

ΙΑΚΧΟΣ

H. S. Versnel

*Oegstgeest*SOME REMARKS SUGGESTED BY AN UNPUBLISHED LEKYTHOS
IN THE VILLA GIULIA.¹I. *The evidence*

As may be expected of a god connected with the mysteries, Iacchos is a mysterious god. The evidence concerning the earliest Iacchos-figure is extremely scanty. The oldest testimony is the famous passage in Herodot 8, 65, describing the battle of Salamis. The Spartan Demaratos and the Athenian Dikaios perceive a cloud of dust approaching through the Thriasian plain, and hear a sound that appears to be the μυστικός Ἰακχος. The Athenian explains to his companion that this is the cry raised by the Athenians whenever they celebrate the Eleusinian mysteries. At the present moment, however, since the plain is totally void of human beings, the φθεγγόμενον must be θεῖον. No mention is made of a god Ἰακχος in this passage, nor is there any allusion to a statue. Not even the famous procession is mentioned explicitly, though the κονιορτός may be taken as referring to it. Only a φωνή or a φθεγγόμενον and an activity ἰακχάζειν are mentioned. In later times a scholion on Aristides III (p. 648 Dind.) still emphasizes these very elements: φωνή τις ἐδόθη ὑπὸ τοῦ Ἰάκχου—τὸ δὲ καὶ ἀπὸ τῆς Ἐλευσίνος ὡσπερ κονιορτὸν ἐλθεῖν ἐπὶ τὴν Σαλαμίνα ἐνομίσθη, ὅτι ἡ Δημήτηρ καὶ ἡ Κόρη ἦλθον συμμαχῆσαι τοῖς Ἑλλησιν.

In the chronologically next testimony Iacchos figures clearly as the name of a god, though not of an independent one. It is used as an epithet of Dionysos in his function of leader of the maenads. The source is Sophocles, *Antigone* 1146 ff, dating from shortly

¹ I am greatly indebted to Mr. F. Lettinga, who translated my other contribution in this issue of Talanta, and was kind enough to read the present note, thus saving me from many barbarisms and errors.

before 440 B.C.: ἰὼ πῦρ πνειόντων / χοράγ' ἄστρον, νυχίων / φθεγμάτων
ἐπίσκοπε, / παῖ Διδὸς γένεθλον, προφάνηθ' / ὄναξ, σαῖς ἅμα περιπολοῖς /
Θυίαισιν, αἶ σε μαινόμεναι πάννυχοι / χορεύουσι τὸν ταμίαν Ἰακχον.

In vers 1119 f. the chorus had addressed Dionysos: μέδεις δὲ παγκοίνοις Ἐλευσινίας Δηοῦς ἐν κόλποις. This has induced Jebb¹ to suppose that Iacchos in verse 1152 is used specifically to denote the Eleusinian Dionysos. This may be true, but an addition is called for. Other passages seem to indicate that the epiclesis Iacchos is given to Dionysos primarily in virtue of his function of χοραγός of the maenads. A fragment of Sophocles (Nauck, no. 874) says: ὄθεν κατεῖδον τὴν βεβακχιαμένην βροτοῖσι κλεινὴν Νῦσαν, ἣν ὁ βουκέρως Ἰακχος αὐτῷ μαίαν ἠδίστην νέμει ὅπου τις ὄρνις οὐχὶ κλαγγά-
νει; and an unknown tragic poet in Dion. Hal. *de comp. verb.* c. 17 has: Ἰακχε διθύραμβε· σὺ τῶνδε χοραγέ. The epithet διθύραμβος proves that Iacchos is here identical with Dionysos. His function is χοραγός.

The latter fragment forms a link with a final 5th-century testimony, which shows Iacchos in the role of a choragos. However, this time he is an independent deity, since Dionysos himself is described as one of the spectators of the Iacchos-ceremony. I am referring to the famous *passus* in Aristophanes' *Ranae*, where the chorus of Eleusinian *mystai*, furnished with torches ἄδουσι γοῦν τὸν Ἰακχον (v. 320) singing (v. 324 ff):

Ἰακχ', ὦ πολυτίμοις ἐν ἔδραις ἐνθάδε ναίων
Ἰακχ' ὦ Ἰακχε
ἐλθὲ τόνδ' ἀνά λειμῶνα χορεύσων.

and (350 ff.):

σὺ δὲ λαμπάδι φέγγων
προβάδην ἔξαγ' ἐπ' ἀνθηρόν ἔλειον δάπεδον
χοροποιόν, μάκαρ, ἦβαν

and (395 f.):

νῦν καὶ τὸν ὠραῖον θεὸν παρακαλεῖτε δεῦρο
ὦδαῖσι, τὸν ξυνέμπορον τῆσδε τῆς χορείας

followed by the refrain: (v. 402, 408, 413)

Ἰακχε φιλοχορευτά, συμπρόπεμπέ με.

¹ Comm. Soph. *Antigone*, 1146.

The ritual model of this passage has been laboriously reconstructed with the aid of odd scraps of information. In broad outline it amounts to the following.¹

On the 19th of Boëdromion the mysts assembled in various places in Athens. A procession was formed, which proceeded on foot to Eleusis, carrying *ἱερά*, which had been brought from Eleusis to Athens some days before. A wooden statue of Iacchos was produced from its Athenian sanctuary and taken along in the procession. It should be stressed that this statue and the special priest in charge of it, the Iacchagogos, are never mentioned before the 4th century.² The procession was characterized by the cry "Ἰακχε ὦ Ἰακχε. An interesting scholion on Arist. *Ranae* 479 reports that during the Lenaea³ the Eleusinian dadouchos, holding a torch in his hand, addressed the people: "καλεῖτε θεόν", καὶ οἱ ὑπακούοντες βοῶσι· Σεμελήι' Ἰακχε πλουτοδότα. Here the identification of Iacchos and Dionysos—not visible in the *Ranae* and probably not realized in the ceremony which was its model—becomes apparent again.

In fact these are all the data concerning the 5th century Iacchos.⁴ All other known reports on Iacchos as a mystery-god, as the mystic Dionysos, as a child or a youth,⁵ date from later times and should not be prematurely introduced into the investigation of Iacchos' original nature.

As regards the evidence offered by plastic art, we must admit that the numerous attempts to recognize Iacchos particularly in pictures of the Eleusinian circle have not yielded sure and trustworthy results. Already in 1899 E. Pottier remarked:⁶ "Pourtant si l'on énumérait toutes les oeuvres d'art sur lesquelles on a mis le nom d'Iacchos, la liste serait longue. Mais si l'on voulait en restreindre le nombre aux attributions tout à fait sûres, il ne resterait à

¹ In view of the excellent surveys existing, it seems superfluous to quote the *testimonia* once again.

See: E. Pfuhl, *De Atheniensium pompis sacris*, Berlin, 1900, 39-43; L. Deubner, *Attische Feste*, 75 f.; O. Kern, RE 9, 1914, s.v. *Iakchos*, 616 f.; G.E. Mylonas, *Eleusis and the Eleusinian Mysteries*, Princeton 1961, 252 ff.; A. Mommsen, *Feste der Stadt Athen*, Leipzig, 1898, 223 ff.

² IG, II² 1, 1092; III, 162 and 262.

³ On the Eleusinian aspects of the Lenaea see: Deubner, *Attische Feste*, 125 f.

⁴ Add: Eur. *Bacchae*, 725 and Eur. *Troades*, 1230.

⁵ Testimonies in: RE, 9, 1914, 621f.

⁶ *Daremberg-Saglio*, III, 370, where also a discussion of the relevant

peu près rien. Nous n'avons pas, pour nous renseigner avec pleine certitude, un seul monument où le nom du dieu figure à côté de lui". It must be added that the one picture in which Nilsson, Deubner, Mylonas and others with a fair degree of probability recognize Iacchos, viz the Niinnionpinax,¹ is dated about 400 B.C. at the earliest, whereas the majority of scholars prefer a date between 400 and 350 B.C.² The representations found more recently, which apparently promised a way out of the impasse, will be discussed in a later paragraph. First, the theories based on the evidence produced so far demand our attention.

II. The theories

On the subject of the birth-process of the god Iacchos the specialists agree in an almost eschatological unanimity. Nobody doubts that the god is the personification of the iacchos-cry.³ Concerning the meaning of the cry slight differences of opinion appear: "the joyful cry" (Guthrie, 288); "a shout of invocation" (Kerényi, 241); "höchste Ausdruck der Freude" (Kern, 614). Elsewhere⁴ I have attempted to class the cry *ιαχχε* with a larger rubric of ritual cries, such as *βόαχχε*, *λαμβε*, *θρίαμβε* etc., all of which functioned in the

pictures can be found. Cf. Mylonas, *Eleusis and the Eleusinian Mysteries*, 213.

¹ Reproduced in: Deubner, *Attische Feste*, pl. V, 1; Nilsson, GGR, I², pl. 41, 2; Mylonas, *Eleusis and the Eleusinian Mysteries*, pl. 88; Farnell, *The Cults of the Greek States*, III, pl. XVI; *Eph. Arch.* 1901, pl. I and II.

² On the date see the literature mentioned in the preceding note and Harrison, *Prolegomena*, 557 f; Nilsson, ARW, 32, 1935, 93 ff = *Opusc.* II, 560 ff.

³ J. E. Harrison (I), *Themis*, 48; (II) *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion*, 1921, 413; W.K.C. Guthrie, *The Greeks and their Gods*, 288; A. W. Persson, *The Religion of Greece in Prehistoric Times*, Sather lect. 1942, 151; M. P. Nilsson, GGR, I², 664; L. Deubner, *Attische Feste*³, 1932, 73; U. von Wilamowitz, *Der Glaube der Hellenen*, 1931-32, II, 159; K. Kerényi, *The Gods of the Greeks*, 241; G. E. Mylonas, *Eleusis and the Eleusinian Mysteries*, 238; P. Foucart, *Les mystères d'Eleusis*, Paris 1914, 110; E. des Places, *La religion grecque*, Paris, 1969, 34 f; G. Méautis, *Les dieux de la Grèce et les mystères d'Eleusis*, Paris, 1959, 95; O. Kern, RE 9, 1914, 614; H. Jeanmaire, *Dionysos. Histoire du culte de Bacchus*, Paris, 1951, 437; E. Rohde, *Psyche*¹⁰, 1925, 284; H. J. Rose, *Religion in Greece and Rome*, New York, 1959 (reprint of: *Ancient Greek Religion*, 1946), 72. These works will henceforth be cited only by the author's name.

⁴ *Triumphus. An Inquiry into the Origin, Development and Meaning of the Roman Triumph*. Diss. Leiden, 1970, 27 ff, where one will find ample discussion of the material.

context of a divine epiphany. The appearing god is often, but not always, Dionysos. I interpreted the cry as an *advocatio* meant to summon the deity to appear, as it is still visible in the adhortation of the dadouchos mentioned above, καλεῖτε θεόν, followed by the shout Σεμελίη' Ἰακχε πλουτοδότα. The latter exclamation I consider to be an amplification of the more primitive Ἰακχ' ὦ Ἰακχε. Next to this the cry Ἰακχε was an ecstatic shout of joy, accompanying the epiphany of the god. These facts logically lead to the following hypothesis: the starting-point must have been the form Ἰακχε—probably an expressive enlargement of ἰά¹—which at one time must have been *interpreted* as the vocative-form of a name. While inviting a god to appear with the cry Ἰακχε, people started thinking that this god's name was Ἰακχος. This, I take it, is the origin of many an epiclesis of Dionysos, who is the appearing god *par excellence*. Moreover, the idea that Iacchos was born out of a cry has been repeatedly expressed in ancient lexicography.²

We may regard as variants of this general view the opinions of those scholars who, though conceding that the cry iacche/iacchos was the basis of the genesis of the god, nevertheless describe the god as: "l'âme collective de la foule en marche" (Jeanmaire, 437); "un génie qui personnifiait et le chant mystique et la procession tout entière" (Foucart, III); "Personifikation des Iakchoszuges" (Nilsson, 599).

In my view this is a misunderstanding which is to be traced back to expressions such as ἐξελαύνειν τὸν Ἰακχον (Plut. Alc. 34, 3); τὸν μυστικὸν Ἰακχον ἐξάγουσιν (Plut. Cam. 19, 15); τὸν Ἰακχον ἐξ ἄστεος Ἐλευσινάδε πέμπειν (Plut. Phoc. 28); προπέμπειν τὸν Ἰακχον (C.I.A. 2, 467 and 471). Indeed, ἐξελαύνειν or πέμπειν (πομπήν) may mean "to lead a procession out (of town)". As far as I can ascertain, however, προπέμπειν and ἐξάγειν never have this meaning. If Aristophanes, l.c. writes Ἰακχε φιλοχορευτά, συμπρόπεμπέ με, and the scholiast interprets verse 399: ὀδεύουσι προπέμποντες τὸν Διόνυσον, the only inference possible is that ἐξάγειν τὸν Ἰακχον

¹ Afterwards I saw that Nilsson had already suggested Ἰακχος ≪ ἰά in: *Opusc.* III, 237 n. 18.

² Photios, s.v. Ἰακχος; *Etymol. Magn.* s.v. Ἰακχος; Cornutus, *Theol. graec. comp.* cap. 30.

in the late testimonies mentioned above means "to take out the statue of *Ἰακχος*".

If Iacchos is characteristic for—though perhaps not strictly reserved to—the procession of the mysts on their way to Eleusis,¹ the question arises whether the cry originally belonged to Eleusis or to Athens. Where did the god's cradle stand? Regarding this question the majority of scholars refuse to follow Strabo's (10, 468) characterization of Iacchos as *ὁ ἀρχηγέτης τῶν μυστηρίων*. Generally Athens is denoted as the birth-place of the god, though it is admitted that the creation only took place under Eleusinian influence.²

Two further points on which scholars generally agree, are:

1. In origin Iacchos had nothing to do with Dionysos.³
2. Both the transition from cry to god and the identification of Iacchos and Dionysos are processes which began only in the 5th century and, more precisely, after 480 B.C. In this connection, curiously enough, both the terms "already early"⁴ and "only late"⁵ are used to indicate the selfsame date.

Of course there are exceptions. Next to Rohde and Miss Harrison (who regarded Iacchos as "a mystical form of Bacchus" which immigrated into Eleusis in prehistoric times as a kind of hypostasis of Dionysos), it is particularly Kerényi who should be mentioned. His theory is that the identification of Iacchos and Dionysos took place considerably earlier than had been supposed so far. Indeed, in his view Iacchos was *ab origine* the "alter-ego" of Dionysos, who

¹ "Wenn er überhaupt nicht ein ganz allgemeiner, in verschiedenen Kulturen Attikas gebräuchlicher Festesruf gewesen ist" (Kern, 614).

² "A new god arose from the connexion of the mysteries with Athens" (Guthrie, 287); "eine erst nach der Einverleibung von Eleusis in den Athenerischen Staat entstandene Personifikation" (Nilsson, 599); "es ist eine sehr wahrscheinliche Vermuthung dass diesen Gott (...) erst Athen dem Bunde der in Eleusis verehrten Götter zugeführt habe" (Rohde, 284).

³ Guthrie, 287 f; Nilsson, 664; Deubner, 73, 126; Rohde, 284; Pfuhl, 42; Wilamowitz, 159; Rose, 72; Kern, 615; Radermacher, *Arist. Ranae*, p. 184. Especially important: P. Boyancé, REG, 75, 1962, 481, on an inscription from the agora (Hesperia, 4, 1935, 21) presenting the names of Eleusinian gods, among whom *Ἀρχηγέτης*, identified with *Ἰακχος*: "le texte confirmait qu' Iakkhos d'Eleusis n'avait originellement rien à faire avec Dionysos mais aussi que le nom officiel (...) était plutôt Archégètes qu' Iakkhos".

⁴ Radermacher, o.c. 184; Kern, 619; Nilsson, 664.

⁵ Deubner, 126; Jeanmaire, 437; Mylonas, 308; L. Gernet-A. Boulanger, *Le génie grec dans la religion*, Paris, 1932, 128.

had ancient relations with Eleusis. There the god sought Persephone, who was identical with Semele, his mother. "Iacchos and Bakchos were the same deity, although the former was also supposed to be different from Dionysos. He was the son of Persephone. . ." (p. 241). Kerényi even tries to prove the great age of the god by the suggestion that I-wa-ko and I-wa-ka on lineair-B tablets¹ should be read as Iacchos and Iacchas respectively, though he concedes that the former is the name of a smith and that the latter denotes an owner of slaves. He even connects these names with Egyptian nomenclature.² The reason for mentioning these not very promising hypotheses, is the means by which Kerényi has tried to add proof to his theories. Two vase-paintings, earlier than any discussed by previous investigators, are contended to represent Iacchos. In one he is in all respects identical with Dionysos, in the other he represents his "alter-ego". A short discussion of these representations—serving both as an introduction to our proper subject and as a warning—will perhaps not be superfluous.

III. *Two supposed representations of Iacchos*

A krater (T. 128) from the necropolis of Spina in the museum of Ferrara, dated about the middle of the 5th century B.C. (Plate I),³ shows a temple, represented by two Doric columns in which two divinities, a male and a female, are seated. At the side of an altar before them is a priestess carrying a liknon on her head, behind her a woman playing the flute and another with cymbals, a flute-player, another woman with cymbals and one with a tympanon, dancing ecstatically. Further there are women, youths and young girls handling snakes. The goddess has a lion standing on her extended left arm. Both the god and the goddess are performing a libation. Over the head of the goddess letters were visible, which have been read as AKOΣ and in front of her the editor read KAOE. The inscriptions are, again with lacunas, repeated on the back. These names and figures have led to various interpretations:

¹ I-wa-ko on a Cnossos-tablet KN 38 (M. Ventris and J. Chadwick, *Documents in Mycenaean Greek*, 171, and I-wa-ka on Cnossos-tablet V 60 and Pylos tablet Jn 01 (Ventris and Chadwick p. 353).

² *Der frühe Dionysos*. Die Eitrem-Vorlesungen, Oslo-Bergen 1960, 18.

³ Published by S. Aurigemma, *Il R. Museo di Spina*, Ferrara, 1936, 211 and pl. 100; cf. B. L. Lawler, *MAAR*, 6, 1927, pl. 22.

"Ιακχος and 'Εκάτη, bien étonnés de se trouver ensemble (Aurigemma), Dionysos and Ariadne, which, anyway, are not in accordance with the letters (Beazley¹), and Bakchos and Chloe (F. Sartori.²). The latter suggestion was not impossible in itself, but presented difficulties as to interpretation: we do not know of bacchic frenzy in Eleusis nor in the agrarian Chloia-feast.

Two new interpretations were put forward in 1953. Erika Simon,³ without using the inscriptions, suggested that the gods were Sabazios and Cybele, which is quite possible in this period. Kerényi⁴ revives the old interpretation of Aurigemma and regards the male god as Iacchos. The name of the goddess, however, he reads as ΕΚΛΟΕ = ΕΥΚΛΟΕ = ΕΥΚΛΕΙΑ. She is supposed to represent the great Goddess of the underworld and the total picture "ist soweit ich weiss, die älteste Darstellung der in Grossgriechenland um die heroisch-orphischen Hadesmotive erweiterten Unterweltszene" (p. 84). This interpretation, if right, would have had important consequences: a relation of Iacchos and the underworld as early as ca. 450 B.C.; Iacchos as an individual god existing in this period; the *liknon* would have been proved to be the *mysticus vannus iacchi* long before the Hellenistic period.

However, after factual criticism by Nilsson,⁵ who pointed out the dissimilarity of the god depicted with everything we know about Iacchos, and the linguistic weakness of K's reasonings, a definitive refutation has been offered by Arias.⁶ With the aid of infra-red-photography he has shown beyond doubt that the words inscribed on both the front- and the reverse side of the krater read ΚΑΛΟΣ and ΚΑΛΗ,⁷ thereby proving that the inscriptions are of the usual funerary type. Consequently, there is no reason any

¹ in: JHS, 54, 1936, 91; idem, *Attic red-figure Vase-painters*, Oxford, 1942, 696, n. 23. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 963 and JHS, 56, 1936, 91.

² Il cratere della tomba 128 nella necropoli di Spina, *Rendic. acad. Lincei*, 1950, 233 ff and pl. I-III.

³ *Opfernde Götter*, Berlin, 1953, 79-87.

⁴ *Symb. Osl.* 30, 1953, 82 ff.

⁵ *The Dionysiac Mysteries of the Hellenistic and Roman Age*, Acta Inst. Athen. Sueciae 8^o, V, 1957, 24 ff. Cf. *idem*, *Dionysos Liknites*, K. Humanistiska Vetenskapsamfundets i Lund årsberättelse, 1951-52, I, 6.

⁶ P. E. Arias—N. Alfieri, *Il Museo archeologico di Ferrara*, Ferrara, 1955, 70-72.

⁷ This interpretation already in Beazley, o.c. and ARV², 1963, 1052, no 25; 1680. Cf. *idem*, *Paralipomena* ², Oxford, 1971, 442 and 444.

more to identify the sitting god with Iacchos. An interpretation of the god as a "Dionysiac Hades" or a "chthonic Dionysos" is, of course, not precluded, but cannot be more than pure hypothesis.

The second picture is to be found on a bell-krater in the same museum of Ferrara (T. 311), dated \pm 475-460 B.C. attributed to the Altamura-painter. (Plate II). A majestic bearded god, holding a thyrsos-staff and sitting on a spotted deer-skin (*nebris*), has on his knee a standing beardless youth with an ivy-crown on his head, and holding a tendril (perhaps a reed) in one hand and a kantharos in the other. The publisher, Aurigemma,¹ interpreted the scene as "Zeus seduto che tiene per la vita, con la mano destra, il fanciulletto Dioniso da poco venuto alla luce", a view also defended by Beazley² and Trendall.³ Already in 1928 Rostovtzeff⁴ had given the interpretation: "Indian Bacchus and Eleusinian Iacchos". This interpretation was accepted by Kerényi in his *Griechische Mythologie*⁵ and defended again in a note in 1953.⁶ He argues—rightly, in my opinion—that the sitting figure must be Dionysos and defines the picture as "Dionysos mit seinem alter-ego, dem Kind Iacchos". In contrast with the former krater, this one has no inscription at all. This opens the door to a great many interpretations. In 1950-51 H. Fuhrmann⁷ had already proved that the sitting figure must be Dionysos. According to him, the child is not Iacchos but Oinopion, in mythology a child of Ariadne and Dionysos, by his attributes clearly defined as the personification of wine and viniculture. This interpretation has been generally adopted since⁸ and defended especially by Arias,⁹ who adds a reference to other pictures of boys and youths serving Dionysos and pouring his wine. This interpretation seems much more attractive than Kerényi's, although, this time, his theory has not been refuted with scientific certainty. At any rate, the identification of

¹ Aurigemma, o.c. p. 176. Pl. LXXXV.

² *Attic Red-figure Vase-painters*, 414 n. 32.

³ A. D. Trendall, *JHS* 54, 1934, 177.

⁴ *Mystic Italy*, New York, 1928, frontispiece.

⁵ Also in: *The Gods of the Greeks*, Penguin 1958, pl. 16.

⁶ *Symb. Osl.* 30, 1953, 82 f.

⁷ *Jahrb. Arch. Instit.* 65-66, 1950-51, 118 ff.

⁸ Now also accepted by Beazley, *ARV*², 593 no 41; 1660.

⁹ o.c. 57 f. Pl. 29.

Iacchos is too hypothetical by far to build theories of an "alter-ego" on it.

Finally, mention should be made of the famous Mycenaean ivory group (15th century), representing two seated women with a boy standing by the knees of one of them. Wace¹ interpreted the group as representing "the goddesses who had many names, Demeter and Persephone, Damia and Auxesia, or simply the Mistresses. The boy is naturally both Iakchos and the young male god of the Minoan-Mycenaean religion." This supposition was accepted by Webster² and—less explicitly—by Marinatos,³ who calls the boy *παραπαιζων*, thus identifying him with the child Dionysos. Again pure hypothesis, the value of which will be discussed below.

This excursus with its rather disappointing results is meant to serve as a warning. We should be cautious, even suspicious, concerning any new "discovery" of Iacchos in plastic art, and be reluctant in drawing far-going conclusions from dubious archaeological data. We should keep this lesson in mind when we now turn to a picture considerably older than the two discussed above, and which has at least one advantage over them: it presents an inscription and what is more, a complete and readable one.

IV. *An unpublished lekythos in the Villa Giulia*

The black-figured lekythos no. 42884 in the museum of the Villa Giulia has neither been published nor catalogued in the textbooks so far. I wish to express my gratitude to the board of the museum for their kind permission to publish some reproductions of the main parts (Plates III, IV, V). The lekythos is 36 cm in height. Bordered by two friezes of palmettes, the main scene presents a series of five deities, all of which are recognizable by their attributes. In the middle a bearded Dionysos with an ivy-crown is depicted. He holds a (vine?) tendril in his left hand and a kantharos in the right. He is sitting on a folding-chair. To his left Athena is standing, armed with helmet, spear and aegis, a shield leaning

¹ A. J. B. Wace, *Mycenae. An archaeological History and Guide*, New York, 1964, 83 ff.

² T. B. L. Webster, *From Mycenae to Homer*, London, 1958, 43.

³ S. Marinatos, *Kreta und das mykenische Hellas*, München, 1959, 23 and 124. Thus also: Ch. Picard, *Les religions préhelléniques*, Mana, 2, Paris, 1948, 244 f.



PLATE I

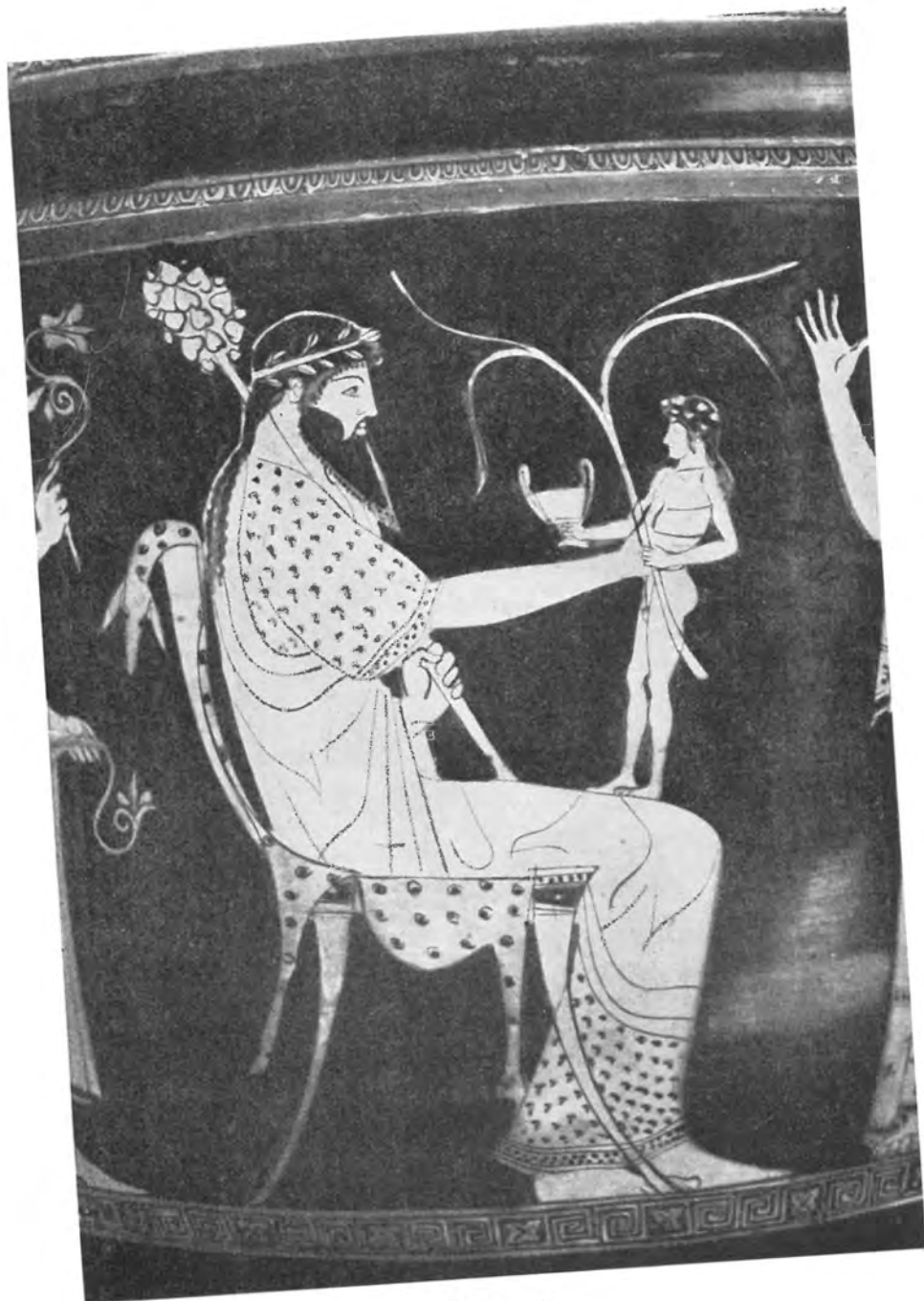


PLATE II



PLATE III



PLATE IV



PLATE V

against her legs. She has turned her head away from Dionysos (and/or from Heracles), raising her left hand in what seems to be a gesture of awe. To the extreme left Hermes, recognizable by his winged shoes, felt-hat and *kerukeion*, is sitting on a massive cylindrical object. Facing Dionysos stands Heracles, wearing the lion-skin, and armed with a sword, a quiver and a club. He is raising his right hand towards his forehead. In his hand he seems to hold a branch with three leaves or blossoms. Behind him a figure is seated on a similar seat as Hermes'. He wears a helmet, a cloak and *knemides*, and is armed with a spear. Though the least outspokenly characterized person of them all, he is surely Ares, as comparison with other pictures confirms.

The style of the figures and ornaments is purely archaic and suggests even to an outsider like the present author, a date somewhere in the last quarter of the sixth century. Dr. J.H.C. Kern,¹ who has kindly given me advice on archaeological details, suggests a date about 500 B.C.

Though not lacking charm, parts of the figures have been rather clumsily painted: particularly the position of the feet has been too intricate a problem for the artist here and there. The orthography, though rather primitive, is not bad, as appears from the three inscriptions which give the vase its particular importance to our subject. Three gods are—superfluously—identified by textual indications: Hermes is described as ΗΕΛΜΕΣ, Heracles as ΝΕΔ-ΔΚΛΕΣ, and over Dionysos one reads: ΙΑΚΧΝΕ. Comparison shows that the letter N is meant to represent the H. So we should read ΙΑΚΧΗΕ.² Before we discuss the implications of this find, it will be useful to relate the opinions of several archaeologists I have consulted, and the scent on which they put me.

Professor J. Hemelrijk, who examined the photographs, expressed serious suspicion concerning the genuineness of the vase or at least of parts of the paintings. He particularly suspected the inscriptions. After this, Dr. C. M. Stibbe at my request examined the lekythos *in situ*, paying special attention to the inscriptions.

¹ My sincere thanks are due to Dr. Kern and all other specialists who have examined the lekythos either at his or at my request.

² Iacchos may claim a medal for aberrant orthography. We find 'Ιαόκχου, *'Ιαχχός, 'Ιαχός. See: Kern, o.c. 618.

His conclusion was that the vase is unconditionally and completely authentic. In the meantime, without my knowledge, Professor P. Mingazzini, accompanied by Professor T. Dohrn and Dr. H. Sichtermann, made the same investigation and arrived at the same conclusion.

It was Professor Mingazzini who drew my attention to a footnote to the description of a Berlin lekythos no 1961 in Haspels, *Attic black-figured lekythoi*, p. 49,¹ reading: "A forgery of this lekythos is in the Villa Giulia, photo Alinari 41150". The "forgery" proves to be our lekythos, and the Berlin lekythos no 1961 is identical with it, even to details. However, I soon found that, if there is any forgery in either of them, it is doubtless in the Berlin vase.

The latter lekythos has been known for a long time. E. Gerhard,² who gives a description and a reproduction of the vase, does not yet make mention of modern restorations, but Fürtwängler³ points out modern additions, particularly in the inscription ΙΑΚΧΝΕ. The treatment this inscription has received is too amazing not to relate it in some detail. Gerhard writes in his text (p. 195): "(. . .) Dionysos in deutlicher Inschrift genannt (. . .); letzterer seiner bärtigen Bildung ungeachtet als Iacchos (ΙΑΚ + ΟΣ (*sic*))." Nevertheless, in his reproduction of the picture he clearly—and rightly—gives ΙΑΚΧΝΕ. Exactly the same one finds in S. Reinach, *Répertoire des vases peints grecs et étrusques*.⁴ He writes: "Dionysos avec inscription moderne 'Ιακχος'", but he reproduces in the picture: ΙΑΚΧΝΕ. Fürtwängler writes: "darüber steht ΙΑΚΧΟΣ, wovon jedoch nur das folgende antik ist". There follow two mutilated letters in which he recognizes ος and which he completes to Διόνυσος.⁵

I must confess that this is all too much for me. If I myself might venture on an exposition of the facts, I would propose the following:

1. There exist two practically identical lekythoi.⁶

¹ C. H. E. Haspels, *Attic black-figured Lekythoi*, Paris, 1936, 49.

² E. Gerhard, *Auserlesene Griechische Vasenbilder*, I, Berlin, 1840, 195; Pl. LXIX; *idem*, *Gesammelte Akad. Abh.*, Berlin, 1868, II, 367.

³ A. Fürtwängler, *Beschreibung der Vasensammlung im Antiquarium*, Berlin, 1885, no. 1961.

⁴ II, Paris, 1900, 43.

⁵ *CIG*. IV, 7632 gives the names 'Ερμ[ῆς], 'Ιακχ[ος] *sic*; 'Ηρακλῆς.

⁶ Pairs of identical vases do occur in antiquity though they are not very common, as M. F. Jongkees-Vos remarked in *Talanta* I, 1969, 13 no. 2. There also literature.

2. Both have the same inscription over the Dionysos-figure, which reads ΙΑΚΧΝΕ, and decidedly not ΙΑΚΧΟΣ.

3. The inscription of the Berlin vase—together with some other parts of the painting—is suspect.

4. Four specialists have, after careful examination, affirmed the complete authenticity of the Villa Giulia-vase. I think we should accept their judgement.

5. Consequently, if there should be forgery somewhere, parts of the Berlin vase (which for the greater part is genuine itself) must have been copied from the lekythos in the Villa Giulia.

Having arrived at this point, the final question is: what implications does the vase have for our subject: the birth-process of Iacchos? The representation on the Berlin vase has not been explained with certainty. Beazley¹ describes the scene as "Herakles in Olympus". Haspels (l.c.) defines: "Heracles among the deities". Similar descriptions had already been given by Reinach and Furtwängler. It seems advisable indeed to accept this explanation, however vague it may be, and to be cautious as to earlier suggestions of Gerhard (l.c.), who interprets the scene as a love-scene between Heracles and Athena: "Heracles erhebt seine Blume, sein Liebesverhältniss zu Pallas Athenen an zu deuten", and, particularly, as to the theory of Preller,² who considers the scene to be the initiation of Heracles into the Eleusinian mysteries. The latter point of view is plainly refuted by many parallel and comparable pictures presenting Heracles and Athena in the same attitude, sometimes without Dionysos, sometimes in combination with other gods³.

I would, therefore, renounce an attempt to interpret the scene in any greater detail and I restrict myself to the one theme really important to our subject: the combination of Dionysos and the inscription ΙΑΚΧΝΕ. In this connection the following remarks are, I hope, not too adventurous:

¹ o.c. 379 no. 273.

² L. Preller, *Ausgewählte Aufsätze aus dem Gebiete der classischen Altertumswissenschaft*, Berlin, 1864, 293.

³ See e.g.: Gerhard, o.c. LXVIII, Dionysos, Heracles with cither, Athena, Poseidon (?); LXVII, Apollo with cither, Dionysos, Athena, Heracles; LIX, Heracles, Dionysos; XXXVII, Athena with cither, Dionysos; XXXVI, Heracles, Athena, Hermes, Dionysos; XXV, Dionysos, Athena, Apollo, Ariadne (?).

1. The names Hermes and Heracles are inscribed in the nominative. We would expect "Dionysos" over the central figure. We read "Ιακχε instead. Yet, there is not the slightest reason to interpret this form here as a vocative. Indeed, if vocatives occur at all in vase-paintings, they are extremely rare, since Kretschmer in his *Griechischen Vaseninschriften*¹ does not even mention this category in his survey of the various forms of declination. Moreover, if "Ιακχε should have represented the ritual cry or the vocative of the name here, we would expect it, not directly over Dionysos, parallel to the other names on the vase, but near a possible shouter, who—for that matter—does not occur. The conclusion must be that ΙΑΚΧΝΕ, in some way, is meant to denominate the figure over which it is written. The word is, though, neither a vocative nor a nominative, the latter, of course, being precluded on formal grounds. *In function*, however, the term serves as a nominative all the same.

2. If this be right, the theories mentioned above about the origin of Iacchos have now been proved correct. Clearly *ιακχε* is the original form out of which the god *Ἰακχος* was born. Our vase represents an intermediate stage: the painter *wrote* *ιακχε*, taking without modification the ritual shout, but *used* it in the function of a nominative in order to indicate the god Dionysos. The nominative *Ἰακχος*, so it appears, was not yet in existence in his time, and was invented in a later period in order to escape the *impasse* clearly illustrated by our vase.

3. For the same reason, we should not speak of an identification of Dionysos and Iacchos in this case. There *is* no god Iacchos as yet. Though at first sight the representation might tell in favour of Kerényi's theories about an early Iacchos, in fact it refutes them definitely. Where no Iacchos existed, no "alter-ego" of that name could have been created. Exactly the same may be concluded concerning the interpretation of the Mycenaean ivory group, as defended by Wace and Webster. Their opponents, among others Nilsson² and Mylonas,³ were right in rejecting their Iakchos-interpretation.

¹ P. Kretschmer, *Die griechischen Vaseninschriften ihrer Sprache nach untersucht*, Gütersloh, 1894.

² M. P. Nilsson, *The Minoan-Mycenaean Religion*, Lund, 1950, XXIV.

³ G. E. Mylonas, *Eleusis and the Eleusinian Mysteries*, 51 f; *id. Ancient Mycenae. The Capital City of Agamemnon*, Princeton, 1957, 62; *id. Seated and multiple mycenaean Figurines*. in: *Aegean and the Near-East. Studies*

Not only did Iakchos not exist before the fifth century, but not even the cry *ἰακχε* was connected particularly with a child-god, as our vase clearly shows. On the other hand, one further part of the general theories has received support now. The vase supports the view that the birth of Iacchos took place in the 5th century, at any rate after \pm 500 B.C.

4. However, another surmise stands in need of a considerable correction. As we have seen, the general view is that first the *ἰακχε*-cry developed into a god *Ἰακχος* and that only after that the god *Ἰακχος* was gradually identified with Dionysos, though elsewhere he might retain his independence. The lekythos makes a fundamental modification necessary. The connection with Dionysos existed already before the personification of the god Iacchos and in a period much earlier than has generally been supposed so far, *viz.* before \pm 500 B.C.

5. This leads, I think, to an important consequence. As far as we know, *ἰακχε* functioned as a cry only in the procession of mysts on their way to Eleusis, probably also in the Eleusinian mysteries themselves. When we now find that as early as 500 B.C. the form *Ἰακχε* is used to denote the god Dionysos, the unavoidable inference is that in this period Dionysos in some way must have been connected with Eleusis. I put this in the vaguest terms possible, since I do not wish to contend that Dionysos of old belonged to the Eleusinian circle, nor that he had an essential place in the mysteries. Some relation, however, between the god and Eleusis must have existed in the last quarter of the sixth century and I venture to propose a possible way in which this relation came into being.

6. The year 510 saw the end of the reign of the Peisistratides. Peisistratos is known for his economic and social measures, but just as much for his religious policy.¹ Under his tyranny, the Panathenaea, founded by the archon Hippokleides (566/565) came

presented to Hetty Goldman, 120. Cf. G. von Lücken, *Forsch. und Fortschr.* 36, 1962, 243 ff.

¹ Short accounts of Peisistratos' religious policy can be found in: Nilsson, *GGR* I², 720 ff; H. Berve, *Die Tyrannis bei den Griechen*, Munich, 1967, 49, 60 f; Cl. Mossé, *La tyrannie dans la Grèce antique*, Paris, 1969, 71/72; Mary White (*Phoenix* 1955, 17) promises a study of Peisistratid cults and festivals. Cf. further: E. Pottier, *Catalogue des vases antiques du Louvre*, III², Paris, 1928, 603 f; Pleket, *Talanta* I, 1969, 55; F. Schachermeyr, *RE*, 19, 1937, 186 f.

to flourish. They showed a clearly political motive: the unification of Attica under the sway of the goddess Athena (and of her protégé Peisistratos). The tyrant also instituted the great Dionysia and the tragedy connected with them. Deubner has plausibly suggested that Dionysos Eleuthereus, with whom the cult and the tragedy were connected, was for the first time introduced by Peisistratos.¹ At any rate, Peisistratos propagated a definitely "Dionysiac" policy, which is generally explained by his wish to win the lower classes and particularly the peasant population. The increasing number of Dionysiac scenes on Athenian vases after \pm 540 B.C. testifies to this.² On the other hand we know that Peisistratos was keenly interested in the Eleusinian mysteries. He built a new telesterion in Eleusis and in Athens Demeter was endowed with a temple on the agora.³ I suggest that a combination of these elements, the central importance of Dionysos and the new interest in the Eleusinian mysteries during the reign of Peisistratos, may have been the *impetus* that brought Dionysos and the cry *ἰακχε* together. This is not more than a hypothesis, of course. The date of our lekythos, however, tells in favour of it.

These, then, are some conclusions the lekythos allows us to draw. However, *if* any uncertainty about the authenticity of vase or paintings should remain from now on the fight should be fought by the archaeologists and I gladly leave the lists.⁴

¹ *Attische Feste*, 139. ² See: Talanta 1, 1969, 55.

³ Mylonas, o.c. 77 ff; Schachermeyr, o.c. 188 f; F. Noack, *Eleusis, die baugeschichtliche Entwicklung des Heiligtums*, 1927, 48 ff.

⁴ During a discussion on this subject Drs. F. T. van Straten drew my attention to the interesting fragment of an amphora from Locri in the museum of Reggio, no. 4001, dating from the third quarter of the 6th century (Orsi, *Bollettino d'arte*, 3, 1909, 474; Procopio, *Arch. CI.* 4, 1952, 155 ff; Beazley, *ABV*, 147; Nilsson, *GGR I*², 849; H. Metzger, *Recherches sur l'imagerie athénienne*, Paris, 1965, 8 f). It shows an Eleusinian scene with Triptolemos, Athena, Heracles and a bearded figure with the inscription "Ploutodotas". The latter has been explained by Nilsson as a variant of Ploutos, but it does seem remarkable that in later times the name occurs as an epithet of Iacchos (*vide supra* p. 25). Concerning the process of personification of Iacchos the following possibilities can now be distinguished: 1. Iacchos becomes an independent deity, 2. he is identified with Dionysos, 3. he is amalgamated with one of the lesser personalities of Eleusis such as Ploutodotas or Archegetes (*vide supra* p. 28 n. 3). All these possibilities were realized at one time or another, as we have seen. Our lekythos illustrates the oldest experiment known so far, appearing to be the connection of *Iakche* with Dionysos.