wishing to see whether Theseus was really the son of Poseidon, flung his ring into the sea. Theseus dived and brought it up, together with a golden crown, the gift of Amphitrite. On the return voyage the ship touched at Naxos, and there Theseus abandoned Ariadne. He landed also at Delos, and there he and his comrades danced the crane dance, the complicated movements of which were meant to imitate the windings of the Labyrinth.@@1 In historical times this dance was still danced by the Delians round a horned altar. Theseus had promised Aegeus that, if he returned successful, the black sail with which the fatal ship always put to sea should be exchanged for a white one.@@2 But he forgot his promise; and when Aegeus from the Acropolis at Athens descried the black sail out at sea, he flung himself from the rock and died. Hence at the festival which commemorated the return of Theseus there was always weeping and lamentation. Theseus now carried out a political revolution in Attica by abolishing the semi-independent powers of the separate townships and concentrating those powers at Athens, and he instituted the festival of the Panathenaea,@@3 as a symbol of the unity of the Attic race. Further, according to tradition, he instituted the three classes or castes of the eupatrids (nobles), geomori (husbandmen), and demiurgi (artisans). He extended the territory of Attica as far as the isthmus of Corinth.

He was the first to celebrate in their full pomp the Isthmian games in honour of Poseidon; for the games previously insti­tuted by Hercules in honour of Melicertes had been celebrated by night, and had partaken of the nature of mysteries rather than of a festival. Of Theseus’s adventures with the Amazons there were different accounts. According to some, he sailed with Hercules to the Euxine, and there won the Amazon Antiope as the meed of valour; others said that he sailed on his own account, and captured Antiope by stratagem. There­after the Amazons attacked Athens. Antiope fell fighting on the side of Theseus, and her tomb was pointed out on the south side of the acropolis. By Antiope Theseus had a son, Hippolytus. On the death of Antiope, Theseus married Phaedra. She fell in love with her stepson Hippolytus, who, resisting her advances, was accused by her to Theseus of having attempted her virtue. Theseus in a rage imprecated on his son the wrath of Poseidon. His prayer was answered: as Hippolytus was driving beside the sea, a bull issuing from the waves terrified his horses, and he was thrown and killed. This tragic story is the subject of one of the extant plays of Euripides.@@4

The famous friendship between Theseus and Pirithous, king of the Lapiths, originated thus. Hearing of the strength and courage of Theseus, Pirithous desired to put them to the test. Accordingly he drove away from Marathon some cows which belonged to Theseus. The latter pursued, but when he came up with the robber the two heroes were so filled with admira­tion of each other that they swore brotherhood. At the marriage of Pirithous to Hippodamia (or Deidamia) a fight broke out between the Lapiths and Centaurs, in which the Lapiths, assisted by Theseus, were victorious, and drove the

Centaurs out of the country. Theseus and Pirithous now carried off Helen from Sparta, and when they drew lots for her she fell to the lot of Theseus, who took her to Aphidnae, and left her in charge of his mother Aethra and his friend Aphidnus. He now descended to the lower world with Pirithous, to help his friend to carry off Proserpine. But the two were caught and confined in Hades till Heracles came and released Theseus. When Theseus returned to Athens he found that a sedition had been stirred up by Menestheus, a descendant of Erechtheus, one of the old kings of Athens. Failing to quell the outbreak, Theseus in despair sent his children to Euboea, and after solemnly cursing the Athenians sailed away to the island of Scyrus, where he had ancestral estates. But Lycomedes, king of Scyrus, took him up to a high place, and killed him by casting him into the sea. Long afterwards, at the battle of Marathon (490 b.c.), many of the Athenians fancied they saw the phantom of Theseus, in full armour, charging at their head against the Persians. When the Persian war was over the Delphic oracle bade the Athenians fetch the bones of Theseus from Scyrus, and lay them in Attic earth. It fell to Cimon’s lot in 469 B.C. to discover the hero’s grave at Scyrus and bring back his bones to Athens. They were deposited in the heart of Athens, and henceforth escaped slaves and all persons in peril sought and found sanctuary at the grave of him who in his life had been a champion of the oppressed. His chief festival, called Theseia, was on the 8th of the month Pyanepsion (October 21st), but the 8th day of every other month was also sacred to him.@@5

Whatever we may think of the historical reality of Theseus, his legend almost certainly contains recollections of historical events, *e.g.* the *συνoικισμόs,* whether by this we understand the political centralization of Attica at Athens or a local union of previously separate settlements on the site of Athens. The birth of Theseus at Troezen points to the immigration of an Ionian family or tribe. With this agrees the legend of the contest between Athena and Poseidon for supremacy on the acropolis of Athens, for Theseus is intimately connected with Poseidon, the great Ionian god. Aegeus, the father of Theseus, has been identified by some modern scholars with Poseidon.

The well-preserved Doric temple to the north of the acropolis at Athens, commonly known as the Theseum, was long supposed to be the sanctuary in which the bones of Theseus reposed. But archaeologists have generally abandoned this conjecture. There were several (according to Philochorns, four) temples or shrines of Theseus at Athens. Milchhöfer considers he has found one of them in the neighbourhood of Peiraeus.@@6

Our chief authority for the legend of Theseus is the life by Plutarch, which is a compilation from earlier writers; see also Bacchylides. G. Gilbert, who has investigated the sources from which Plutarch drew for his life of Theseus, believes that his chief authority was the *Atthis* of Ister, and that Ister mainly followed Philochorus *(Philologus,* xxxiii., 1874, p. 46 sq.).

There is a modern Greek folk-tale which preserves some features of the legend of Theseus and the Minotaur, but for the Minotaur has been substituted a seven-headed snake. See Bernhard Schmidt, *Griechische Märchen, Sagen und Volkslieder* (1877), p. 118 sq.

Among modern monographs on Theseus may be mentioned: A. Schultz, *De Theseo* (Breslau, 1874); Th. Kausel, *De Thesei Synoikismo* (Dillenburg, 1882); E. Pngge, *De Thesei rebus gestis* (Marburg, 1891); O. Wulff, *Zur Theseussage* (Dorpat, 1892); see also O. Gruppe, *Griechische Mythologie,* i. pp. 581-608; J. E. Harrison, *Mythology and Monuments of Ancient Athens* (1890); “ Der Theseische Synoikismos ” in C. F. Hermann’s *Lehrbuch der griechischen Staatsaltertümer,* i. (1892), pp. 303-306; A. Baumeister, *Denkmäler des klassischen Altertums,* iii. (1888).

**THESMOPHORIA,** an ancient Greek festival, celebrated by women only in honour of Demeter Θeσμoφ0ρos. At Athens, Abdera, and perhaps Sparta, it lasted three days. At Athens the festival took place on the nth, 12th and 13th of the month

@@@1 The Ostiaks of Siberia have an elaborate crane dance, in which the dancers are dressed up with skins and the heads of cranes (P. S. Pallas, *Reise durch verschiedene Provinzen des russischen Reichs,* iii. 1778).

@@@2 So, too, the ship that sailed annually from Thessaly to Troy with offerings to the shade of Achilles put to sea with sable sails (Philostratus, *Heroica,* xx. 25). The ship that was to bring Iseult to the mortally wounded Tristram was to hoist a white sail if she was on board, a black sail if she was not. The black sails recur in the modern Greek version of the tale of Theseus. Cf. *Asiatick Researches,* ix. 97.

@@@3 Besides the Panathenaea Theseus is said to have instituted the festival of the *Synoikia* or *Metoikia.* Wachsmuth ingeniously supposes that the latter festival commemorated the local union in a single city of the separate settlements on the Acropolis and its immediate neighbourhood, while the Panathenaea commemorated the political union of the whole of Attica · (C. Wachsmuth, *Die Stadt Athen im Alterthum,* 1874, p. 453 sq.).

@@@4 Theseus is also said to have taken part in the Argonautic expedition and the Calydonian boar-hunt.

@@@5 The Athenian festival in October, popularly supposed to com­memorate the return of Theseus from Crete, is interesting, as some of its features are identical with those of harvest-festivals still observed in the north of Europe. Thus the *eiresiōnē,* a branch of olive wreathed with wool and decked with fruits, bread, &c., which was carried in procession and hung over the door of the house, where it was kept for a year, is the *Erntemai* (Harvest-may) of Germany. See W. Mannhardt, *Antike Wald- und Feld-Kulte* (1877), p. 212 sq. . . ,

@@@6 See *Erläuternder Text* to the *Karten von Attika* (Berlin, 1881), i. p. 37 sq.