

## **The war dances and their role in the youth's military education in ancient Greece**

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### **Abstract**

War dances had a significant role in ancient Greeks' life before, during and after the classical period. The aim of the current research is to study the significance of military preparation in ancient Greeks' life and to make a reference to war dances, especially dance pyrrhichios; the most prominent dance of this category. For the data collection it has been used the historic methodological research, where it has been analyzed and interpreted primary and secondary sources. According to analysis of the collected, in the antiquity, war dances possessed a pedagogical role, whereas they were used as a war preparation medium by weapons usage. Greeks loved war dances, not because they were a bellicose folk, but in the wake of those historical incidents, which obliged them to be constantly and sufficiently prepared for war, they could taste the goods of the Peace. The consequence of this research is that for the ancient Greeks, the best martial education and preparation was accomplished through dance and music, that's why they ascertained each time that the "best warriors were the best dancers". Hence, they attempted through poems, songs and dance movements to stimulate warriors' courage, bravery and jubilant/impulsive mood.

**Keywords:** dance; military education; pyrrhichios.

### **1 Introduction**

The most researchers that have handled with dance in general, and especially with the dancing in the ancient Greece, refer war dances, too. Their first meaning had religious and magical extensions. Afterwards, they acquired pedagogical character and were used as an important part of the youth's military preparation.

The aim of this research is the study of war dances in ancient Greece and their role in the youth's military education. When we are referring war dances, the notion includes all those dances that were performed with weapons' usage and dancers mimed martial and fighting moves. In the category of war dances, there are, also, a few that present only the second characteristic, without realizing the weapons' usage.

### **2 Method**

For this research, it has been used the historic methodological research, through which they have been analyzed primary sources such as historians' ancient texts, and secondary sources.

### **3 Youth's military education**

In antiquity, the war was a static situation for Greeks; therefore, the military education played a major role in their life.

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Spartans did not concern a lot about learning, thus their education's pylon aimed at formulating good citizens, who would be obedient to their leader and foremost to be strong enough, in order to endure troubles and win the war. This is the reason why young boys did intense physical exercises, cut their hair till their skin and used to walk without shoes. They, also, took part naked in festivals called 'paidies'. When they became 12 years old, they did not wear palliums (cloth that they wear next to the skin), but cloths (external cloth worn over pallium), in order to toughen, whereas they avoid the use of baths and pomades. Only for a few days in the year, it was allowed to enjoy that kind of comforts. They were sleeping all together, by creating groups, on straw mattress, which were made by them. They cut canes from the Evrotas River, without using knives, whereas they used to mix them with the plant named 'likofon', which supplied mattresses with an amount of heat. The youth spent many hours in gyms, where they made exercises under older people's authority. The latter considered themselves as teachers, fathers and lords of the youth. A part of their exercises set was to learn stealing, without being noticed by anyone. In case of arresting, they were punished strictly (Plutarch, Lycurgus: 16, 17). The melodies, the poems and the dances played one of the most significant roles, as their target was to stimulate courage, bravery and jubilant-impulsive mood. Those poems involved reflection towards cowardice and laudations for bravery, so that the youth keep in its mind which is considered as the net attitude. Gymnastic exercises were so hard during the year, so the war period was for them a reprieve. The preparation stage was accompanied by offerings, dances and hymns that were realized by flutes accompany, along with an array rhythmic stepping. Thucydides (5.69-70). makes a reference to Spartans' war dance during the battle, where they were singing war songs: 'war laws' under many flute-players' music and performed steps in cohesion, in order to avoid breaking it. This dance presented a swarm of soldiers who attack. The reason of this hard preparation of the youth in Sparta aimed at the exhibition of courage and bravery in war, whereas the presence of offerings, dances and music had as a result the heartsease, the cheerfulness for the war, the abortion of fear and anger, and the stable ideology that God sides up with them (Plutarch, Lycurgus: 22). It is become, therefore, obvious why the learning of martial, gymnastic exercises and war dances played so much significant role for Spartans.

On contrary, the basic goals of Athens state were foremost citizens' route toward virtue and then its defense. Both of them were the central goals, therefore Plato (Laws: 3.688a-b) condemned Crete's and Sparta's state, in which everything was organized in a way to service the war. An important part of citizens, who should watch over the state of Athens, it should be practiced in order to learn the martial art and exercised in martial and gymnastic exercises. In parallel to the aforementioned, to this part of citizens it should also be offered high education in music and philosophy, in order to accomplish harmonic development of both body and mind. Their education started in the age of 6, whereas its duration was neither mandatory, nor defined (Plato, Protagoras: 326) and it was watched by educators and tutors (Aeschylus, Timarchus: 10, 12). Their training took place in arenas, and according to Plato (Laws: 1. 643, 7.790, 797) and Aristophanes (The Clouds: 960-972), heavy and dangerous exercises should have been avoided. Aristophanes commented on the following; the Marathon's victory was achieved due to warriors' good physical condition.

It becomes clear, in this point, that there was a big difference in Athenians and Spartans' education; to the first it was not mandatory, whereas to Spartans was. However, the consequence is that in both cases, the preparation followed a series of stages, martial exercises, training in martial dances, always combined to music, song and ode.

Strabo (Geography: 10.4.16) refers to the military education of Cretans, where from even an early age, children studied at agelas and ate together at anderia. In order to develop bravery and avoid cowardice, they were trained in weapons to endure the pain and hold on war consequences. Therefore, they were trained in arch and armed dancing, which started with Curetes' dance and one of its forms was the pyrrhichi. They always accompanied those dances and war exercises with Cretan rhythms and odes, paeans and other indigenous odes, whereas they wore martial cloths and shoes. The whole preparation aimed at considering weapons as the biggest gift of their life.

Plato (Laws: 7.814d-815b) divides the dancing in two categories: the serious one which mimics nice and gentle bodies and the one that mimics ugly bodies and whatever flagitious they own. In the first one, the youth exercised in peaceful apolemos mousa and martial dancing, imitating defendant and offensive exercises. However, the correctness of the moves was dependent on how successfully they were imitating the naïve bodies and souls. Therefore, both types of dancing were necessary to be taught to the youth by the lawgiver who will designate the limits. During celebrations, they used to dance by imitating martial battles (Plinius, Historia Naturalis: 833d-e). Those were accepted as bayonet-fighting and many times might lead to an injury or even worse to death.

Homer (The Iliad: 23.798) considers bayonet-fighting as a part of fatal matches, but according to some researchers, it was considered a sacrifice's substitute, which was offered by Achilles to Patroklos' fire, a blood offer which would cause delectation to the warrior's dead body (Arvanitakis 1996)

The war dance's exercise was very important in the ancient world. In Thessaly, citizens called their lords and their leaders proorchistires, that is to say leaders of the dance and this becomes obvious from statues' signs which were stood to honor the prizewinning and brave men (Lucian, The Dance: 14).

Lucian (The Dance: 15-18) makes references to the foreign folks and their relationship to the martial dance to persuade for its goods. Ethiopians battled by dancing, whereas they did not throw arrows, unless they had intimidated the enemies before, by performing dance movements. Indians and Egyptians considered that dance as an integral part of their life.

It is insightful to point out that many times descriptions did not refer to a specific dance, but to gaits that follow the armed rhythm given from a musical instrument and a song. This is the reason why we have many known names of hymns such as the paeon and hyporchema, which most of the times were followed by dance steps of the same name.

Additionally, there are cases where combats are presented as dances, as occurs in Euripides case (Phoenician: 226-249) where Aries and Dionysus idolaters' content against each other, presenting the combat in the form of dance (Fitton 1973)

Athenaeus (Deipnosophistae: 14.628e-f) correlates the art of dance with the art of war, that's why in the orchestral forms are presented combat scenes. By this way, he also confirms Socrates' view that the best dancers were the best warriors. By performing this dance, they also cared for their bodies' assiduity.

Undoubtedly, except for martial dances performed by men, the ancient sources inform us about women exercises. In Sparta, for instance, women exercised in athletic contests, in order to create strong and healthy bodies from where they would bear healthy children. In Athens, according to Plato (Laws: 7.794c-d), there were different songs and dances for women, despite the fact that they were also taught the use of weapons and horse riding.

#### **4 Names of martial and armed dances**

The greatest of the martial dances was pyrrhichios, emanated from the ancient Greece. According to Greek researchers, the views concerning the origin of the dance differentiate.

Plato (Laws: 7.796b-815a) considers this dance as mime which represents a form of combat in front to the audience. He continues with Crete, where the dance was considered as Curettes' finding, in Sparta as Castor and Pollux's finding and in Athens as the Athens' dance. Dionysus Hallicarnassus (7.72.7-8) deems that pyrrhichios is of a Greek origin and mentions that it was danced by the goddess Athena, who dances armed, triumphantly, swayed by victory's satisfaction in Titanomachy. He, also, writes about the probability this dance to be performed by Curetes, who had as their target to save Dies from Cronos. The geographer Strabo (Geography: 10.3.467-481), agrees with this view, too. More specifically, he advocates that the dance is military, because its target was the preparation for war with weapons and arches. In this point, he writes that the finder of this dance was Thalitas and his Cretan rhythms. However, he expresses also the view that the finder was Pyrrichos from Crete. For the first time, in Pindar's comments is referred the Castor member, which was a melody from Spartan military march. Pyrrhichios was accompanied by Castor and Pollux's music. According to the quotation, the finders of the dance were Castor and Pollux who were, also, the first who danced it. The Cretan Pyrrhichos was its reformer, and Thalitas composed it based on hyporchemas. Lucian (The Dance: 9) expresses also the view that Neoptolemus, Achilles' son, invented that kind of dance, which later named pyrrhichios. Besides, Neoptolemus named Pyrrhus, that is to say blond. According to the sophist, Achilles' son who was a hero, and exercised enough in the dancing art, shined as a dancer in this kind of dance. When his father learned about it, he was glad for his son's beauty and technique. They also considered that his dancing art contributed to have been conquered and destroyed Troy. Athenaeus (Deipnosophistae: 14.630d-e) is also referred to pyrrhichios, which he considers constituting one of the three kinds of the lyric poesy and correlates it with satyr dancing. He supports that both are characterized by speed. Pyrrhichios was danced by armed teenager boys with speed, a necessary characteristic to warriors' supplies in both defense and attack cases. Heliodorus (3.10.) agrees, also, with this view and writes that it was a teenage dance, as young boys owing to their age and their physical condition could perform it skillfully and rapidly. Aristoxenus (FHG 1) considers as pyrrhichios' finder the Spartan Pyrrhichos and the armed dancing in general as Spartans' finding. Spartans, along with their songs adopted the military marches named enoplia. At war, they preferred more Tyrtaeus' poems, accompanied them by measured movement. Philochorus (FHG 1) writes that Spartans defeated Messina's people under Tyrtaeus' leadership and established the custom to play and sing Tyrtaeus' hymns after dinner. The best of all would win the prize. Undoubtedly, pyrrhichios continued to be performed during Athenian's lifetime, as a military exercise in Sparta, where they started preparing young boys from 5 years old for the war.

Then, the dance was developed to Dionysus adorable dance, where dancers were not armed, but they kept thyrsus, narthexes, and torches, instead, while they were dancing under the best melodies and music's sounds. Pausanias (Description of Greece: 3.25.2-3) does not handle with the origin of the name, yet he informs us that he paid a visit to a town called Pyrrhichos lied at Mani's eastward, and from where he left by ship to Tainaron, through Teuthronis. There refers a God named Pyrrhichos, a piece of information that we also receive from Pindar's comments (Pythia: 2.127).

For Spartans, pyrrhichios constituted an important element for youth's military education and preparation for their proper adolescence. The education system in Sparta had to do with gymnastics, music and dance, elements of primary significance.

Spartans' gymnastic exercises during the peace period were so intense and harsh;

as a result, the war was a relieve situation for them. When they were prepared for a combat, before the beginning, the king sacrificed hymairan, gave the order to the soldiers to be laurelled and ordered the flute-players to sing the hymn of Castor by the flute's accompaniment. The king started singing the martial march, so that his face to be serious and cause the fear, while all was stepping on flute's rhythms without mangling their parataxis. Due to the martial song's effect, soldiers led to a combat full of peace and cheerfulness. They were possessed by a good psychological mood free of anger and fear and they were characterized by high self-assurance accompanied by hope and courage, because they believed that god sided up with them (Plutarch, Lycurgus: 22)

Pyrrhichios played an important role in Spartans' worship festivals, too. In the celebration called gymnopaideiai, young boys presented pyrrhichio at theater (Athenaeus, Deipnosopistae: 14.631c), and in Castor and Pollux's (Pausanias, Description of Greece: 4.27.2) sacrifices, as well. In Sparta, apart from the educational role, pyrrhichios looked at youth's initiation. It was also presented in worship festivals in order to complete youth's education. It was a necessary element for both sexes as well. In Sparta, the dance's greatness was of a prominent significance, because it considered as Spartans' national dance and preserved for many centuries as the best exercise for war, when it was totally forgotten by other Greeks.

In Athens, youth's education belonged in general to another level. It reminds us of up-to date schools, where the military exercises were always taught by a dancing master and under music's accompaniment. Moreover, pyrrhichios constituted an important part of Athena's worship. Plato (Laws: 2.654a, 7.815a-b) refers that dance had a major significance in education, so that we can identify the illiterate with the one who doesn't dance (ahoreuto) and the educated with the one who dances (kehoreukota). He supported that dancing is separated into four categories. The two basics were firstly, the serious dance that mimics beauty bodies' movements, in whatever benign they own, and secondly, the dancing that mimics ugly bodies' movements. The first category is further subdivided in the martial and peaceful dancing.

The martial dancing is pyrrhichy which mimics, on the one hand, defensive moves, and on the other hand the offensive ones. The parts of this dance are ekneusis, meaning a sidelong turn and head's inclination in order to avoid a hit, or ekpidisis which are the springs, tapinosis, that is to say relaxations, and ipiksis, meaning recessions. They used weapons such as arrows, darts and arcs, whereas the shield and the headpiece were absolutely necessary elements. When children reach the education level of carrying weapons, they should start accompanying those who dance at worship ceremonies, by wearing armors (Plato, Laws: 7.796c-d, 816b-c). In Athens, the martial and peaceful dancing should necessarily be taught to the youth, whereas the types of dances should be defined by the reformer and get realized by the law guard. Undoubtedly, Plato criticized negatively Tyrtaeus' songs. He deemed that Tyrtaeus put above all the martial virtue, whereas the philosopher believed that Athens should not turn to an armory, as happened with Sparta. He also believed that bravery was the fourth and not the first virtue (Plato, Laws: 2.666d-667a).

Pyrrhichios was accompanied more by the flute's music; this is the reason why Pollux (4.73) refers that the armed and pyrrhichic rhythm was accompanied by faulos aulos. Undoubtedly, the dance was also accompanied by the guitar's sounds as well.

Leaving behind the most prominent war dance named pyrrhichios, we move on a series of other armed dances successfully represented by ancient researchers. Telesias was an armed dancing. To some extension, it was a dance from Crete, took its name from the dancer Telesia, and also it is correlated with pyrrhichios (Pollux: 4.99). Hesychius agrees with the naming, yet he adds that it was performed with the use of swords. Athenaeus (Deipnosopistae: 14.629d, 630a) considers this dance as a Macedonian one

and narrates an incidence from Marsya, where Ptolemy's men killed Alexander, who was Philippe's brother, during Telesia's performance. Hipagoras (FHG 4) deems that the dance took its name from someone named Telesias, who first danced the dance armed.

According to some attestations, Athenaeus (Deipnosophistae: 4.155 b-c) describes Macedonian kings' dances and dinners. Demetrius of Scepsis writes that in Antioch was a habit the king's friends and the king for him to dance armed at dinner time. However, when it came the time Igisiantas to dance, the historian from Alexandria asked the king if he preferred to see him dance badly or to recite his poems. Eventually, he presented his work and then he became one of the king's pets. Duris of Samos (FHG 2) writes that Polisperchontas, when he drank wine, he danced, although he was old enough and belonged to Macedonians' armed forces. Eventually, Agatharchides refers that Alexander's friends, who was Phillip's son, used to entertain them during dinner time and offer them the dessert in gold. We are not aware if there were two different types of telesia, one from Crete and another from Macedonia or if it was telesias for itself. Some researchers (Latte 1913) correlate dancing's name to ceremony and for this view, they base on Etymologiko Lexiko (Gaisford 1848)

Epikridios was also of Cretan origin and had a martial character (Athenaeus, Deipnosophistae: 14.629c.). It was probably correlated with the Greek verb kradao, which means moving, battling, as the dance is presented to have a wrestling form.

Along with epikridios, it is also referred one more Cretan dance known as orsitis. Lawler (1951) connects the dance with the ancient Greek verb ornymi, which means move, stimulate, motivate. Athenaeus (Deipnosophistae: 14.629c), by correlating both dances, writes about their common origin and the fact that they were performed by young people and music accompaniment. Dancers looked after specially their body, in order to be powerful, whereas always by song's accompaniment, they exercised a lot in armed moves to acquire skillfulness.

In Thrace and Karia was danced the armed dancing known as kolamvrismos (Pollux: 4.100). The verb kolavrizo means dancing a wild Thracian dance (Liddell&Scott, lemma: kolavrizo ). Hesychius uses for this dance the verb skirtan, which means move, dance, run and flip. Pollux (9.129) considers that kollabizein was a kind of game, where the one closed other's eyes with his hands and asked him to the ear, if he had understood whose these hands are. However, we don't know if it had a relation with the dance. Athenaeus (Deipnosophistae: 14.629d, 4.164e, 15.697c) agrees that that dance comes from Thrace, yet he presents a more composed image of it, which is performed with soft moves, non-violent and in a close order. The song that accompanied the dance named kolavros, and it was wild, heard by the musical instrument cane, which was essentially a flute that it was made by cane. They were also used cymbals that they hit them each other.

Xenophon (Anavasis: 6.1.6-9) makes an important description of the martial dance karpaia. In Thessaly, Ainiates and Magnites danced this dance armed. The dancing represented a history, where there is an armed man led a pair of beefs, when suddenly because of his fear turned back, and by leaving his weapons, he saw a bandit to come close to him. Then the man grasps his weapons, goes near to him and fights him, in order to keep safe his animals. Both men moved in flute's rhythm. The bandit ties the man and hits the road with the animals. However, the end is sometimes different, and the man ties the bandit near to beefs, with his hands to his back and abandons him. After this scene, Musos is coming, keeping shields in his both hands and danced a pantomime, as two men string out against him, so he uses his shields to face them. He starts swirling and somersaulting, by holding always his shield in his hands, in order to create a more

delightful spectacle. Athenaeus (Deipnosophistae: 1.15f) and Souda (lemma: karpaia) are referred to dancing, by citing to Xenophon's quotation, whereas Hesychius uses another intonation and different dictation for the dancing, that is to say karpea, and considers it as a Macedonian dance.

Prylis was also belonged to the armed dances and performed by doughboys. This dance may have a kind of connection with the doughboys, as it they were also named prylees (Liddell&Scott, lemma: prylees) a view that finds many historians in a great agreement. Callimachus (Hymn to Zeus: 52-4, Hymn to Artemis: 240-3) advocates that it was an armed dancing having its roots in Crete, where Curetes were dancing by whacking their shields. By this way, they would create noise and Saturn would not realize Zeus' presence. Additionally, He correlates the dance with Amazons, who performed it by holding shields and forming a large circle. They accompanied the dance with sounds of small slight flutes, whereas at the same time they were dancing around Goddess Artemis' statue. In Plutarch (Life of Alexander: 42), we read about Lesvii pryli. There are references that correlate the dance with funeral's ceremony. In Homer (The Iliad: 23.130-1), we meet a reference relevant to Patroklos' funeral.

Plato (Laws: 12.947c, e) writes about the armed dances that accompanied funerals. He is the same person that also refers; In order to praise the illustrious dead, who usually were kings, they organized funeral matches and they also organized the right way to be instituted, according to responsibilities funeral, which was the highest principle in Laws' society. This funeral dance was performed by armed men, related to armed corteges and those in fire or bank's burial, known elements even form the Homeric times.

Pollux makes a simple reference to the dance idikomo, which consider it as one of the most moiling battles that causes cuts. Further information about that particular dancing does not exist. Tryphon (Aspects of language, lemma: idikomos; Athenaeus, Deipnosophistae: 14.618c) refers idikomo as a name of fluting in a series of other flutings where its rhythm is given by a flute and it accompanies homonymous dances.

Hesychius writes about a group of dances, named imones, and who might have a relation with the martial dances, as imones were javelin throwers, according to Souda. In Homers (The Iliad: 23.886), we read about imones andres, that is to say, those men who threw javelins.

In Pollux' work (4.99), there is a point where we read about a series of armed dances and between them the following ones: podismo, sword thrust xifismo and diarriknousthe.

Podismos is referred to Hesychius as a dance and the verb means tied my feet around the horse (Liddell H. & Scott R., lemma: podizo). We don't really know if this explanation has a connection to dance's performance, yet the lexicographer, along with this dance, cites the podikra. However, we don't have another piece of information for the dance.

The last dance of this set is the sword thrust. Hesychius considers it as a dancing schema of emeleia that is today a theatrical kind of tragedy, whereas Cratinos notes that it was performed with the hands widely open holding the swords. Dio Cassius (47.44) makes a detailed description of the dance that represents a battle with swords. More specifically, dancers were hitting each other with weapons, they feel deep anger, move hell-for-leather, and without taking any precaution measurements, they throw the shields, they are hit on chest and head, and eventually they feign injury or even worse, death.

References to this dance, we also have from Athenian (Deipnosophistae: 14.629f) and Souda, who classifies it to tragedy's dances and from Photius (309, 16) and Pausania (Description of Greece: 10.2) as well. To the latter, the dance is considered to be a kind of dancing with knives. Souda correlates the dance to gesture and Ploutarch (Moralia: 997c) conceives gesture as another name of pyrrhichios. This parallel leads us to sword thrust relation with the martial dances. Lucian (The Dance: 7, 8), through his references to Curetes, Corybantes, and in his work about Zeus' rescue, writes that they were dancing

armed and hit their swords and shields in-between, while they were jumping highly in an enthusiastic and martial way. In Crete, even the ordinary citizens, along with lords and people belonged to gentle families, and exercised in this kind of dancing, in order to evolve to first-rate dancers. Undoubtedly, the sophist does not refer the dance's name, thus he describes how it was performed.

Along with sword thrust reference, they should also be referred two other orchestral forms, named skifismos and apoxizein. The first form, according to Hesychius, is xiphismos, as a kind of dancing with swords, whereas the second form constitutes another form of dancing. Eustathius (1167, 24) deems that apoxiphisai means exorchisasthai, that is to say leaving from one place by dancing and he refers it along with sword thrust. The conclusion is that the sword thrust constituted a kind of a martial dance, where dancers used swords. However, it also appears in tragedy's dances.

Pollux (4.100) also makes a reference to another martial dance, known as oklasma. Beazley (1932) alleges that this kind of dancing is mostly met in Attic red vases, where dancers raised their leg and had their hands out of them. Additionally, he identifies some female dancers. But, oklazein (Liddell&Scott, lemma: oklazein) means bending my knees, kneel or sit on my knees. Similar explanation gives Souda. This fact exhibits that the dance was based on low sittings, springs, whereas they are also added volte-faces by Galen (6.155) as dancers were scuffing towards and then they were opening their legs.

Athenaeus (Deipnosophistae: 14.631b) correlates the dance named anapali with gymnopaidiki meaning naked boys' dance. He supports that this was an old naming. It was danced by naked boys who performed particular moves and formed shapes with their hands, softly. The dancers imitated arena's and pancratium's sports, by moving their legs in music's rhythm. It was almost a kind of pantomime, because dancers despite the fact that they do not keep anything in their hands, they present with their body's movements, according to music, all the sports. Athenaeus considers anapali as a decline of Oschoforikes and bacchanal ceremonies. Therefore, the dance is correlated directly to the God. Oschoforia was an Athenian celebration in the honor of the God and it was done by the youth who wore female cloths, kept in their hands branches from vineyard arbors, and did pomp from God Dionysus temple to Athena Skirados temple, while they were chanting the celebration's melodies (Pollux: 4.53). Bacchanal was Bacchus' celebration, where participants were captured by bacchanal craze, madness, cheerfulness and enthusiasm, and afterwards the widely known bacchanal orgies follow (Euripides, Bacchae; 215, 1294) Celebrations' parallel to anapali is not clear, because in this dancing, the movers were gentle, soft and danced by naked boys. In this point, the grammatical believes that this dancing referred to Dionysus. Aristoxenus (FHG 2) writes that gymnopaidiki which in older times named anapali, was danced at theater before pyrrhichy's presentation. Delavaux-Roux (1993) deems that anapali was a martial dance, yet it was performed without weapons and presented in the celebration gymnopaidia in Sparta. According to Plato (1. 633c-d), it was an imitation of battle and wrestling.

In the same category of martial dances, it was belonged gymnopaidiki (Athenaeus, Deipnosophistae: 14.631c), which was performed before pyrrhichy at theater, and constituted the Apollo's worship dance. We have already known that in Sparta, martial arts' learning, along with males and females' military education was the most important element of citizens' life. As far as men are concerned, learning was very important to them, so that the results of wars to bring positive results. On the contrary, what was of a major significance to women was their hardening, aborting crack and effeminacy (Plutarch, Lycurgus: 14, 22), so that their strong bodies to bring into life strong and healthy children.

At gymnopaides, which was the annual celebration in the honor of Spartans who were beat at Thireia, the naked juvenile presented the dance named gymnopaideiki and at the same time they also performed gymnastic exercises (Thucydides: 8.82; Herodotus: 6.67)

The two last dances have adorable and military attributes however the most important one was the nonuse of weapons. Hesychius underlines that the youth danced around Apollo's altar hitting the one other's back without getting hurt.

Martial characteristics also had the dance tritogenia (Comments Aristophanes, The Clouds: 956) which was performed in the honor of the Goddess Athena, and apokinos, which, except for comedy's dance form, had martial dance's characteristics, as well. Aristophanes (The Knights: 20) believes that dance has the form of escape, whereas there are a vast variety of sources analyzing its characteristics (Pollux: 4.101; Aristophanes, The Frogs: 126, 33; Souda Lexicon; Photios; Hesychius). Athenaeus (Deipnosophistae: 14.629c) on the other hand, through his reference to a series of martial dances, he writes about apokino and correlates it with young people, who most of the times carried free moves and arena's forms in dances. Men cared for their bodies and their bravery, as they used to be exercised with weapons' use, along with music and songs' accompany. From these armed exercises emancipated pyrrhichios, orsitis and epikridios, and eventually apokinos. The latter was named maktrismos by many authors later, and it was danced by women, known as maktristes. However, we don't know a lot about the dance, but it probably started as a martial one, and later developed to a comedy's dance. We also meet this development in pyrrhichios' dance, which, although it was the prominent martial dance, is also referred as a funny dance causes great amounts of laugh (Athenaeus, Deipnosophistae: 14.629f, Pollux: 4.101) to the audience in many resources.

## 5 Conclusions

As we have already mentioned all the dances of category, we are in the position to understand their high value in ancient Greeks' life. To be more specific, they considered as an important element of their military education, martial businesses, and worship celebrations and of celebrations where they solemnized their victors and of their funerals where they praised the eminent men.

Due to historical coincidences, Greeks should always be prepared for war, in order to enjoy the Peace's goods. Leaving away the short period, when, owing to the Olympic Games and the marvelous armistice, hostilities reached the end, the rest of the time the constant competition between states-members for ascendancy and dominance, obliged them battle or get prepared for war. Martial dances were performed not only by men but also by women, aimed at the hardening and the built of strong bodies, the bear of strong children and the essential restriction of their muscular strength and effeminacy.

The greatest of all martial dances was pyrrhichios, which was an armed dance, danced in Sparta, Athens, Crete, Macedonia, but not always with the same naming or target.

They have been written down many other martial dances or not based on the pyrrhichios' dance and their performance proves how much important was their presence in ancient Greeks' life, because it covered the prominent issue of their military preparation and all their adorable and artistic worries.

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