup>.1.128.58 ff. [Isyllus]) at Sparta; Ajax the son of Oileus, for whom a space was left in the ranks of the Italian Locrians and who in one battle wounded the Crotonian commander (Paus. 3.19.12–13; Conon fr. 18, Jacoby). Cf. M. P. Nilsson, *Geschichte der griechischen Religion*, I (Munich 1941) 678–9; J. G. Frazer, *Pausanias's Description of Greece* (2nd ed.; London 1913) 5, on Paus. 10.23.2.

<sup>3</sup> The evidence does not show that gods were thought to take the field in person in the classical period (but we do not know the date of the battle between Tanagra and Eretria, in which Hermes appeared as an ephebe, Paus. 9.22.2). Nilsson suggests that there was a reluctance to imagine gods, worshipped in more than one city, as fighting for one particular city (above, note 2; this would hardly prevent their participation in battle against the barbarians). At the level, however, at which these stories arose it is doubtful that such contradictions would be felt, especially since supernatural figures generally appeared in victory, and not defeat, in itself an indication of which side they had decided to favor. Nor does this account for the reappearance of gods in battle in Hellenistic times when the gods are, if anything, less localized and more universal. It would seem that the predominance of heroes — a term that includes figures of diverse origin (cf. A. D. Nock, *HTHR* 37 [1944] 162–6) — in the stories from the classical period is due to the popularity of their cults, their local and intimate character, and the belief that many had been great men and especially great warriors, rather than to any reluctance to visualize the gods in battle.

a tradition that Theseus appeared in battle for the Greeks at Marathon (Plut., *Thes.* 35). Help may also come from a hero whose prime function is to give aid when the country is attacked: at Delphi, Phylacus, who had a shrine near the sanctuary of Athena Pronaia southeast of Apollo's precinct, along with Autonomos, another local hero, appeared as giant hoplites and attacked the Persians (Hdt. 8.38-9; Paus. 10.8.7). Again, when the Gauls attacked Delphi, Phylacus helped to ward off the enemy (Paus. 10.23.2). The very name of Phylacus suggests the role he played.<sup>4</sup>

In such company Echetlaeus seems out of place if, in fact, he was neither a local nor national hero and was unknown to the Athenians before the battle. Nor does his name — "he of the plow-handle" — suggest his epiphany in battle. It is, therefore, not surprising that the tradition recorded by Pausanias has been more or less vigorously rejected. Farnell, for one, believed that "... it is probably a pseudo-historic aetiological story invented to explain a name and a half-forgotten cult, and should not be regarded as proof that the latter [Echetlaeus] originated in the fifth century B.C." He classes him with such other local agricultural heroes as Eunostos ("he of the good return") of Tanagra.<sup>5</sup> Indeed, comparison with other heroes who fight in battle strongly suggests the prior existence of Echetlaeus, but, as I hope to show, we need not therefore discount the tradition which says that he had no organized cult up to that time.

In native Greek art, no representation of Echetlaeus is known, but a series of Etruscan funerary urns shows a figure in battle wielding a plow. It has not been possible to identify this figure

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Teichophylax at Myrina (Hesychius, s.v.), presumably a guardian of the city walls. There is also a *daimôn nyktophylax* (Lucian, *Peregr.* 27-28, p. 350, cf. Th. Hopfner, *RE* 17 [1937] 1516-17, s.v.), but Horo- or Oro-phylax (*JHS* 8 [1887] 236, Kibyrtis) may be the title of an official. Cf. also Hoplophylax used of Heracles (Drexler in Roscher, *Lex.*, s.v.) and Apollo Prophylax (*IG* 12.7.419, Amorgos). *Phylax* is attached to a variety of gods and heroes, cf. J. Schmidt, *RE* 20 (1941) 991-2.

In addition to his name, the location of the shrine of Phylacus on an approach to the main sanctuary may be significant for his function. So far his *temenos* has not been certainly identified, cf. R. Demangel, *Fouilles de Delphes*, II. 5, *Topographie et architecture. Le sanctuaire d'Athéna Pronaia*, 3. *Topographie du sanctuaire* (Paris 1926) 74, 105-7.

<sup>5</sup> L. R. Farnell, *Greek Hero Culls and Ideas of Immortality* (Oxford 1921) 88. Cf. C. Robert, "Die Marathonschlacht in der Poikile und Weiteres über Polygnot," *Hallisches Winckelmannsprogramm* 18 (1895) 34 f., and W. Helbig, *Führer durch die öffentlichen Sammlungen klassischer Altertümer in Rom* (3rd ed. by W. Amelung, E. Reisch, F. Weege; Leipzig 1913) 2, p. 424.

as the Attic hero, nor as a native demon of death. He appears to be a native Etruscan, but a rustic, warrior hero, of similar origin but independent of the Attic Echetlaeus.<sup>6</sup> In themselves the Etruscan representations do not add to our knowledge of Echetlaeus. It is to his name and his distinctive weapon that we must look for further understanding.

Echetlaeus performed his feats with the plow, the *arotron*. His name, however, in the second form given by Pausanias is an adjective derived from the *echellê*, the plow-handle, -tail, or -stilt, by which the plowman grasps and guides the plow and on which a strong pressure, according to the *Geoponica* (2.2.3), ensures a deep furrow (Echetlus is probably a shortened form of Echetlaeus).<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> See especially G. Körte in H. Brunn, *I rilievi delle urne etrusche*, III (Berlin 1916) p. 11, fig. 3, pp. 12–16, and plates iv–vii. Winckelmann called this figure Echetlaeus (*Werke* 3 [edd. H. Meyer & J. Schulze; Dresden 1809] 91, 170, 380–81; cf. G. Zoëga, *Die antiken Basreliefs von Rom* [trans. and ed. Welcker; Giessen 1811] pl. 40 and pp. 304–306) and C. Robert (above, note 5) pp. 32–34, attempting to reconstruct the painting of the battle of Marathon, reaffirmed the identification. The contrary view has been presented by Giancarlo Conestabile della Staffa, *Dei monumenti di Perugia etrusca e romana* (Perugia 1855–70) on pl. 47–73 [*non vidi*, cited by Robert, p. 32, note 39]; W. Helbig (above, note 5) 2, p. 424, cf. p. 277; Schultz in Roscher, *Lex.*, s.v. "Echetlos"; A. S. F. Gow, *JHS* 34 (1914–15) p. 252, note 10.

Körte suggested that the Etruscans may have acquired their plow hero in their earlier home in the Near East, on the basis of the interpretation of Judges 3:31 by his friend R. Smend: the *malmaḏ* with which Shamgar slew six hundred Philistines is explained as a plow instead of an ox-goad, the usual translation. The suggestion is hazardous in the extreme.

<sup>7</sup> On the early Greek plow see A. S. F. Gow, "The Ancient Plough," *JHS* 34 (1914–15) 249–75; A. W. Mair, *Hesiod: The Poems and Fragments* (Oxford 1908) 158–62; T. A. Sinclair, *Hesiod's Works and Days* (London 1932), on lines 427 and 433; E. A. Gardner in *A Companion to Greek Studies* (ed. L. Whibley; Cambridge 1906) p. 539, fig. III and p. 540. Pollux (1.252) uses *echellê* of the whole upright stick while the short horizontal piece actually grasped by the hand is the *cheirolabis*, cf. Hesiod *Op.* 467–68 ἄκρον ἐχέρλης | χειρὶ λαβῶν and Gow (above), p. 250 and note 60. The distinction is not made elsewhere, e.g., Photius, Suidas, Hesychius, *Et. Mag.*, s.v. E. Saglio, "Aratrum," *DarSag* 1.354 describes the beam in his fig. 429, the Etruscan warrior with the plow, as the *echellê*; he is evidently influenced by his identification of the warrior with Echetlaeus.

The adjective *echellaïos* is one of a number of divine or heroic epithets derived from objects: cf. *herkos* and Zeus Herkeios; *tegōs* and the hero Epitēgios (*IG* 1<sup>2</sup>.310.82–83; 2<sup>2</sup>.5071); *pylē* and Hermes Pylaios and Propylaios; *ogmos* ("furrow") and Demeter Epogmios (*Anth. Pal.* 6.258). The Aloades (Otos and Ephialtes) may come from the *alōê*, "worked land"; they had graves in Anthedon in Boeotia (Paus. 9.22.6) and in Crete (Plin. *Nat. Hist.* 7.73; Sall. ap. Serv. in *Verg. Aen.* 3.578) and they were worshipped as heroes on Naxos (Diod. Sic. 5.51.2; *IG* 12.5.56).

With *Echetlos* as a shortened name derived from *Echellaïos* cf. *Iphiklos* from *Iphikleês*, *Perimos* from *Perimēdês*, etc. It is extremely unlikely that parallel forms, *Echetlos* and *Echellaïos*, originally existed side by side. Such parallel forms as *cheimet-*

To describe Echetlaeus as "the hero of the ploughshare" as does Farnell, or even of the plow-share or plow-handle, as does Schwenn, is misleading.<sup>8</sup> The plow-share, in particular the metal tip, the *hynis*, because of its phallic and fertilizing function, is used in modern Greek customs directed to human fertility and especially the birth of male children, as well as to the fertility of the fields, and these practices find parallels, for example, in India; possibly the modern Greek customs have their origin in the ancient world.<sup>9</sup> But Echetlaeus is the hero of the plow-handle, which is not the object of attention in such practices. The plow as a whole is involved in a number of interesting rituals and a hero is most likely to be derived from the plow when it is the focus of religious attention, though, strange to say, no divine or heroic epithet is derived directly from the name of the plow or the act of plowing in Greece.<sup>10</sup> The "ox-yoker," Bouzyges, in Attica is the closest parallel. We should first see, however, when the plow-handle in particular is the center of interest.

Because of the importance of plowing in an agricultural society, in many cultures the task is attended by various ceremonies; these

*lon* besides *cheimellê* ("chilblain") are no help for the meaning of a presumed independent form *Echellos*. *Echellaos* from *echellê* clearly means "he of the plow-handle," but *Echellos*, on the analogy of *Melissos* (from *melissa*), "being like a bee," *Korônos* (from *korônê*), "being like a crow," would have to mean "being like a plow-handle," and for such a meaning there is no support.

<sup>8</sup> Farnell (above, note 5) 71; F. Schwenn, "Triptolemos," *RE* 7A (1939) 216. I do not believe their translations are based on Hesychius's gloss on *echellê*, where only in our sources, after the usual explanation, there is added *καὶ ἡ αὐλαξ* ("the furrow") *καὶ ἡ σπάθη τοῦ ἀρότρου*. A. S. F. Gow (*JHS* 34 [1914-15] 265, note 46) comments: "For these meanings there is no other evidence nor are they intrinsically probable." I know of no ancient use of *spathê* in this sense but in the present day Mani (the middle of the three prongs of the Peloponnesus) I have heard it used of the brace between the beam, to which the pole is attached, and the stock, the wooden part of the share to which the metal tip, the *hynis*, is attached. The *Lexikon Hellêniko-Gallikon* (ed. A. Epites; Athens 1926), s.v., described the *spathê* as the part of the plow to which is attached the *histobô* ("the pole" — I heard only *stavari* in this sense) in the dialects of Epiros and Karpathos; this would seem to describe the plow beam when the pole and beam are separate. The usual Greek plow of today can be seen in *JHS* 26 (1906) p. 201, fig. 8 and *JHS* 34 (1914-15) p. 258, fig. 10, but in the Mani and Crete, at least, the upright *echellê* of antiquity survives.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. K. A. Romaos, *Laographia* 7 (1923) 346-68. Cf. H. A. Rose, "Magic (Indian)," in Hastings, *ERE* 8.289.

<sup>10</sup> But cf. perhaps Hesychius *Ἀρωτος*: *Ἡρακλῆς παρὰ Μακεδόσιν*. The second vowel is uncertain since the word is placed out of alphabetical order between *ἀρητόν* and *ἀρθεος*. Cf. O. Hoffman, *Die Makedonen* (Göttingen 1906) 93. For epithets from the plow in Indian mythology, see below, note 14.

are attached primarily to the commencement of plowing and sowing, and in Greece they were a joint operation (cf. Hesiod, *Op.* 391 with the comments of Sinclair [above, note 7] and Mair [above, note 7], pp. 126, 130, 135–6). This example of the special importance of initial acts survives in Greece today in the blessing of a sheaf of grain in church before plowing begins.<sup>11</sup> In Italy the plow-share used for the first furrow, Pliny tells us (*Nat. Hist.* 28.267), was put on the *focus Larum* to keep wolves from the fields. In Indo-China the plow with which the ceremonial plowing of the rice-fields is performed is purified in advance with water.<sup>12</sup> In Athens the very first plow ever yoked to oxen was dedicated to Athena and preserved on the Acropolis (Schol. Aeschines, p. 56.23–25 Dindorf). A Greek superstition which held that one should curse and swear while sowing cumin to ensure a good crop (Theophr., *Hist. Plant.* 7.3.3, 9.8.8; Plut., *Quaest. Conv.* 7.2.2, 700F–701A) is paralleled in public ritual by the *Bouzygeioi arai*, the curses pronounced by the Bouzyges (“the ox-yoker”) at the time of the sacred plowing at Athens, against those who do not share water or fire, or do not show the lost the way (Diphilus fr. 62 Kock [II, p. 561] ap. Athen. 6, 238F; *Paroem. Graec.* 1.388) and against those who suffer a body to lie unburied (Schol. Soph. *Ant.* 255). The magical, apotropaic practices of the sower of cumin are echoed and elaborated on the public level as curses against any member of the community who by offending the gods endangers the success of this state plowing and consequently all plowing in the state.

In Attica alone we know of three sacred, public plowings (Plut., *Con. Praecep.* 42, 144A–B) and undoubtedly similar ceremonies took place elsewhere in Greece. It seems probable that originally Eleusis and Athens each had a public plowing, the one on the Rarian plain, the other below the Acropolis near the sanctuary of Demeter Chloe (cf. *IG* 2<sup>2</sup>.5006), conducted by the family of the Bouzygai who traced their descent from the original Bouzyges who first yoked oxen to the plow. The third plowing, at Sciron, is thought to be a compromise between the two states at the time of

<sup>11</sup> Cf. K. Sittl, *Hesiodou Ta Hapanta* (Athens 1889) on *Op.* 465.

<sup>12</sup> W. D. Wallis, *Religion in Primitive Society* (New York 1939) 99. Comparative material is widespread, e.g., P. V. Glob on votive deposits of wooden plows in Scandinavia and a rock carving of a plowing rite in south Sweden, *Strena Archaeologica A. M. Tallgren Sexagenario Dedicata* (Helsingfors 1945) summarized in *AJA* 52 (1948) 225.

their union.<sup>13</sup> The intent of all three plowings, we may be sure, was to procure a good crop by ensuring that all the plowing in Attica was performed properly and with the good will of the appropriate divinities. A similar state ceremony is performed in Siam. The plowman, the minister of agriculture *ex officio*, is called Baladeva, the name of an Echetaeus-like figure of Indian mythology who performs various feats with his plow and has various titles derived from the plow.<sup>14</sup>

Other Greek rituals which are close to the plowing ceremonies are the Proerosia, the "before plowing ceremonies," at Eleusis, and the Thesmophoria at Athens, not to mention the Eleusinian mysteries. The Proerosia were held on the fifth of Pyanopsion, the Attic month of plowing, and were, according to a gloss in Suidas, s.v., "sacrifices taking place before plowing for the future crops, that they may be brought to maturity." A fragment of a song addressed to Kore seems to indicate that she was conceived as participating in the subsequent sacred plowing (Plut. ap. Proclus in *Hes. Op.* 389). The Thesmophoria took place at the time of sowing (cf. Plut., *Is. et Os.* 69, 378E; Cornutus 28, p. 55.7 Lang) and included the bringing up from the underground *megara* of the pigs and other fertility charms thrown down after harvest, early in the summer in the month of Scirophorion, and the mixing of the remains with the seed to be sown.<sup>15</sup> Thus the ceremonies at the time of plowing and sowing are not isolated rites but continue the power preserved

<sup>13</sup> See O. Kern, *RE* 2 (1896) 1215-17; L. Deubner, *Attische Feste* (Berlin 1932) 46-48; C. Robert, *Hermes* 20 (1885) 378. The contention that the Bouzygai also performed the Eleusinian plowing is not proved. The Scholiast on Aristides Rhetor (II, p. 175 Dindorf) says that those who cared for the sacred cows used for plowing at Eleusis were called Bouzygai and an inscription of the second century A.D. shows one official among others called Bouzyges (*IG* 2<sup>2</sup>.1092, B, line 32). This does not mean he was of the clan of the Bouzygai, cf. O. Rubensohn, *AM* 24 (1899) 59-60. In view of the prominence of the Eteoboutadaï rather than the Bouzygai at the plowing at Sciron (Lysimachides, fr. 3 Jacoby), presumed to be a compromise between the two national plowings, it would be strange to find the Bouzygai dominant at both the other two.

<sup>14</sup> See G. E. Gerini in Hastings *ERE* 5, 886b. Epithets derived from the plow attached to Baladeva, also known as Balarâma, include *Halâdhara*, *Halabhrîl*, *Sîrabhrîl*, *Sîrapâni*, *Halâyudha*, *Halîn*; cf. Hastings *ERE* 7, 195b. I am grateful to a member of the audience at the time of oral presentation of this paper for reminding me of the ceremonial plowing formerly performed each spring by the Chinese emperor at the Hsien Nung T'an, the so-called Altar of Agriculture, in Pei-p'ing. See L. C. Arlington & W. Lewisohn, *In Search of Old Peking* (Pei-p'ing 1935) 113-116.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Deubner (above, note 13) 68-69 for the Proerosia, 50-52 for the Thesmophoria. Cf. the month Praratios (Sept./Oct.) at Epidaurus, e.g., *IG* 4<sup>2</sup>.1.103, line 136

throughout the summer months by ensuring that the seed enters the ground safely and set in motion the whole process of growth which will be fostered throughout the year by other rites<sup>16</sup> and will culminate in the harvest and its ceremonies. At Athens the Scira, the Thesmophoria, and the sacred plowing at Sciron, and perhaps the Arretophoria and the sacred plowing below the Acropolis, spanned the period between harvest and sowing, and there are traces of a similar continuum in present-day customs reported from Lygourion in the Argolid.<sup>17</sup> At Magnesia on the Maeander a ritual spanned the period between sowing and harvest. A bull was dedicated to Zeus Sosipolis at the beginning of sowing with a prayer for the safety of the city and its people, for peace, wealth, and the bringing forth of wheat, all other crops, and herds (SIG<sup>3</sup> 589.7, 26–31). The bull was fed throughout the winter and killed, it seems probable, at harvest time. This is but one example of a distinctive type of sacrifice of which the best-known representative is the Attic Bouphonia.<sup>18</sup>

The object of these public rites on a considerably more elaborate scale and performed for the whole state corresponds to the desires of the individual farmer as he performs his seasonal tasks. Vergil tells no one to begin the harvest before making simple dances and songs for Ceres (*Georg.* 1.347–50). No one, says Epictetus (Arrian, *Epict.* 3.21.12), leaves port before sacrificing to the gods for his safety and no one starts to sow before praying to Demeter. Maximus of Tyre shows that the individual farmer performed his own bloodless Proerosia among other agricultural rites (292.16 ff. Hobein). The ceremonies at the public plowings correspond, as Frazer pointed out, to the individual farmer's prayer as he starts his own plowing.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>16</sup> E.g., on Myconos, in winter and early spring, 12th of Poseidon: to Demeter Chloe, two sows, one pregnant . . . 10th of Lenaion: a pregnant sow (primipara) to Demeter "for the crop" (along with sacrifices to Kore and Zeus Bouleus) . . . 12th of Lenaion: to Zeus Chthonios and Ge Chthonie, black yearling sheep "for the crops," SIG<sup>3</sup> 1024 (von Prott, *Fasti Sacri* [Leipzig 1896] No. 4). For Attica, e.g., the Pompaia and Zeus Melichios in the month of Maimakterion. Deubner (above, note 13) 157–58, "Zeus Melichios ist ja den Zeus Xōnios nächst verwandt."

<sup>17</sup> Cf. D. Euaggelides, *Laographia* 3 (1912) 675–6; K. A. Romaios, *Laographia* 7 (1923) 365.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Nilsson (above, note 2) 140–43. On the survival of this type of sacrifice, see C. [= K.] A. Romaios, *Cultes populaires de la Thrace* (*Collection de l'institut français d'Athènes* 18; *Cahiers d'hellénisme*, I; Athens 1949) 50–67. The reviling of the slayer of the plow ox should not be confused with the cursing at the time of plowing.

<sup>19</sup> J. G. Frazer, *The Golden Bough* (3rd ed.; London 1911) 7.50 and 53.



In some parts of Greece this prayer was perhaps called the *pratasia*, a word which Hesychius, s.v., also equates with Proerosia. Hesiod says (*Op.* 465-9): "Pray to Zeus of the earth and pure Demeter that the holy grain of Demeter may be ripe and heavy as you first begin plowing when, having taken the top of the plow-handle [the *echellê*] in your hand, you come down with the goad on the backs of the oxen as they tug at the strap-pin." The pose described is to be seen on a number of vase-paintings.<sup>20</sup> Here the *echellê* is the center of attention. In the simple ritual, without procession, priests, and sacrifice, the farmer asks blessing on his immediate task, the plowing and sowing. Well done and with the gods' help he may truly hope for a good return. He grasps the handle of the plow as he makes his prayer, in effect, asking the gods to put *their* hands to what he is holding; touch plays no little part in magic and ritual.<sup>21</sup>

In battle Echetlaeus in properly heroic fashion wields the whole plow, the *arotron*, but his point of origin is the plow-handle as the farmer holds it and makes his prayer. At the simplest, Echetlaeus need only be the *daimôn* developing from this prayer, a figure evolved to hear the prayer and become the recipient of whatever simple offerings, perhaps at one time predeistic, may have been made at this moment, as some modern Greek survivals strongly suggest (see above, note 17). He may, indeed, have had more of a cult than this; there is the parallel of the bloodless, private Proerosia and we know that by the fourth century B.C. the *Fasti* of the

<sup>20</sup> E.g., interior of a black-figured kylix, Berlin (1806, signed by Nicosthenes as potter, F. Gerhard, *Trinkschalen und Gefässe des königlichen Museums zu Berlin* [Berlin 1848-50] pl. I [whence A. Baumeister, *Denkmäler des klassischen Altertums* (Munich & Leipzig 1885) I, pl. I, fig. 12, a, b], *Wiener Vorlegeblätter* [1889] pl. VII, 2a [whence J. C. Hoppin, *Handbook of Greek Black-Figured Vases* (Paris 1924) 185]); exterior of a black-figured kylix (Siana cup) in the British Museum, 1906.12-15. 1, *Corpus Vasorum* III He, pl. 10, 6b, *JHS* 66 (1946) pl. iii, b, f, g; black-figured kylix (band-cup) in the Louvre, F 77, *Encyclopédie photographique de l'art* (Paris 1936) II, 290, A and B (Baumeister [above] fig. 13, a, b, shows an old drawing taken from Jahn, *Sächs. Ber.* [1867] pl. 1, 2). See also below, note 26.

<sup>21</sup> It is as an example of the combination of pious prayer and practical action that Plutarch (*Superstit.* 169B) cites one line of this passage (*Op.* 465) adding in his own words "holding on to the *echellê*" from two lines later, and includes the passage with other prayers offered in critical (*peristatikois*) circumstances, such as that of the helmsman who sees a sudden storm come up and, as he prays, lays his hand to tiller and sail. (All such combinations of pious and practical action Plutarch contrasts with the behaviour of the superstitious man who is incapable of practical action and, by implication, with the atheist who refuses all piety.)

Marathonian Tetrapolis paid ample attention to minor local heroes, e.g., a certain Galios to whom a ram was sacrificed, significantly, on the day before the Scira.<sup>22</sup> But as such rites are elaborated the attention shifts from the inconspicuous plow-handle to the rites themselves. Echetlaeus owes his origin at least to the simpler stage. We may interpret Pausanias' report to mean that he had not received formal, certainly not public, cult before Marathon. His name and the tradition point to the same conclusion and it is unnecessary to follow Farnell and suppose that the tradition of the founding of a public cult is only the aetiological explanation of a half-forgotten name and cult. As a figure close to the hearts of the Marathonian peasants it is not surprising that he should have appeared in battle on their fields and have been elevated to full heroic rank. We might recall the miraculous manifestation of a cloud of dust from which issued the Iacchus cry at the battle of Salamis (Hdt. 8.65) and the fact that Iacchus himself is little more than a personification of the Iacchus cry; the incident before Salamis may have had much to do with his emergence as an individual, even as the worship of Pan in Attica dates from Marathon.<sup>23</sup> Demeter seems to have derived two of her epithets from farmers' songs: *Ioulo*, from *ioulos*, a sheaf of grain and a song (Semus fr. 19 Müller ap. Athen. 14, 618D-E), and *Himalis* (Polemo Hist. frs. 39 and 74 Müller ap. Athen. 3, 109A and 10, 416B), *himalis* being the return (*nostos*) of grain (cf. the hero Eunostos) but also a song sung at the mill (Tryphon ap. Athen. 14, 618D; Hesych., s.v.; Pollux 4.53). The mysterious Lityerses was at least a figure in story as well as the name of a reapers' song (Pollux 4.54).

Hesiod recommends prayer to Zeus Chthonios and Demeter. Characteristically, he elects the two most common patrons of agriculture throughout the Greek world: Zeus, not the god of the underworld, but of the fertile soil, the farmer's god who receives sacrifice "for the crops" in company with Ge Chthonie on Myconos (SIG<sup>3</sup> 1024.24-25). Demeter herself is Chthonia in Hermione (Paus. 2.35.5-8) and Sparta (Paus. 3.14.5). Under other titles

<sup>22</sup> IG 2<sup>2</sup>.1358 (von Prott, *Fasti Sacri* [Leipzig 1896] No. 26) B 51, cf. 30-33. On the heroes of the Tetrapolis, see S. Solders, *Die Ausserstädtischen Kulte und die Einigung Attikas* (Lund 1931) 93-97.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. M. P. Nilsson, "Die eleusinischen Gottheiten," *ArchRW* 32 (1935) 83-84; O. Kern, "Iakchos," *RE* 9 (1914) 613-22. Cf. Linos and the cry *ailinon*, Hymenaeus and *hymên hymenaie*.

both are found in numerous agricultural roles. It is Demeter who dominates the Scira and Thesmophoria, the Eleusinian mysteries and the Proerosia, and with Zeus-like figures in Asia Minor are connected reliefs of oxen drawing the plow.<sup>24</sup>

There is reason, however, to believe that there was considerable local variation in the identity of the gods who watched over the plowing. Figures who later appear as culture heroes, the reputed inventors of the plow or the art of yoking oxen, must often be regarded as originally involved in the ceremonies at plowing time. Bouzyges, we may well believe, was no inventor but the eponym of the clan whose name derived from their hereditary role as sacred plowmen. Dionysus was also described as the first to yoke oxen to the plow (Diod. Sic. 3.64.1 and 4.4.2) and in a modern Thracian plowing ritual which shows strong traces of a Dionysiac origin, a prayer is made which Hesiod would surely have echoed: "May wheat be ten piastres the bushel! Rye five piastres the bushel! Barley three piastres the bushel! Amen, O God, that the poor may eat! Yea, O God, that poor folk be filled!"<sup>25</sup> To Poseidon, whose agricultural ties are well recognized, were dedicated at Corinth votive plaques with representations of oxen, once apparently drawing a plow (*JDAI* 12 [1897] 31, F 729, cf. 44, No. 85).

In Athens, Athena Polias participated in the plowing at Sciron and, no doubt, originally dominated the plowing below the Acropolis. Athena appears beside Bouzyges and his plow on an Attic vase of about 425 B.C.<sup>26</sup> A curious story found only in Servius (*in Verg. Aen.* 4.402) suggests even some special connection between Athena and the *echellê*: Athena invented the plow to match Demeter's

<sup>24</sup> For the agricultural epithets of Demeter see H. Usener, *Götternamen* (2nd ed.; Bonn 1929) 242-47. Cf. especially the prayer at harvest time to Demeter Epogmios for a good crop, *Anth. Pal.* 6.258, and Demeter *Eualôsia* (Hesychius, s.v.). For the plow and Zeus in Asia Minor, e.g. Zeus Bronton, see *AM* 25 (1900) 417-18; *BCH* 33 (1909) 290-300, No. 47, 48, 52, figs. 19, 20, 24. For Zeus Dios, see *GGA* 159 (1897) 409-10. On gravestones in the form of dedications, especially to Zeus Bronton, see *MAMA* 5, xxxiv-vii, and cf. *MAMA* 6, No. 275, pl. 49; No. 311, pl. 55; No. 322, pl. 56; No. 362, pl. 63. The reference in *Et. Mag.*, s.v. *zeuxai*, to Zeus as the one who first yoked mules for the sowing of crops is probably purely etymological.

<sup>25</sup> R. M. Dawkins, *JHS* 26 (1906) 193-204, and, in a most important study, C. A. Romaios (above, note 18) 121 ff.

<sup>26</sup> Red-figured bell krater by the Hephaestus painter in the collection of Professor D. M. Robinson, now in Oxford, Mississippi, *AJA* 35 (1931) p. 153, fig. 1, *Corpus Vasorum* II, pl. 48, 2, A. B. Cook, *Zeus: A Study in Ancient Religion*, III, 1 (Cambridge 1940) p. 606, pl. XLV, J. D. Beazley, *Attic Red-Figured Vase-Painters* (Oxford 1942) p. 391, No. 19.

agricultural benefactions; a favorite of Athena's, an Attic maiden by the name of Myrmix, stole the *stiva*, i.e., *echellê* (without which, of course, the plow could not be guided and the share would not bite the earth), and claimed the invention for her own. She was turned into an ant, the farmer's enemy, as punishment. Zeus in pity saw to it that the illustrious Myrmidons were descended from her.<sup>27</sup> Even in Hesiod's Boeotia, where the plowing month was called Damatrios (Plut., *Is. et Os.* 69, 378E), Athena had the title Boarmia (Lycophr. 520 and schol.) and in Thessaly she was Boudeia (Lycophr. 359 and Tzetzes *ad loc.*), both names referring to her yoking of oxen.<sup>28</sup>

In Attica, besides Bouzyges we hear of another mortal, Epimenides, who invented the plow.<sup>29</sup> Bouzyges himself owes his existence to the sacred plowing below the Acropolis and the role of *bouzygês* played by the clan of the Bouzygai; the same title if not the same family is known from Eleusis (Schol. on Aristides Rhet. vol. II, p. 175 Dindorf; *IG* 2<sup>2</sup>.1092, B, line 32). To him Echetlaeus has been compared despite some significant differences:<sup>30</sup> all the probability is against either a priestly family or a public rite, both essential to the concept of Bouzyges, to which Echetlaeus could be attached before Marathon. At Argos it was Homogyros who first yoked oxen to the plow (Varro, *De Re Rust.* 2.5.4; Augustine, *De Civ. Dei* 18.6). Probably the story of Triptolemus's invention of the plow was the most widespread, although the nature of his connection with the plow in the earlier period is doubtful; the only two early representations of him with the plow do not show him plowing, as in the vase-painting of Bouzyges, and in one of these

<sup>27</sup> It may be noted that the ants are themselves plowmen, "clod-breakers" (*bôlotomoi*, *Anth. Pal.* 9.438), cf. *bôlostrophêô* of plowing. Were it not for the considerable evidence connecting Athena with agriculture in early Attica one would be tempted to dismiss this story as a late metamorphosis myth and the *stiva* as nothing more than the most easily detached and stolen part of the plow.

<sup>28</sup> On Boarmia cf. F. Solmsen, *RhM* 53 (1898) 145-6; on Boudeia cf. P. Kretschmer, *Einleitung in die Geschichte der griechischen Sprache* (Göttingen 1896) 419. Cf. Cook (above, note 26) III, 1, p. 608, notes 3 and 4, whose doubts stem from his desire to assign Athena's connection with the Attic plowing ritual originally to Demeter in Eleusis.

<sup>29</sup> Serv. in *Verg. Georg.* 1.19 (= Aristotle fr. 386 Rose), Hesychius s.v. *Bouzygês*, and Schol. Townl., *Il.* 18.483. Cf. Kern, *RE* 6 (1909) 173, s.v. "Epimenides," who believes he was originally distinct from both Bouzyges and the Cretan Epimenides.

<sup>30</sup> J. Toepffer, *Attische Genealogie* (Berlin 1889) p. 140, note 1; F. Schwenn, *RE* 7A (1939) 216.

cases he has no intention of plowing for he is about to leave in his winged chariot, standing close by.<sup>31</sup>

This rapid survey will have shown the considerable variety in the cast of gods and heroes who were concerned with the sacred rites at plowing. In this number there is ample room for Echetlaeus from the Marathonian Tetrapolis. The hero who appeared at the battle of Marathon, defending his compatriots from the barbarians with a plow, derived his name from the plow-handle. The plow-handle is the center of interest when the farmer first grasps it to start his furrow for the fall plowing and prays for success in his task. Echetlaeus is a hero of this rite and this moment. His specialized function obviated the need for any more formal cult until, in the eyes of his fellow farmers, he joined them in battle and won the respect of all Attica and the god of Delphi.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. Nilsson, *ArchRW* 32 (1935) p. 85, note 3 and O. Rubensohn, *AM* 24 (1899) 59-71, who argues for the antiquity of "Triptolemos als Pflüger." The two representations are on (1) a Boeotian red-figured skyphos attributed to the Painter of the Judgment of Paris, Berlin inv. 3414, *AM* 24 (1899) pl. VII (whence Cook, *Zeus I* [Cambridge 1914] p. 224, fig. 165) and *AM* 65 (1940) pl. 10, 2; and (2) a bell krater by the Hector Painter, Cabinet des Médailles 424, *Bollettino archeologico napolitano* 1 (1843) pl. 2, Cook, *Zeus I*, pl. XX, *JHS* 34 (1914) p. 255, fig. 6, Beazley (above, note 26), p. 685, No. 12.