

Redefining Dionysos

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Contents

Acknowledgements — V

Introduction — 1

Jan N. Bremmer

Walter F. Otto's *Dionysos* (1933) — 4

Alberto Bernabé

Dionysos in the Mycenaean World — 23

Marco Antonio Santamaría

The Term βάκχος and Dionysos Βάκχιος — 38

Emilio Suárez de la Torre

Apollo and Dionysos: Intersections — 58

Claude Calame

‘Rien pour Dionysos?’ Le dithyrambe comme forme poétique entre Apollon et Dionysos — 82

Miriam Valdés Guía

Redefining Dionysos in Athens from the Written Sources: The Lenaia, Iacchos and Attic Women — 100

Christopher A. Faraone

Gender Differentiation and Role Models in the Worship of Dionysos: The Thracian and Thessalian Pattern — 120

Marisa Tortorelli Ghidini

Dionysos versus Orpheus? — 144

Silvia Porres Caballero

Maenadic Ecstasy in Greece: Fact or Fiction? — 159

Zoa Alonso Fernández

Maenadic Ecstasy in Rome: Fact or Fiction? — 185

Andrea Debiasi

Dioniso e i cani di Atteone in Eumelo di Corinto (Una nuova ipotesi su *P. Oxy.* xxx 2509 e *Apollod.* 3.4.4) — 200

Miguel Herrero de Jáuregui

Dionysos in the *Homeric Hymns*: the Olympian Portrait of the God — 235

Raquel Martín Hernández

Herodotus' Egyptian Dionysos. A Comparative Perspective — 250

Paola Corrente

Dushara and Allāt alias Dionysos and Aphrodite in Herodotus 3.8 — 261

Ana Isabel Jiménez San Cristóbal

The Sophoclean Dionysos — 272

Nina Schwartz

Under the Spell of the Dionysian: Some Meta-tragic Aspects of the *Xenos* Attributes in Euripides' *Bacchae* — 301

Sara Macías Otero

The Image of Dionysos in Euripides' *Bacchae*: The God and his Epiphanies — 329

M. Carmen Encinas Reguero

The Names of Dionysos in Euripides' *Bacchae* and the Rhetorical Language of Teiresias — 349

Anton Bierl

Dionysos in Old Comedy. Staging of Experiments on Myth and Cult — 366

Francesc Casadesús Bordoy

Dionysian Enthusiasm in Plato — 386

Kerasia A. Stratiki

Les 'Dionysoi' de Patras: Le mythe et le culte de Dionysos dans la *Periégèse* de Pausanias — 401

Radcliffe G. Edmonds III

Dionysos in Egypt? Epaphian Dionysos in the *Orphic Hymns* — 415

Giulia Sfameni Gasparro

Dioniso tra polinomia ed enoteismo: il caso degli *Inni Orfici* — 433

Mercedes López Salvá

Dionysos and Dionysism in the *Third Book of Maccabees* — 452

David Hernández de la Fuente

**Parallels between Dionysos and Christ in Late Antiquity:
Miraculous Healings in Nonnus' *Dionysiaca* — 464**

Paloma Cabrera

The Gifts of Dionysos — 488

Fátima Díez-Platas

The Symposiast Dionysos: A God like Ourselves — 504

Patricia Meilán Jácome

**Bacchus and Felines in Roman Iconography: Issues of Gender and
Species — 526**

Stéphanie Wyler

**An Augustan Trend towards Dionysos: Around the 'Auditorium of
Maecenas' — 541**

Albert Henrichs

Dionysos: One or Many? — 554

Contributors — 583

Analytic Index — 586

Index Fontium — 614

Plates — I

Introduction

Dionysos defies limits and frees himself from any attempts at imprisonment. That ability to blur all sorts of boundaries is one of the most prominent features of the god, recognized by ancients and moderns alike. So it may sound risky to try to define, let alone redefine, Dionysos. However, in doing so the authors of this volume follow a tradition as old as the god himself: no boundaries can be collapsed unless they are previously constructed. What would Dionysos do without chains to break, conventions to transgress, or oppositions to unite?

In this spirit of continuing, and not closing, the modern investigation of the multiform dimensions of this ancient god, a large group of senior and less senior scholars devoted to Dionysiac studies gathered at a conference held in February 2010 in Universidad Complutense de Madrid. Many papers were delivered in several languages, and Spanish was declared by most a necessary condition for initiation in the Bacchic mysteries of the 21st century. The academic *koine* still being English, however, the Spanish papers gathered in this volume resulting from the conference have been translated to make its results more generally accessible. Not all oral papers became written ones, and one (Valdés) could not be delivered orally at the conference for personal reasons, but has been included in the volume. However, we believe the final result reflects faithfully the spirit of the conference: to combine the analysis of specific instances of particular dimensions of the god in cult, myth, literature and iconography, with general and transversal visions of the god in antiquity and modern times. Only from the combination of different perspectives can the multidimensional personality of Dionysos become clarified, although, inevitably, some areas will remain in darkness.

The contributions to this book reflect this combination of varied approaches. Even a partial definition of the god can only be attempted by narrowing down a particular perspective and pursuing it in depth. One possibility is the search for some or all the dimensions of Dionysos in an ancient or modern author or in a clearly delimited corpus of sources. Another option is the analysis of a very specific topic in all, or the most relevant, ancient sources: e. g. the epithets and names of Dionysos; specific manifestations of his cult like maenadism or epiphany; and issues that reappear as central in ancient and modern definitions of the god, like his relations to other gods or the perennial question of his multiplicity and unity. The ordering of the papers aims to facilitate the reader's task in connecting one chapter to another, although it is clear that close connexions can readily be found between distant papers.

In beginning with Bremmer's evaluation of Walter F. Otto's definition of the god due homage is paid to the most successful and influential modern attempt to define the 'essence' of the god.

The focus then shifts to studies on Dionysiac cult: Bernabé analyses the earliest evidence from the Mycenaean tablets, which confirmed Otto's intuition that Dionysos was not a late arrival to the Greek pantheon. Santamaría studies the distribution in ancient texts of the name *βάκχος* and the adjectives *βάκχιος* and *βακχεῖος* designating the god and also his followers. The classical issue of the intersections between Apollo and Dionysos is reappraised by Suárez de la Torre, who focuses on Delphi, Orphism, and Athens, and then by Calame, who looks at the dithyramb as a genre situated between the realms of both gods. Regional Dionysiac cults are studied by Valdés (Attica) and by Faraone (Thessaly and Thrace), with special attention to gender and salvation. The links of the god to Orpheus and Orphism are tackled by Tortorelli, and maenadism, both in myth and in cult, is analysed by Porres for the Greek world and by Alonso for the Roman.

The next part of the book turns back again to archaic times, looking at the (partial or total) portrait of Dionysos in specific authors: Debiasi in Eumelus, Herrero de Jáuregui in the *Homeric Hymns*, Martín and Corrente in Herodotus, Jiménez San Cristóbal in Sophocles, and Bierl in comedy. There are three studies on the *Bacchae* by Schwartz, Macías and Encinas, which focus on very specific issues as is to be expected of the most important ancient depiction of the god. The chapters on authors of the classical period close with Casadesús' study of Plato's interpretation of Dionysiac possession. After that there is a leap of several centuries to Imperial times: Stratiki focuses on Pausanias' description of the cult of Dionysos in Patras; the *Orphic Hymns* are studied by Edmonds, who focuses on the epithet *Epaphios* in two hymns, and by Sfameni Gasparro, who analyses the conflicting tendencies to give Dionysos multiple names and at the same time an all-encompassing personality. The papers focusing on specific written sources close with two chapters which tackle, respectively, convergences with Judaism and with Christianity: López Salvá studies the presence of Dionysiac cult in the book of the Maccabees, and Hernández de la Fuente the healing miracles in Nonnus' *Dionysiaca*.

Iconography has a language of its own, and therefore the three papers focusing on iconographical sources have been put together: Cabrera analyses Apulian vases, while Díez-Platas studies the images of the god in connexion with the symposium. Wyler's paper concentrates on the Dionysiac paintings preserved in the so-called *Auditorium of Maecenas* in Rome.

The book closes with Henrichs' paper on the unity and multiplicity of Dionysos, for this topic encompasses many of the issues considered along the book, including the (im)possibility of completely defining the god in ancient and modern times.

It will be clear from this brief sketch that the book does not aim to cover all, or even most, aspects of Dionysos. Definition simply facilitates better understand-

ing of a topic, and new sources and approaches, as well as criticism of previous theories, force a constant process of redefinition that can never be completed. There are of course many other possible ways of shedding light on an ancient god. One year earlier than the meeting in Madrid, another conference was held in Berlin which addressed the question of how and whether Dionysos was different from other gods. The papers have been edited in 2011 by Renate Schlesier, and some scholars contribute to both volumes. Most papers in this volume were written before the Berlin one was published, so they cannot take into account its important contributions, but fortunately, a mere shifting of the *Fragestellung* makes the results very different in content.

To sum up: has the god been redefined? The result cannot be a new synthesis that replaces Otto's, and anybody who hopes for that will be soon disappointed. But we should not expect the 21st century Dionysos to deliver snappy formulations for dictionaries. His appearance will always be mysterious, his forms shifting, and his manifestations contradictory. And above all, he belongs to a world that does not exist any more and which is irremediably other to us. However, we should not give up hope of understanding Dionysos, even through partial glimpses of what he sometimes was, a few certainties about what he was not, and even some intuitions about what he might have been. It is perhaps fitting to close this introduction with the words from the *exodos* of the *Bacchae*:

Many are the forms of the deities
and the gods accomplish many things unexpectedly.
That which was envisioned is not accomplished
but the god found a way for the unenvisioned.
Such has been the result here.

Jan N. Bremmer

Walter F. Otto's *Dionysos* (1933)

The first modern, book-length study of the god Dionysos, Walter F. Otto's *Dionysos. Mythos und Kultus* of that fateful year 1933, is not a very big book.¹ Its actual text contains less than 200 pages, of which a quarter is taken up by a discussion of myth and ritual. Yet its pioneering character and its modern influence warrant a fresh look at this, Otto's *Meisterwerk*.² The book was Otto's last, more or less traditional scholarly work before he was exiled to Königsberg in 1934 for political reasons.³ I will first look at what Otto has to say about myth and ritual in connection with Dionysos (§ 1). I will then survey the rest of the book and concentrate on a few questions, which have not received sufficient attention in recent times, namely the nature of Semele and the festival of the Agrionia (§ 2). I will conclude by asking if Otto's book can still be considered a valuable contribution to the study of Dionysos (§ 3).

1 Myth and Ritual

Although Otto's first chapter is called 'Mythos und Kultus,' it actually offers much more than a discussion of these two well-known concepts. Otto starts by claiming that the study of ancient Greek religion wavers between two opposing schools, the anthropological and philological ones. The first school compares the beliefs and practices of 'primitives' and outlying European peasants. It tries to go back to the earliest stages of a divinity and looks for its primeval uses, an approach that has given us terms like *Vegetationsgott*, 'fertility god' (11).⁴ The other school, represented by Wilamowitz, whose book on Greek religion had appeared only two years earlier,⁵ is not much better and lets the gods develop from rather simple functions, such as Hermes from being a protector. Not unreasonably, Otto fulminates against an all too historicising approach that leaves us only rather *blutleere Schemen* (15). Yet he does not help us any further by claiming that we need to look for an *Offenbarung des Göttlichen* (16), an idea that he had developed in his earlier

1 Otto 1933 (1938²). Note that the next full-length study, Jeanmaire 1951, almost totally neglects Otto and spells his name wrongly in the index.

2 Cancik 1998, 165–186.

3 On Otto see Lossau 1994; Stavru 2005² (with excellent bibliography).

4 For such German coinages as *Vegetationsgott*, *Seegott*, etc., see Graf 2009, 36–43.

5 Wilamowitz-Moellendorf 1931–1932.

Die Götter Griechenlands of 1929.⁶ It is one of the paradoxes of Otto's religious development that he could not give up Christian terminology, even though he had renounced the Christian faith.⁷

Having thus put the two dominant schools into their places, Otto goes on to note that they both agree in stating that only cult genuinely attests religious belief (16); moreover, according to them, cultic acts aim at utilitarian purposes (17). Otto strongly opposes that approach and claims that man's first reaction was rather *Entzückung, Andacht, Huldigung und Preis*. That is why we also have to take into account what myth tells about the gods (18). From a contemporary point of view, it is highly interesting to note that Otto, who had followed Usener's lectures in Bonn,⁸ took myth very seriously. He noted that in the cult of Dionysos, but also in that of other gods, myths often reflected rituals (19). But whereas it is often naively assumed that rituals reflect myths, the *neuere Wissenschaft* explains myth from ritual, an idea that Otto seems to accept in the case of aetiological myths (20). In the end, though he rejects a dependency of myth on ritual or ritual on myth (20). But what is his alternative?

Otto first discusses what *Kultus* means according to him.⁹ The answer is a highly Romantic, imaginative idea of cult as an act that is motivated by *die Berührung mit dem Göttlichen* – an idea that is completely unsupported by any evidence. Originally, cultic acts were not utilitarian, but their character was determined by the fact that their first performers *das Wünschenswerteste – die Gottesnähe – besaßen* (35). *Mythos* only started to originate when *Kultus* had lost its freshness (24), and it is also more informative as the forms of the cult are often less known to us; in fact, it is the most important aspect of Greek religion (24–25). Yet it seems as if Otto finds it easier to discuss cults, as he notes that *Kultus* attests *der Erscheinung des Göttlichen* (29) and *immer steht am Anfang der Gott* (31). It looks as if *Das Urphänomen des Mythos* exists, for Otto, between *die Erscheinung der Gottheit* and the appearance of culture and society (32).

Sometimes, Otto seems to identify cult and myth, as when he notes in his discussion of the scapegoat ritual: *Ihr Mythos war die kultische Handlung selbst* (40); both, in fact, *sind aus demselben Geiste geboren* (44). But he also notes that many cultic acts of the *Dionysische Religion* are reflections of *eines übermenschlichen Seins und Geschehens* (43), which seems to prioritise myth. In any case, Otto stresses that we cannot separate myth from cult, and thus comes close to a position defended, in a well-known article, by Henk Versnel, who also noted the

⁶ Otto 1929, 163–164, 231, cf. Cancik 1998, 139–163.

⁷ Otto 1923 and Otto 1929, 79, 233.

⁸ For Usener's influence on Otto see Wessels 2003, 189–225.

⁹ For this under-researched term see Bredholt Christensen 2009, 13–27.

similarity, to some extent, with Otto's position.¹⁰ Even if he was right for the wrong reasons, Otto did see the close connection of myth and ritual in ancient Greece much more clearly than many of his contemporaries.

2 Dionysos' Biography

Having looked at myth and ritual, as we would say today (but Otto also uses Usener's terminology of *Heilige Handlung* where we would say 'ritual'),¹¹ albeit in a rather unusual manner, Otto proceeded with a discussion of Dionysos along rather traditional lines. Otto rightly observes that Homer knows the cult and mythology of Dionysos well, from which he concludes that he must have been indigenous at least at the end of the second millennium (56), a date confirmed by the discovery of Dionysos' name in the Linear-B tablets. We should note the date proposed by Otto, as Cancik reproached him for never mentioning a date,¹² which is clearly not true. As regarding Dionysos' place of origin, Otto rightly remained sceptical of the possibility of determining a precise place and rightly rejected the current proposals of Thracia and Asia Minor as unconvincing (60–62).

Otto's subsequent discussion of Semele (62–70) is neglected in recent discussions, just as is Semele herself. Otto does not figure in the study of heroine cult by Larson, who has dedicated some unsatisfactory pages to her, nor does Semele even figure in the index of Seaford's recent book on Dionysos.¹³ What do we actually know about Semele?¹⁴

Semele is already mentioned by Homer as the Theban mother of Dionysos, who is a 'joy for mortals' (*Il.* 14.323–325), in a series of Zeus' girl friends, divine and mortal, and her motherhood is also mentioned by Eumelos (fr. 11 Bernabé = *Europa* fr. 1 Davies) and Tyrtaeus (20.2). Thebes clearly belongs to the oldest tradition, even though many other places claimed to be the birthplace of the god, such as Naxos, Kos and Ikaros, in the later seventh-century *Homeric Hymn to Dionysos* (A 2–3 West).¹⁵ Yet none of these mentions Dionysos' mother, whom we also find in Hesiod(?) (fr. 162.6 Most), Bacchylides (19.49–50) and Pindar (fr. 75.19 Maehler). She clearly was still a girl when Zeus approached her, as Euripides

¹⁰ Versnel 1993, 15–88 at 48 n. 87. I critically discuss this position in Bremmer 2005 and 2010, both to be added to Parker 2011, 22–23, 213.

¹¹ Otto 1933 (1938²), 74, 81; for Usener's terminology see Bremmer 2011.

¹² Cancik 1998, 145

¹³ Larson 1995, 93–96; Seaford 2006.

¹⁴ For a full bibliography see Kossatz-Deissmann 1994, 718–26 and Wilson 2009, 448–450.

¹⁵ West 2003, 7.

(*Ba.* 2) calls her Κάδμου Κόρη, 'daughter of Kadmos.' As such, she was one of four sisters, whose names are already mentioned by Hesiod (*Th.* 976),¹⁶ and the same number occurs in Pindar (*P.* 3.98–99). Of the names of these sisters – Semele, Ino, Agaue and Autonoe – the last three are all connected with the sea, Ino being a marine goddess,¹⁷ and Agaue and Autonoe being names of Nereids (West *ad loc.*). This seems to suggest that the names have been invented relatively recently, and that Semele does not originally belong to this group. With his attention to myth and ritual, Otto (64) notes that Semele is treated differently from the other three sisters in Pindar (*P.* 3.97–99) and illuminatingly connects the triad of sisters with the threefold organisation of the maenadic thiasoi elsewhere in Greek cult, to start with in Euripides' *Bacchae* (680).¹⁸ The fact that there are three Proitids and three Minyads (below) suggests that this maenadic organisation went back well into pre-Archaic times. In Thebes, Semele may well have played an important role in such maenadic thiasoi, as Euripides (*Ph.* 1754–1757) lets Antigone mention that she dressed in the 'Kadmeian *nebris*' and 'led upon the mountains the sacred thiasos of Semele in dancing.'

According to Otto (67–68), Semele is called Thyone to denote her immortal aspect, but he clearly did not properly collect and evaluate the relevant evidence; moreover, he also overlooked the late nature of our sources in this respect. We find the name Thyone first in Sappho (17.9–10 Voigt), who calls Dionysos Thyone's son. As his parents are Zeus and Hera, Sappho clearly has the same Lesbian divine triad in mind as Alcaeus (129.5–8 Voigt), who mentions Zeus, Hera and Dionysos. The fact that Zeus and Hera already have a son, Drimios (PY Tn 316.8–9), in Mycenaean times, suggests continuity, even though Drimios is no longer attested in the first millennium. The name Thyone for Dionysos' mother also occurs in the somewhat later ending of the *Homeric Hymn to Dionysos* (D 12 West), was probably mentioned in Aeschylus' *Semele or the Watercarriers*,¹⁹ is certainly used by Pindar (*P.* 3.99), occurs on two late fifth-century Attic vases,²⁰ and is used instead of Semele by Philodamos (I.7 Furley-Bremer) in the middle of the fourth century. Finally, Dionysos was worshipped as Thyonidas on Rhodes (Hsch. s.v. Θυωνίδα), as Thyonais he is mentioned by Oppian (C. 1.27, 4.285), and Ovid (*Met.* 4.13) even calls him Thyoneus.

¹⁶ Note also Hyg. *Fab.* 79.1: Semele, Ino, Agaue and Autonoe.

¹⁷ Ino is already daughter of Kadmos in *Od.* 5.333 and Hes. *Th.* 937. She is a nurse of Dionysos since Pherecydes *FGrHist* 3 F 90 = Fowler F 90cd; Apollod. 3.4.3; Kühr 2006, 280–281.

¹⁸ But note also [Theoc.] 26.2; Prop. 3.17.24; *I. Magnesia* 215 = Sokolowski, *LSAM*, 48 = Jaccottet 2003, 2.146.

¹⁹ See Radt *ad loc.* (p. 355).

²⁰ Kossatz-Deissmann 1994, nn. 28–29.

However, Panyassis (fr. 5 Davies = fr. 8 Bernabé) and Pherecydes (F 90d Fowler), undoubtedly early and good sources, employ Thyone as the name for Dionysos' nurse; moreover, on several Attic vases a maenad is called Thyone.²¹ The name, then, seems to have originated as an independent tradition in the eastern Aegean. It can hardly be separated from the Thyiades, a different name of the maenads,²² and the rather rare month name Thyios with its festival Thyia, which is attested in Elis (Paus. 6.26.1–2) and Thessaly.²³ It is perhaps not surprising that later sources used the two names to differentiate between Semele and Thyone and called her Thyone after her death and ascension from the underworld into heaven.²⁴ The ascension itself was already attested on Attic vases from about 520 BCE onwards,²⁵ and the tradition of Dionysos' *katabasis* into the underworld to rescue his mother was treated in a tragedy of Iophon (*TGrF* 22 F 3). Did the theme perhaps develop in Bacchic mysteries?²⁶

We find the same alternation of a name between Dionysos' mother and his nurse elsewhere in the mythological tradition. Euripides (fr. 177 Kannicht; note also *TrGF* Adesp. 204) called Dionysos' mother Dione but that was also the name of one of Dionysos' nurses according to Pherecydes (F 90b Fowler).²⁷ As Dione survived in outlying Dodona as Zeus' wife, just as did Diwia in outlying Pamphylia,²⁸ she seems to have been relatively ancient, even though arguments claiming an Indo-European existence are somewhat tenuous.²⁹ Comparing all these data, we can conclude that the name of Dionysos' mother was not fixed, even though Semele proved to be the most popular name. The variety is once again an interesting illustration of the fact that in Greek mythology the names of women

²¹ Kossatz-Deissmann 1991, 191.

²² Thy(i)ades: Alcm. fr. 63.1 Davies; S. *Ant.* 1151; Timotheus, fr. 778b Hordern; Lyc. 143, 505; Cat. 64.391; Verg. *Aen.* 4.302 (with Pease *ad loc.*); Hor. *C.* 2.19.9, 3.15.10 (with Nisbet and Rudd); Prop. 3.18.14 (with Fedeli); Plin. *HN* 36.23.3: *Maenades et quas Thyidas vocant*; Statius *Theb.* 12.792; Val. Flac. 8.447; Plu. *Aet. Rom. et Gr.* 293F, *De Is. et Os.* 364E, cf. Sourvinou-Inwood 2005, 211–213; Paus. 10.6.4; Serv. *Aen.* 4.302: *thyias Baccha*; Eust. in *Il.* 1.342 (= I p. 179.5).

²³ Trümper 1997, 199–200, 225.

²⁴ D. S. 4.25.4; Charax *FGrHist* 103 F 14; Apollod. 3.5.3; Hsch. Suda s.v. Θυώνη.

²⁵ Kossatz-Deissmann 1994 nn. 19–26; Wilson 2009, add. 3.

²⁶ D. S. 4.25.4; Hyg. *Fab.* 251, *Astr.* 2.5 (Argive historians as source); Plu. *Quaest. Rom. et Gr.* 293D (Delphi as surmised by Plutarch: possible but not necessarily convincing); Apollod. 3.5.3; Paus. 2.31.5 (Troizen), 2.37.5 (Lerna) For Semele's *anodos*, see Moret 1993, 293–351; Kossatz-Deissmann 1994, nn. 19–26; Wilson 2009, add. 4; Parker 2011, 181–182.

²⁷ Note that in fr. 90b Valckenaer wanted to emend Διώνη in Θυώνη, whereas in fr. 90d Carl Robert wanted to emend *Thyene* into *Dione*.

²⁸ Brixhe 2002, 54–55 (Pamphylia); Rougemont 2005, 337 n. 63.

²⁹ Dunkel 1988–1990 claims an Indo-European ancestry for Dione, but note the objections of West 2007, 192.

were much more fluid than those of men, even those of women whom we would have thought to be of prime importance.³⁰

Semele's fatal love for Zeus is not mentioned before the fifth century, as the second ending of the *Homeric Hymn to Dionysos* seems to be somewhat later than the first ending.³¹ Later authors had much to tell about the way Semele was deceived by Hera, who transformed herself into Semele's nurse Beroe, but none is earlier than the first century BCE.³² This seems to point to a motif from the Hellenistic era rather than from the classical period. In any case, all agree that Semele perished through the lightning of Zeus, but that Dionysos was saved. There are a few Greek iconographic representations of her death, starting around 390 BCE, but in Roman times Semele's death became a popular theme in art.³³

The place where Semele was supposed to have met Zeus and her death was treated as an ἄβατον, called a σηκός and remembered as her grave and her θάλαμος, 'bridal room'.³⁴ This spot was located on the Theban acropolis. On the other hand, according to Pausanias the tomb of Semele was found in the Lower Town near the Proetid Gate, a location that is confirmed by a passage from Hyginus that has been overlooked in the commentaries.³⁵ Moreover, there also was a σηκός ἄβατος, which was considered as her tomb, on Mount Kithairon, where the already mentioned 'thiasos of Semele' performed their maenadic dances.³⁶ Traditionally, the qualification as ἄβατον points to a more than normal status for the person killed by lightning, and it was not different in the case of Semele. Hesiod already mentions her divine status, and this is confirmed by a series of later authors.³⁷ The location of Semele's place of death on the acropolis was hardly chance. Not only was the acropolis the most important place of Thebes, but its inhabitants could also see there the remains of a Mycenaean palace that had been destroyed by a big fire.³⁸ It was this ruin with its ashes, which was still visible in Pausanias' time (9.12.3–4), that must have given rise to

³⁰ For this phenomenon see Bremmer 1988², 45.

³¹ West 2003, 31.

³² D. S. 3.63.3–4, 4.2.2–3; Ov. *Met.* 3.256–315; Hyg. *Fab.* 167, 179; Apollod. 3.4.3.

³³ Kossatz-Deissmann 1994, nn. 6–17 and Wilson 2009, add. 3.

³⁴ Ἄβατον: E. *Ba.* 10; Aristid. *Or.* 25.2; Paus. 9.12.3, cf. Parker 1983, 167 note 132. Σηκός: *FD* III.1.351, 17, 28 and p. 200 = *SEG* 19.379. Grave: E. *Ba.* 596–600. Θάλαμος: Statius *Theb.* 7.602; Paus. 9.12.3.

³⁵ Hyg. *Fab.* 9.1 *Semelae bustum*; Paus. 9.16.7; for the location, Symeonoglou 1985, 190.

³⁶ E. *Ph.* 1751–56 with scholiast *ad loc.*

³⁷ Hes. *Th.* 942; Pi. *O.* 2.25, *P.* 11.1; D. S. 5.52; Charax *FGrHist* 103 F 14; Ach. Tat. 2.37.4; Aristid. 41.3; Philostr. *Iun. Im.* 1.14.

³⁸ Symeonoglou 1985, 57, 137–8, 186; Kühr 2006, 220–222.

the myth of Zeus' lightning: an interesting example how a topographical feature can give rise to a specific motif in myth.³⁹

Despite Otto's rejection (66), Semele's name is generally accepted as being of Thracian origin and meaning 'Earth,' a meaning that was already surmised by the great Apollodorus (*FGrHist* 244 F). She is most likely an old goddess, who must be related to the Indo-European Plataia, 'Broad earth,' the eponymous nymph of Boeotian Plataiai and a consort of Zeus (Paus. 9.3.1).⁴⁰ Apparently, the same goddess had been imported by small groups of invading Indo-Europeans, but in the course of time the name and the status of the goddess had become differentiated. In any case, the evidence we have, however debated sometimes, clearly points into a different direction than Otto's insistence on Semele being a purely human girl (67). Walter Burkert, who, strangely enough, discusses Dionysos twice in his history of Greek religion, situates the death of Semele in the maenadic complex, but that is hardly persuasive.⁴¹ I would rather stress that Dionysos' human birth is not really human because of the lightning that killed his mother, which turned her into a goddess. His birth suggests something of the ambivalent nature of Dionysos between Olympos and Thebes, order and disorder, nature and culture. In this respect Otto is perhaps not that far from the mark when he notes that the god *also schon durch seine Abkunft ein Angehöriger zweier Reiche war* (70).

After Semele, Otto proceeds to discuss the myths of Dionysos' epiphany. One must immediately grant him that in this respect he was ahead of his time, as he rejected the idea that the myths of Dionysos' arrival reflected a historical truth (72), as Welcker and Rohde had argued before him and Nilsson still maintained after him.⁴² According to Otto, the myths reflected the power of the god, which humans could not easily accept. Cult and myth thus reflected the same nature of the god (71–75). The arrival was imagined in all kinds of ways, which Otto persuasively analyses in a kind of structural approach *avant la lettre*; especially the role of noise as breaking normality is interestingly elaborated (86–88). The climax (a somewhat dubious pun in this respect) of his arrivals was the wedding of the god with the wife of the Athenian ἄρχων βασιλεύς, where Otto's reticence (79–81) is much more persuasive than Burkert's explicit mention of sex.⁴³ Finally, Otto sees the mask as a symbol of the arrival and presence of Dionysos, and the

³⁹ See also Schachter 1981, 187–188.

⁴⁰ R. Janko on *Il.* 14.323–325; West 2007, 175, 182.

⁴¹ Burkert 1985, 161–167, 222–225 at 165 (= 2011a, 254).

⁴² Nilsson 1967³, 564–568.

⁴³ Burkert 1983, 233. Otto has been overlooked in the most recent discussion: Parker 2005, 303–305.

language of his analysis – *Die letzten Geheimnisse des Daseins und Nichtseins starren den Menschen mit ungeheuren Augen an* – is impressive, but too Romantic and philosophical to be persuasive to this non-German author (81–85).

What does all this emotion and noise announce? Otto (89–95) now combines a number of aspects of Dionysiac myth and ritual, a way of proceeding that we find repeated in Versnel's excellent discussion of the *Bacchae*.⁴⁴ Yet it also seems to me that he combines different aspects that should be kept separate. On the one hand, there is the appearance of milk, honey and wine that shows that the god has manifested himself.⁴⁵ These are not the primordial gifts that Dionysos has bestowed on humanity, as Versnel claims⁴⁶ – as Dionysos did not give milk or water to mankind – but the most valuable fluids for mankind. Their appearance is a typical product of the mythical imagination, even if later on transposed into cult, at least to some extent, as we do not find Dionysiac wells of milk or water.⁴⁷ On the other hand, the violence of the maenads is also a mythical motif, but this is caused by their ecstasy and the probably concomitant lack of pain of the maenads during their ecstatic dances in the winter;⁴⁸ in other words, this is a motif that originated in ritual, and the two should not be confused.

Yet, claims Otto (96), the splendour of the wonderful gifts is suddenly overcast by a profound darkness, which is expressed in all kinds of ritual acts. Otto (96–112) now collects each and every Dionysiac myth and ritual where murder, cannibalism, violence or cruelty is attested, which are all categorised as madness.⁴⁹ Moreover, and not wrongly, Otto connects the *diasparagmos* by the women with the fate of the god suffered from the hands of the Titans (100). As before, Otto stresses the oppositions within the persona of Dionysos, as he is both the nurturing and enchanting god as well as the 'eater of raw flesh' and 'render of men.'⁵⁰ According to Otto, death is an important feature of the latter side of the god, and the expression 'raw eating' can be found *nur bei den Ungeheuern der Totenwelt* (106). This is of course not true,⁵¹ as the epithet is already used by Homer (*Il.* 11.454, 24.82) for birds and fishes, and by Aeschylus

⁴⁴ Versnel 1990, 165–167.

⁴⁵ E. *Hyps.* fr. 758a Kannicht (wine, milk, honey); see also E. *Ba.* 142–143 (milk, wine, honey), 704–711 (water, wine, milk, honey); Pl. *Io* 534a (milk and honey), cf. Usener 1913, 398–417; Nisbet and Hubbard on Hor. *C.* 2.19.10; Graf 1980, 209–221.

⁴⁶ Versnel 1990, 167.

⁴⁷ Kany 1988, 5–23; Sourvinou-Inwood 2005, 152–155; Parker 2011, 183.

⁴⁸ Bremmer 1984, 272 and 2006, 40.

⁴⁹ This is stressed by Cancik 1998, 177 note 60.

⁵⁰ For Dionysos as 'Raw Eater,' see most recently Parker 2011, 165–167.

⁵¹ Otto is too quickly followed by Nisbet and Hubbard on Hor. *C.* 2.29.29.

(A. 827) for the lion. Similarly unconvincing is his connection of Dionysos with the Erinyes because both share the epithet *melanaigis*,⁵² and his comparison of Euripides' expression 'hellish Bacchants' in the *Hecuba* (1119). Admittedly, Dionysos is connected to Persephone by the Orphics,⁵³ but that connection should not be generalised to Greek religion *tout court*. Even the connection of Dionysiac Greek festivals with the dead is problematic, although the famous conundrum Kares/Keres of the Anthesteria is rather peremptorily dismissed by Robert Parker,⁵⁴ and the interpretation of the Agriania in Argos as Nekysia is attested only in Hesychius (α 788), where it seems to be a later interpretation of the commemoration of Iphinoe, as we will see shortly. The only certain connection between Dionysos and death seems to be found on funerary black-figure lekythoi, but even here the god disappears with the arrival of red-figure.⁵⁵

The Agrionia are a central element of Otto's argument (110–112), and it is therefore not surprising that Hubert Cancik in his rather critical discussion of Otto's *Dionysos* directed his arrows against Otto's analysis of this festival. Cancik argues not only that Otto much too often uses the term *grausam*, 'cruel,' in his analysis, but also that the festival is attested only in Plutarch, far too late a testimony to be valid for the *Urzeit*. Its ancient character is not proven and the Lyncurus myth from the *Iliad* wrongly adduced in this connection.⁵⁶ Whereas Cancik is right regarding Otto's over-emphasis on cruelty, his objections to Otto's general interpretation are much less convincing. Let us take a fresh look at the festival.

The first aspect that must strike every student that comes new to the problem is that all recent scholars call the festival Agrionia in their texts.⁵⁷ The preference for this version of the festival's name is clearly influenced by the description in Plutarch, who is our best source. Yet the tradition also presents the name Agriania, though the variants Agrionia (Plu. *Quaest. Conv.* 717) and Agrania (Hsch. α 750) both occur in literature only and, in the light of the epigraphical evidence, are clearly manuscript errors.⁵⁸ As none of the recent discussions has presented the full evidence, it may be useful to do that first.

52 Cf. Hutchinson on A. *Th.* 699.

53 See now especially Sourvinou-Inwood 2005, 169–189.

54 Parker 2005, 297.

55 Van de Put 2009.

56 Cancik 1998, 174–176.

57 Burkert 1983, 168–179; Graf 1985, 79–80; Sourvinou-Inwood 2005, 347–350.

58 *Contra* Trümper 1997, 126 note 258, who mistakes manuscript errors for dialectal developments.

The festival is called Agrionia in Boeotia. Here it is attested in Orchomenos (Plu. *Quaest. Rom. et Gr.* 299F), where we also find the personal name Agrionios (IG VII.3219), Chaironeia (Plu. *Quaest. conv.* 717A) and Thebes (IG VII.2447; Hsch. α 788).⁵⁹ The month name Agrionios is found in Oropos (IG VII.247) and Lebadeia (IG VII.382),⁶⁰ and from Boeotia the month name clearly wandered to Melitaia in Achaia Phthiotis (IG IX. 2.206). Plutarch (*Ant.* 24.5) also mentions the epithet Agrionios for Dionysos, which is lacking in Farnell's *Cults of the Greek States*, who was perhaps influenced by Nilsson's comment that the epithet must have been late and *ohne weitere Bedeutung*.⁶¹ But Plutarch is an excellent source, and there seems to be no reason to doubt the existence of the epithet that fits the Boeotian spelling, the less so as more recently the epithet Agrios for Dionysos has turned up in Macedonia (SEG 48.748.IV).

On the other hand, the festival is called Agriania in Dorian areas. Here we find the festival itself mentioned only for Argos, but the corresponding month name Agrianios has recently been found there as well, as was to be expected.⁶² The month name was fairly widespread. On the Peloponnese we find it not only in Corinth, from where colonists exported it to Ambracia (SEG 35.665), Illyria (SEG 36.565, 38.468) and Epirus (SEG 33.473),⁶³ but also in Messene (IG V.1.1447), Megara (to judge by its colony Byzantium),⁶⁴ and Epidaurus.⁶⁵ From the Peloponnese the month was also exported to the south where we find a cluster in Rhodos (passim) and the neighbouring islands Syme (IG XII.3 *Suppl.* 1269) and Telos (SEG 14.715) as well as in Kos with its neighbour Kalymna, where the month was the beginning of the second semester.⁶⁶ Finally, we find the month in Cretan Olus where it may have come directly from the Peloponnese (IC 1.16.3).⁶⁷

Finally, in Eresos on Aeolian Lesbos the month name was Agerranios (IG XII.2. 527), a variant that has now also turned up in Pamphylian Aspendos.⁶⁸ There can be little doubt, then, that the month name is very old, just like the concomitant

⁵⁹ See also Knoepfler 2004, 1247–1252.

⁶⁰ See also IG VII.247, 535, 2447, 3219, 3348, 3354–3355, 3376, 3388, 3404.

⁶¹ Nilsson 1906, 273 note 1.

⁶² Kritzas 2006, 431, cf. Chauvet Gabit 2009, 206.

⁶³ As is shown by Cabanes 2003; SEG 56.392.

⁶⁴ Trümper 1997, 147–149, 154.

⁶⁵ IG IV.2, V.1.18, 1447; SEG 24.277.

⁶⁶ Trümper 1997, 179–182, now corrected by Bosnakis/Hallof 2005, 233–240.

⁶⁷ For its place in the year, see the, somewhat inconclusive discussion of Chaniotis 1996, 25–41.

⁶⁸ Brixhe/Tekoglu 2000, 25.

festival. The fact that the festival is attested rather lately is no argument against Otto, and in this respect Cancik is certainly in the wrong.

Now what do we know about the festival? As far as I can see, we have more detailed information only for four places: Peloponnesian Argos and Boeotian Orchomenos, Chaironeia and Thebes. This is not the place to analyse in detail all the myths and rituals of the festival. Here I want to concentrate especially on the structure of the whole and its message. Let us start with the Boeotian ones as they are the most detailed. In Orchomenos the Agrionia was connected with the myth of the Minyads. The myth focuses on the refusal of the daughters of Minyas to join the other women in the Dionysiac dances. When they finally gave in and joined the other women in the mountains, they were chased away, as they had killed the son of one of them, and changed into birds. In the ritual we hear of women from a specific Orchomenian family, called the Oleiai, who are pursued by a priest who tries to catch them. In Plutarch's time, the priest Zoilos was swept away by Dionysiac frenzy and actually killed one of the women. Consequently, the priesthood was taken away from his family and given to the best of all. Plutarch starts his brief notice by mentioning the husbands of the Minyads, who were called the Psoloeis, 'Black ones.' The husbands, I would suggest, must have been chasing the Minyads in the local version of the myth, and the priest Zoilos will have descended from a family that claimed descent from one of the husbands. His name, Zoilos, was very popular in Orchomenos in Plutarch's time,⁶⁹ and there seems to be no reason to doubt the latter's information.⁷⁰

In Chaironeia, as Plutarch tells, the women go out to search for Dionysos, but give up their search when they hear that he had secretly fled and hidden himself with the Muses. Subsequently, they pose one another riddles and word plays.⁷¹ As Christiane Sourvinou-Inwood persuasively argues, the mythological scheme is the same as that of Dionysos fleeing for Lycurgus and hiding with Thetis and the Nereids.⁷² The motif of being hidden is typical for Dionysos. Boeotian tradition tells us that after his birth Dionysos was handed over to his mother's sisters, Ino and Athamas, who hid him in Euboea dressed up as a girl, a characteristic

⁶⁹ Fraser/Matthews 2000, 177 list 7 examples.

⁷⁰ *Ov. Met.* 4.1–415; *Plu. Quaest. Rom. et Gr.* 299F–300A; *Ael. VH.* 3.42; *Apollod.* 3.5.2; *Ant. Lib.* 10.3 (referring to Nicander and Corinna); Schachter 1981, 180–201; Burkert 1983, 177–179; Dowden 1989, 82–84.

⁷¹ *Plu. Quaest. Conv.* 717A; Schachter 1981, 173; Parker 2011, 191.

⁷² *Il.* 6.130–137 (Lycurgus); *Plu. Quaest. Conv.* 716F–717A (Chaironeia), *cf.* Burkert 1983, 176–178; Franoux 1992; Sourvinou-Inwood 2005, 106–108, 203–205; Simon/Dennert 2009.

initiatory motif of course.⁷³ In Macedonia, Dionysos even received the epithet (Επι)Κρυπτός, 'Hidden' (SEG 48.748.I, II, IV).⁷⁴

In Thebes we hear only of ἀγῶνες, which means that the musical-dramatic competitions superseded other parts of the festival in Hellenistic times and thus the later tradition,⁷⁵ but in Argos the festival was connected to the myth of the Proetids.⁷⁶ Strangely enough, Hesychius has two entries regarding the Argive Agriania, one (α 750) mentioning that it was a festival for one of the daughters of Proetus, the other (α 788) that it was a Nekysia. Burkert interprets the latter notice as a festival for the dead, but it seems more economical to combine the two and to conclude that the Nekysia refers to Iphinoe, the Proetid that was killed.⁷⁷ According to Apollodorus (2.2.2), Hesiod explained the madness of the daughters of Proetus from their refusal to accept the mysteries of Dionysos, whereas Acusilaus of Argos (*FGrHist* 2 F 28 = F 28 Fowler) states that they mocked the wooden statue of Hera. However, from other sources it is clear that Hesiod also mentioned Hera as the cause of the madness,⁷⁸ and moreover, the mysteries of Dionysos can hardly have existed already in Hesiod's time. The daughters of King Proetus of Tiryns had become mad and wandered round the country, their skins covered with a kind of white eczema, until Melampus chased them but in the pursuit also killed one of them, whose grave was shown in Sicyon: probably an indication of an Agriania festival there too.⁷⁹

It seems clear from these notices that originally a chase of Dionysiac women was part of the Agriania/Agrionia ritual and myth, even if refracted variously in later differing versions. In fact, Argive tradition also mentioned the grave of the maenad Choreia and a tomb for other maenads,⁸⁰ who had fallen in a chase of

⁷³ *Trag. Adesp.* 646ab; Seneca, *Oed.* 418–423; Apollod. 3.4.3; Nonn. *D.* 14.143–167, 20.229–230; Bremmer 1999.

⁷⁴ For the 'hiding,' note also the interesting study by van Liefferinge 2008.

⁷⁵ Hsch. s.v. ἀγιάνια; *IG* II².971, as corrected by L. Robert, *OMS* I, 266 note 1; *IG* VII.2447; *IG* XI.4.1061, as restored by L. Robert, *OMS* I, 266; Schachter 1981, 189–191.

⁷⁶ See most recently Henrichs 1974; Bonnechere 1994, 181–201; Casadio 1994, 51–122; Kahil 1994; Dorati 2004; Cairns 2005. This makes the analysis of Burkert 1983, 170–171 less persuasive in its combination of Dionysos and Hera.

⁷⁷ *Contra* Burkert 1983, 173.

⁷⁸ Hes. fr. 131–132 M.-W.

⁷⁹ Hes. fr. 133 M.-W.; B. 11.39–110 with Maehler; Pherecyd. *FGrHist* 3 F 114 = fr. 114 Fowler; Alex. fr. 117 K.-A.; *P. Herc.* 1609 VIII, cf. Henrichs 1974; Vitruv. 8.3.51.5; Str. 8.3.19; Paus. 2.25.9, 5.5.10; St. Byz., s.v. Οἶνη; Sch. Call. *H.* 3.236; Eust. in *D.P.* 292.15–21; Hsch. α 3345. Death of Iphinoe: Apollod. 2.2.2; *SEG* 15.195.

⁸⁰ Choreia was a popular maenadic name, cf. Kossatz-Deissmann 1991, 177.

Dionysos and the maenads by Perseus.⁸¹ There can be little doubt, then, that Otto rightly compared Lycurgus' chase of Dionysos in the *Iliad* too in this context.⁸²

Somewhat surprisingly, after the Agrionia Otto (112–123) proceeds with a discussion of modern theories. Having mentioned Preller and Karl Otfried Müller, Otto (114–120) directs his arrows against Erwin Rohde, however much he admires him. He rightly criticises Rohde's use of psychology, but goes too far in his critique. Rohde convincingly stressed that the maenads created their ecstasy by certain techniques, such as the shaking of their heads and their whirling dances,⁸³ but Otto rightly asks what is the nature of the god the maenads want to take into their hearts (114–115). Rohde conceived of the god *nach orientalischen Muster* (115; Orientalism also 131)⁸⁴ – clearly not a compliment – and, even worse, compared the maenadic means of ecstasy with the smoking of hashish. Naturally Otto also disliked Rohde's comparisons with shamans and dance epidemics (116), comparisons that would be taken up in his famous commentary on the *Bacchae* by Dodds, who was not wholly unfavourable to Otto.⁸⁵ Interestingly, Otto even opposes Rohde's individualising approach by noting that the maenadic rites were a *Sache der Gemeinschaft, vor allem der Frauenwelt, mag sie auch durch Kollegien vertreten werden* (117). After some pre-feministic observations on the nature of women (117–118), Otto claims that the secret to the nature of the god is the fact that he is *ein Wahnsinniger* himself, but fiercely denies that the attitude of his followers could have influenced this conception. Neither should we accept explanations derived from Wilhelm Mannhardt,⁸⁶ whom Otto judges more favourably than we perhaps would have expected from him (120–121), or from those that see in the maenadic violence a *sakramentales Opfer* (122).

Otto takes his point of departure from the fact that Dionysos is often pictured as *der rasende Gott* (126), but such a god needs a mad world, which reveals itself through him. Yet there is no life without death, and Otto sees death as an important factor in the origin of the Dionysiac world. This god who unites life and death, this god of oppositions, is the model for his female followers, but even males have to participate in this Dionysiac condition (124–132).

Madness, then, is the essence of Dionysos,⁸⁷ but it is not a human madness. It is the madness of the womb of the mother that attends all moments of creation

⁸¹ Paus. 2.20.4, 2.22.1, 2.23.7–8, cf. Burkert 1983, 176; Sourvinou-Inwood 2005, 200–202.

⁸² Similarly, Burkert 1983, 176–178.

⁸³ For these ancient 'techniques of ecstasy' see Bremmer 2008, 296 (with bibliography).

⁸⁴ For Orientalism in the time of Otto and before, see Marchand 2009.

⁸⁵ Dodds 1969², xii.

⁸⁶ Mannhardt 1875–1877, cf. Tybjerg 1993; Kippenberg 2002, 81–87.

⁸⁷ Henrichs 1994; Graf 2010.

and is expressed in music and dance. These are indeed important parts of the Dionysiac cult, and Otto well notes Dionysos' ties to the Muses, but overrates the god's connection to prophecy, which we find only in Thrace (*Ba.* 298–299) and Phokis (Paus. 10.33.11). Otto's subsequent observations on the god's ties with wine (133–141), nature (141–148), water and animals (148–158) as well as women (159–167) are hardly very contentious today, if we subtract his Romantic vocabulary.

The prototypical woman for Otto (168–175) is Ariadne, who was the wife of Dionysos. Unfortunately, her cult has not been studied very often,⁸⁸ and Otto's observations are not really very helpful. He suggests that by nature Ariadne belongs to the Dionysiac milieu. Yet already in our earliest testimony her role in the Cretan myth of Theseus initially is without Dionysos, who only comes in at the very end, but not even as her lover (*Od.* 11.321–325). Moreover, on Cyprus she was closely connected with Aphrodite (*Plu. Thes.* 20). In short, at two places where we would expect early traditions, she is not part of the Dionysiac milieu. Admittedly, when Theseus abandons her, Dionysos saves her as, according to Otto (175), *Erlöser und Tröster*, once again heavily Christianised language. The connection with Dionysos is certainly old and already mentioned by Hesiod (*Th.* 947–949); moreover, Aphrodite's role in this liaison also seems old, as it is already mentioned by Pherecydes (*FGrHist* 3 F 148 = fr. 148a**b Fowler). The resemblance of Ariadne's role concerning Theseus with that of Medea concerning Jason undeniably brings us into the area of ancient rites of initiation, as also seems to be the case at Naxos, where girl choruses worshipped the sleeping Ariadne (*Call.* fr. 67.13–14 Pfeiffer). Both the fact of her divinity and her prominence in the eastern part of the Mediterranean suggest that Ariadne was a more complicated mythological figure than Otto makes her out to be, and that her close connection with Dionysos is only part of her cultic, mythological and iconographical persona.⁸⁹

Having looked at the women, Otto (175–187) proceeds with the fate of Dionysos. He naturally argues that Dionysos' spirit originated from the immeasurable depths where life and death are intertwined as the god himself, in his view, combines life and death. That is why he had to die. Otto (177–182) brings here Zagreus onto the stage, but the latter is a much too 'elusive and multiform' figure to be of much help.⁹⁰ Originally, Zagreus hardly belonged to the Dionysiac milieu,⁹¹ and thus his later presence cannot be part of a prime explanation. Otto (182–185) also connects Dionysos' death with the myths of his disappearance and

⁸⁸ But see Bernhard/Daszewski 1986; Pirenne-Delforge 1996; Steinhart 2008, 9–11.

⁸⁹ For the difficulty of identifying Ariadne on vases, see Scheffer 2009, 165–168.

⁹⁰ Sourvinou-Inwood 2005, 170.

⁹¹ For Zagreus see Lindner 1997; Gordon 2002.

in a nice structuralist manner argues that the two are rooted in the same idea. This seems attractive. Yet anyone who has tried to read Sourvinou-Inwood's latest book, realises how complicated all these myths and rituals are. As more often, a structuralist approach sometimes removes all historical developments and cultural specifics from the religious stage. Even so, Otto's approach in this chapter is well worth pondering.

It is not surprising that Otto concludes his book with a chapter on Apollo (187–193), as this relationship figured prominently in nineteenth-century German philosophy.⁹² However, this means that, as he acknowledges, he leaves out Orphism and the Bacchic mysteries, both of which perhaps did not quite agree with his picture of Dionysos.⁹³ This final section is not the most successful part of his book, as he elaborately argues that Hyakinthos is very close to Dionysos (191), which is wholly unpersuasive.⁹⁴ On the other hand, Otto (191–192) rightly combats contemporary explanations of the co-habitation of gods as caused by the one succeeding to or expelling the other. Moreover, he also persuasively argues that we have to look for *das Sinnvolle einer Gemeinschaft* between Apollo and Dionysos and that only the combination of the two can mean *die ganze Wahrheit* (192), *das ganze Ausmass der Welt* (193). This cannot be true, of course, but a wrong answer does not invalidate a good question.

Otto (194–195) closes his book with two rather disappointing pages on tragedy. In reality, they just resume his thesis of Dionysos as *das Urphänomen der Zweierheit (und so weiter, und so weiter)* as symbolised by the mask. The spirit of madness breathed new life into the tragic myths. Thus Dionysos, still Otto, entered the spiritual world of the Greeks and *sein Kommen war so gewaltig, dass es uns heute noch erschüttert*.

3 Conclusion

In a brief lecture one can hardly present Otto's book in more than an outline, if even that. I must confess that I was rather sceptical about Otto's book before I started to read it for the conference that was the basis for this book. I will not say that I have now seen the light and have become a convert. Otto's language, which

⁹² Kein 1935; Wilson 1996, 19–24; Henrichs 2001, 11–14; Baeumer 2007, 327–329. We still need a good modern study of the relationship, but note Calame 1996², 364–368.

⁹³ The many findings of the last decades have made all previous literature on this matter out of date. See most recently Graf/Johnston 2007; Bernabé/Jiménez San Cristóbal 2008; Tzifopoulos 2010; Edmonds 2011.

⁹⁴ For Hyacinthus see Villard/Villard 1990; Richer 2004.

he largely owed Nietzsche, as Cancik has shown⁹⁵ – though an investigation into his connections with older philosophers, like Schelling (46),⁹⁶ and contemporary ones, like Heidegger, contemporary sociologists, like his Frankfurter colleague Karl Mannheim, and the Christian tradition would also pay – is certainly enough to put off anybody who is a bit allergic to all too Romantic-German. Yet when one tries to filter that out, it remains to say that Otto's book was impressively original at the time of its appearance, and that his ideas on myth and ritual as well as his conceptualisation of Dionysos were really adventurous in the early 1930s. Otto dared to go against the current of his time, and we should admire that. I have naturally concentrated on aspects I disagree with – otherwise this would have been a very short chapter – but Otto's book teems with insights and good questions. In their different ways, scholars such as Walter Burkert, Marcel Detienne, Albert Henrichs, Hugh Lloyd-Jones (1922–2009) and Jean-Pierre Vernant (1914–2007) have drunk from its waters,⁹⁷ and any student of Dionysos that neglects this book will do it at his or her own loss.⁹⁸

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⁹⁵ Cancik 1998, 178–181, but see also Henrichs 1984.

⁹⁶ For Schelling's *Dionysos* see Wilson 1996, 81–103; Baeumer 2007, 314–330.

⁹⁷ Henrichs 1984, 234–240 and 1993. The reasons for the attraction of Otto's book deserve further investigation, but it is clear that its Romantic, proto-structuralist and proto-post-modernist aspects as well as its modern religiosity can appeal to rather different scholars.

⁹⁸ I am most grateful to Bob Fowler, Albert Henrichs and Alessandro Stavru for their comments. Scott Scullion kindly and skilfully corrected my English.

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Alberto Bernabé

Dionysos in the Mycenaean World*

1 Introduction: Rohde's Hypothesis

During the 19th century and at the beginning of the 20th, many Hellenists and scholars of religion were attracted to Rohde's hypothesis that Dionysos was a god incorporated into the Greek pantheon relatively late.¹ There were good reasons to support this theory, such as Dionysos' scarce presence in Homer, his status as a foreign god, and the fact that he always seems to be a newcomer to Olympus. Despite Otto's dismissal of this hypothesis, arguing that the main features of the god were already defined in Homer,² this theory continued to be generally accepted for a long time. And in spite of the fact that in the 1950's the decipherment of Mycenaean enabled the reading of some syllabic sequences that seemed to attest the name of Dionysos on two tablets, the lack of context for the first tablet, and the obscurity of the second, coupled with wide acceptance of the late arrival of the god Dionysos to Greece, underscored the inconclusiveness of such testimonies until new findings could corroborate the antiquity of the god in Greece.³

In order to present an adequate account of what we know today about the presence of Dionysos in Mycenaean times, I will examine the story of how successive findings progressively undermined Rohde's theory, which held more authority than the evidence in the primary data, and also how several interpretative efforts were made from the opposite direction, attributing to Dionysos a larger presence in the textual evidence available by means of drawing groundless comparisons.

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1 Rohde 1903³, II, 5–8, 23–27.

2 Otto 1948² [1997, 48].

3 Palaima 1998, 209. The still dubious conviction from the 1980's is presented in Aura 1985, s.v. *di-wo-nu-so*], with bibliography. Cf. Granata 1991.

2 The Texts: Successive Findings

In the 1950's the discovery of a tablet from Pylos classified as PY Xa 102 was announced. In it only the name of Dionysos in the genitive case (*di-wo-nu-so-jo* [] could be read.⁴

A second fragment, in which the name, probably in the dative, can be read just before a fracture in the tablet and within an obscure context, was found in excavations that took place in 1960. It was published in 1961, and was reported, with the same uncertainty of whether it was indeed the name of the god, by Chadwick in 1973.⁵ I shall return to possible interpretations of these tablets later on.

The situation of the Mycenaean texts begins to change in 1990 when, in the excavations in Kastelli hill in Chania, known in the Mycenaean texts as *ku-do-ni-ja*, that is, Cydonia, another tablet was found (Gq 5) that again contained the sequence *di-wo-nu-so*. This time the context of the inscription was unequivocally religious, with the god's name written after the mention of Zeus and both as addressees of an offer of honey.⁶

- .1 *di-wi-jo-ḑe di-we* *ME+RI *209^{VAS} +A 1* [
 .2 *di-wo-nu-so*, *ME+RI [*209^{VAS} +A] 2* [

Nevertheless, the presence of the god's name in tablets from Pylos was still in doubt, particularly when in 1992 Bennett discovered that the fragment previously known as PY Xa 102 (the series X consists of fragments that do not present any features that could allow for their inclusion into any of the other given groups) did in fact belong to the series Ea, one of the series of the misnamed 'Cadastre' which contains registries of distributions of grain to be sowed. Consequently, it was labelled as PY Ea 102 and, in accordance with other documents of the same series that reiterate anthroponyms in the genitive case as owners of plots, Bennett inferred that the document to which the fragment belonged had to be reconstructed as *di-wo-nu-so-jo* [*ko-to-na*, Διονύσοιο κτοί-*vā*, 'for the Dionysos' plot.' The implication of such a reconstruction is that this *di-wo-nu-so*, as owner or farmer of a plot, had to be a man, and not a god. The consequence of such a proposal was that the mention of the god on the other fragment from Pylos was also put into question. Once again, the theories on the

⁴ Ventris/Chadwick 1956, 127.

⁵ Ventris/Chadwick 1973. See § 4.

⁶ Cf. Hallager/Vlasakis/Hallager 1992, 75–81.

character of Dionysos *qua* newcomer seemed to be well established, at least on the continent.⁷

However, the situation seemed to take a definitive turn when José Luis Melena⁸ discovered that another fragment from Pylos reading *e-ka-ra*, so far edited separately, in fact belonged to the same tablet as PY Ea 102. The tablet reconstructed as PY Ea 102 + 107 is now read in a sequence *di-wo-nu-so-jo, e-ka-ra*, Διφονύσοιο ἐσχάρῃ, ‘to the sacrificial hearth of Dionysos.’

There is no point, therefore, in rejecting the evidence any longer: Dionysos appears documented in Mycenaean texts, both in Pylos on the continent, and in Chania, in Crete. The presence of the god in the ancient Greek world is thus confirmed, contrary to the hypothesis of his late arrival to the Hellenic pantheon.

It is worth analysing the three documents to place them in the context of other source materials and obtain from them a sketch as accurate as possible of the position of the god within Mycenaean religion.

3 The Chania Tablet

The tablet of Chania dates to 1250 BCE.⁹ The translation of the text is as follows:

- .1 To the sanctuary of Zeus. To Zeus, one amphora of honey.
- .2 To Dionysos two [amphorae of] honey.

The tablet registers a delivery of amphorae of honey and two addressees of the offerings, in the dative, Zeus and Dionysos. Both share the sanctuary of Zeus, which seems to indicate a close connection between them. Although it cannot be proven, it would be reasonable to suppose that this relationship is the same as in the first millennium: already in Mycenaean times Dionysos was the son of Zeus, as seems to be inferable, moreover, from name itself. Although it is not my intention at this point to engage with the controversy on the etymology of the

⁷ Palaima 1998, 214, and Ilievski 1999, 305, still echoed the interpretation proposed by Ruipérez 1992, 566ff., who applied all his linguistic sagacity in trying to demonstrate that *di-wo-nu-so-jo* was in fact reflecting a homographic anthroponym of the god **Diw(y)on(n)usios*, that is Dionysios, and not the theonym. Ruipérez also pointed out that a similar case could be found in Xa 1419.1. Rougemont 2005, 366, still questions whether the reference in Ea 102 is a theonym or an anthroponym.

⁸ Melena 2000/2001, 357–360.

⁹ KH Gq 5. Cf. Pugliese Carratelli 1991; Hallager/Vlasakis/Hallager 1992; Godart 1991; Palaima 1998, 216–217; Melena 2001, 48. Antonelli 1996, 174–175 believes that the very ancient reference in the Chania tablet could make us consider a Minoan origin of Dionysos.

name of Dionysos, it is clear that the first part is the genitive of the name of Zeus.¹⁰ Also it is impossible to determine if Dionysos is a god or a hero, because in the first testimonies of his name in the epic we can see still traces of a period of indeterminacy.¹¹

If Dionysos indeed received double the honey that Zeus did, it could indicate a greater cultural importance of the young god or hero,¹² but it is still possible that Zeus received the same or even double the amount since, as we have mentioned, the reading of the first numeral is uncertain.

Honey is important in the cult of certain Mycenaean gods, as shown by the fact there are offerings of honey to other divinities and in other places. Thus, the series Gg of Knossos attests offerings of amphorae of honey to different gods; two examples, which we will discuss further later, are one amphora which is offered 'to all the gods' and another to 'the Lady of the Labyrinth.'¹³ Melena suggests that honey could be used as an intoxicating substance,¹⁴ but it could be used to many other purposes.

The exact location of the above-mentioned sanctuary has not been found, but it is highly likely that it was near the area where the tablets were found, since the excavation site is not very large.¹⁵

Hallager, Vlasakis and Hallager¹⁶ relate the Chania tablet to the cult of Ayia Irini in Keos and they remind us that the myth connects the god to Ariadne, Minos' daughter, and to the Cretan tradition according to which Dionysos is the son of Zeus and Persephone. Furthermore, they survey the various representations of the known gods around the time of the tablet in the area of Chania that could refer to Zeus or Dionysos.¹⁷ Both questions will be revisited later. Finally, they point out the fact that it is probably no coincidence that the number of representations of male gods is significantly higher in Chania than in the rest of Crete.

10 There are no convincing proposals for the second one, though 'son' could be accepted. Palaima 1998, 209 points out the possibility of it being a hybrid, the first part Indo-European and the second pre-Hellenic. Cf. also García-Ramón 1987.

11 Bernabé forthcoming.

12 Duev 2008, 223.

13 KN Gg 702, cf. Palaima 1998, 217. Hallager/Vlasakis/Hallager 1992, 78, also draw attention to a fragment of a tablet from Knossos (KN Gg 711) where there is a reference to 270 amphorae of honey in an erased part and a mention of *ku-do-ni-jo*, the ethnic adjective from Cydonia (Chania) in the lower margin. It all seems to point out that the Knossos administration registered honey from Cydonia, which shows the importance of this product in Western Crete.

14 Melena 2001, 47.

15 Hallager/Vlasakis/Hallager 1992, 80.

16 Hallager/Vlasakis/Hallager 1992, 77.

17 Hallager/Vlasakis/Hallager 1992, 79.

4 Pylos Ea 102+107

After Melena's reconstruction, the Pylos tablet that is now Ea 102+107 (dated approximately to 1200 BCE) reads:

To the sacrificial hearth of Dionysos two large parts and two small parts of grain.

As I have pointed out, this tablet belongs to the set of tablets of the so-called 'cadastre,' a landholdings registry that registers the amounts of grain the palace distributed to sow the plots given in usufruct to people on various administrative posts or who belong to certain guilds. Those who received these deliveries of grain most likely had to render certain services in exchange, either religious or artisanal, since the register of usufructuaries includes priests and priestesses and a variety of guilds. The cult to Dionysos, therefore, seems to be supported by the palace by giving the usufruct of a plot to the priest or priestess in charge of celebrating the rites to honour the god.

The ἑσχάρα, as pointed out by Melena,¹⁸ is a hearth, excavated on the ground and used for sacrifices; the remains of successive cremations thus were accumulated in it. The term *e-ka-ra* was attested in another tablet from Pylos in the sense of 'brazier,'¹⁹ but here it has the meaning of 'sacrificial hearth'; Melena²⁰ confirms Chadwick's²¹ analysis and adds ἑσχάρα Διονύσου in Alciphron²² to the examples of the sequence ἑσχάρα plus the genitive of a god name gathered by the latter. Such an altar was characteristic of the cult to chthonic divinities and to heroes, which places Dionysos within a chthonic sphere in Mycenaean times, although we cannot know whether he was believed to be a god or a hero; ἑσχάρα would be a metonymic designation for the sanctuary of Dionysos, probably because such a conspicuous type of altar would be characteristic of it, but the site has not been identified archaeologically.²³ Finally, Weilhartner has collected Mycenaean evidence about offerings of this type and quotes more passages in which Dionysos' ἑσχάραι are mentioned.²⁴

18 Melena 2000/2001, 358; 2001, 37.

19 PY Ta 709.2.

20 Melena 2000/2001, 358.

21 Chadwick 1986.

22 Alciphron 4.18.16.

23 It is unknown to which sites in Pylos the mentions of deliveries of grain are referring in the series Ea, but, as Melena 2000/2001, 360, points out, it is likely they were areas close to the palace and maybe not far away from the *pa-ki-ja-na*, what we could call the 'sacred area' of Pylos.

24 For example IG II².1011.11–12 or 1006.12–13, Weilhartner 2008, esp. 811–813.

5 Pylos Xa 1419

The last of the tablets has been dated, along with another five from Pylos, to the 14th century BCE.²⁵ They are rather anterior to others from the same excavation, dated to 1200 BCE. It is, therefore, the oldest reference to Dionysos in Mycenaean texts. Unfortunately, its context is far from clear:

r.1 di-wo-nu-so[
 r.2 tu-ni-jo[
 v.1 i-pe-ne-o[
 v.2 wo-no-wa-ti-si[

The item attested in v.2 is clearly a dative plural, so the others must be singular datives. They could be the recipients of a certain product, but the tablet is broken and the part where the product or products could have been specified is lost.

None of the proper names are clear: *tu-ni-jo* (most likely Θυνίω) appears as a masculine anthroponym in another tablet from Pylos.²⁶ If the name is derived from θύνω ‘rush’ it would come from the same stem derived in θυ(ι)άς ‘bacchant,’ and Θυώνη, the name of the mother or nurse of Dionysos, which could also connect it to a Dionysian environment. As for *i-pe-ne-o*[, it is a *hapax* without accepted translation (maybe *Ipnehōi*?).²⁷

Even more interesting is the name in the plural dative in v.2. It seems to be a feminine gentilic, φοινοφάτι(σ)σι, from the toponym Φοινός, which would correspond to Οἰνός of the first millennium. The same term appears in another tablet from Pylos Vn 48.6, itself difficult to understand, but whose context seems to be religious, since a goddess is mentioned (*po-ti-ni-ja* Ποτνία) as well as a female keeper of the keys (*ka-ra-wi-po-ro* κλαφιφόρω), a feminine occupational term that in Mycenaean documents is related to the cult sphere.²⁸ It seems to refer, therefore, to a group of women that may be related to the Dionysian cult. It is interesting because it would mean that we also find in the Mycenaean world, like in the first millennium, women connected to the cult of the god.

Οἰνός is derived from the wine’s name that also designates, already in the first millennium, a place in Attica between Thebes and Eleusis.²⁹ There is a series

²⁵ The date was proposed by Palaima 1998, 212.

²⁶ PY Cn. 4.4. The interpretation proposals can be read in Aura 1993, s.v.

²⁷ Melena 2001, 37. Palaima 1998, 210, considers it to be a toponym. For the possible connection to the name of a cooking utensil ἰπνός, documented in Mycenaean *i-po-no*, cf. Aura 1985, s.v.

²⁸ Cf. Aura 1985, s.v.; Granata 1991, 626.

²⁹ Puhvel 1964, 168; Palaima 1998, 220 n. 24. For other proposals and further bibliography, cf. Aura 1993, s.v. *wo-no-wa-ti-si*; Granata 1991, 625 and n. 16.

of meaningful details. First, the fact that it is a term derived from the wine's name has seemed to various scholars a piece of evidence for the connection between Dionysos and wine in Mycenaean times.³⁰ Secondly, as Melena has pointed out,³¹ the strategic position of Οἰνών in the first millennium is between Thebes, Dionysos' homeland, and Eleusis, where he was initiated; it is also close to a sanctuary of Dionysos Eleutherios in Eleutheria.

Nevertheless, in spite of other evidence of the name being clear, and notwithstanding the Dionysian connotations evident in *wo-no-wa-ti-si*, some authors still consider the possibility that in this tablet Dionysos could be a theophoric person's name, and not the god's.³² Once again, the old hypothesis persists.

6 Other Proposals for Identification with Dionysos or Characters of his Entourage

Aside from the passages in which the name of the god is attested, some specialists have attempted to interpret other mentions as references to the god or terms derived from his name. It is worth making a brief survey of such attempts.

First, a tablet from Pylos³³ presents an interesting reference:

v.08 i-je-to-qe, di-u-jo, do-ra-qe, pe-re, po-re-na-qe a-ke
 v.09 di-we AUR *213^{VAS} 1 VIR 1 e-ra AUR *213^{VAS} 1 MUL 1
 v.10 di-ri-mi-jo. di-wo, i-je-we, AUR *213^{VAS} [

A consecration is made in the sanctuary of Zeus, they bring offerings and lead the victims (?).³⁴

To Zeus, a golden bowl, a man; to Hera, a golden bowl, a woman,

To Drimios, son of Zeus, a golden bowl.

The tablet in question is one of most discussed Mycenaean documents, since not only are some of its details dubious, such as the names of some gods or the

³⁰ Mentioned in Antonelli 1996, 30. Antonelli himself considers, however, that it could be by chance.

³¹ Melena 2001, 37.

³² Duev 2008, 227. Cf. Rougemont 2005, 366, who even doubts the reference in Ea 102.

³³ PY Tn 316.v.8–10. From the immense bibliography dedicated to this document, worthy of singular mention are Bennett 1979 and Palaima 1999.

³⁴ The translation 'victims' is tentative, since the interpretation of the term *po-re-na* is still under debate; cf. Aura 1993, s.v.; Palaima 1999; Uchitel 2005.

interpretation of certain terms, but also neither the reason for the existence of the whole text itself nor its function are clear. It consists of various offerings of golden bowls and of people (men for the gods and women for the goddesses) to sanctuaries, in each of which different theonyms are mentioned as recipients of such offerings. In the lines I have selected Zeus' sanctuary is mentioned. He shares the sanctuary with the goddess Hera, and the tablet does not specify the relationship between both divinities. Although *prima facie* it could be his wife, this possibility is hindered by the fact that in the Pylian pantheon there is another goddess, *di-u-ja/di-wi-ja*, that seems to be Zeus' *paredros*.³⁵ In the same sanctuary, a cult was also dedicated to a certain Drimios, who is clearly identified as Zeus' son, further reason why some authors have wanted to identify it with Dionysos.³⁶ However, as we have seen, the god is referred to by his own name in two other tablets from Pylos, and Drimios is found neither as an epithet of the god nor as a divine name in the first millennium; the identification is thus quite dubious.³⁷

Furthermore, throughout the 1950's and 1960's some proposals were made to interpret various Mycenaean terms as references to the god, which today are completely overlooked, but which I include here for curiosity value:³⁸

- a) In the case of *e-re-u-te-re*³⁹ the reading proposed was Ἐλευθήρει, the classic epithet of Dionysos, though it is currently interpreted as the dative of ἐρευτήρ 'inspector.'
- b) In the case of *i-wa-ka*, *i-wa-ko*, *i-wa-ka-o*⁴⁰ a possible link to Ἰακχος was suggested, but it is an anthroponym carried by, among other men, a bronze worker and a deer hunter.
- c) In the series Ea from Pylos there are several references to a character named as *sa-ke-re-u*, *sa-ke-re-wo*, *sa-ke-re-we*,⁴¹ which had been identified, without any justification, with Dionysos, named with the epithet Ζαγρεύς/-ῆφος/-ήφει. In any case, these referred to people (a priest and a bronze worker⁴²), and, moreover, the etymologies proposed for Ζαγρεύς are incompatible with a Mycenaean spelling *sa-*, since *za-* should be expected instead.

35 Cf. Aura 1985, s.v. *di-u-ja*.

36 Cf. Aura 1985, s.v. Antonelli 1996, 175, discusses 'structural analogy.' Gallavotti 1956a, 40, 1956b, tried to relate them to the 'Lesbian triad' documented in Alcaeus 129 Voigt.

37 Denied, for example, by Duev 2008, 223 n. 1.

38 References can be found in Antonelli 1996, 171.

39 PY Cn 3.2, Wa 917.2, now *e-re-u-te-ri* in TH Av 100.4b.

40 KN As 1516.18, V 60.2, PY Jn 310.16, Ub 1317, Jn 310.11.

41 PY Ea 56, 304, 756, 776. The name appears as well in Jn 413.17.

42 Priest in the references of the series Ea; bronze crafter in Jn 413.17.

- d) The term *ke-me-ri-jo*⁴³ was linked to the epithet Κεμήλιος, documented in Alcaeus,⁴⁴ but apart from the fact that in Mycenaean it seems to be a proper name, the epithet of the god itself is a more than dubious reading, another possibility being Δεκεμήλιος.⁴⁵
- e) Finally, the identification of Dionysos with *ti-ri-se-ro-e* ‘the thrice hero’ mentioned in Pylos is thoroughly groundless.⁴⁶

On the other hand, the identification of Ariadne with the ‘Lady of the Labyrinth’ (*da-pu₂-ri-to-jo po-ti-ni-ja*), mentioned in a tablet from Knossos (KN Gg 702.2) as the recipient of an amphora of honey, is likely, but not quite sure.⁴⁷

In the same tablet from Pylos in which Drimios is mentioned, a certain goddess *i-pe-me-de-ja*⁴⁸ also appears as the recipient of offerings. Rocchi proposes identifying her with Ἰφιμήδεια; the extant myth states that she was kidnapped by the men of Butes, Lycurgus’ brother, while she was celebrating the cult in honour of Dionysos, and Rocchi considers it to be a myth about the establishment of Dionysos cult in Naxos, though the identification is far from certain.⁴⁹

7 Anthroponyms Derived from the God’s Name or Related to him

In contrast to the proposals we have just seen, all of which are groundless, I shall mention some other, more plausible ones about anthroponyms related to the name of the god or to characters from his entourage.

- a) In a tablet from Knossos, dated to 1350 BCE,⁵⁰ there is, without context, the sequence of syllables *di·*79-nu* [. If the reading of the syllable *79 is accepted as *wo₂*, pronounced /*wyo*/,⁵¹ it could also be accepted that it is a term derived from the name of the god, namely *Diwyonu*[*sios*, or a hypocoristic of such a

⁴³ PY Fn 324.

⁴⁴ Alc. 129.8 Voigt.

⁴⁵ Rodríguez Somolinos 1998, 156–157.

⁴⁶ PY Tn 316.5. Cf. Aura 1993, s.v.

⁴⁷ Cf. Gallini 1959 and Puhvel 1964, 165. Hoorn 1959 limits himself to considering the legend of the union between Dionysos and Ariadne as old, based on the presence of the god in the texts from Pylos.

⁴⁸ PY Tn 316.v.6. Cf. Aura 1985, s.v., on the proposals and difficulties in reading the name.

⁴⁹ D. S. 5.50; Rocchi 1996.

⁵⁰ KN Dv 1501.

⁵¹ Melena 1978. The proposal is highly plausible.

name, i.e. *Diwyonus*.⁵² In light of the series to which this sequence belongs, it could be the beginning of the name of a shepherd or even his full name in the nominative. If that were true, and it is indeed highly probable, the presence of the name of a shepherd containing Dionysos' name in Knossos, where the theonym is not directly attested as such, would give evidence of a diffusion of the cult of this divinity among the popular classes of the Knossos kingdom.

- b) It is also worth mentioning the existence of an anthroponym from Knossos *si-ra-no*⁵³ that has been interpreted as Σιλᾶνός, 'Silenus,' and that could lead us to think that Silenus or the *sileni*, i.e. the mythical character or group related to the entourage of Dionysos, go back to Mycenaean times.
- c) Additionally, the Knossos anthroponym, *pa-re*, maybe Φαλής,⁵⁴ has also been posited to be connected with a Dionysian milieu.

Finally, without abandoning the relationship of Mycenaean characters with the god, it is worth saying some words about the above-mentioned individual, *sa-ke-re-u/-wo/-we*, as documented in Pylos, who has a barely identifiable and, most likely, pre-Hellenic name.⁵⁵ One of the references specifies that he is a priest (*i-je-re-u*),⁵⁶ and, since it is mentioned in the same series Ea where Dionysos' sacrificial hearth is referred to, and bearing in mind that this series is characterised by its laicity, with the exception of this priest,⁵⁷ Melena⁵⁸ proposes a reading of *sa-ke-re-u* as the name of the priest of Dionysos who conducted the cult in the sanctuary of Pylos.

8 Possible Representations of the God. The Sanctuary of Ayia Irini

Regarding the representations of the god, I have to mention the possibility that certain objects (e.g. a column) decorated with ivy in Minoan and Mycenaean art could deliver a connection to Dionysos,⁵⁹ perhaps as a form of aniconic representation of the god (Fig. 3.1).

⁵² Palaima 1998, 215.

⁵³ KN V 466.1, cf. Aura 1993, s.v. with bibliography. Maybe it was also read in KN B 799.v.3]ṛa-no.

⁵⁴ KN DI(1) 8177.B, Sc 247, 249, cf. Aura 1993 s.v. with bibliography.

⁵⁵ Aura 1993, s.v.

⁵⁶ PY Ea 56, 304, 756, 776.

⁵⁷ As pointed out by Lejeune 1974, 91 n. 8.

⁵⁸ Melena 2000/2001, 360.

⁵⁹ B. Otto 1996, cf. the god's epithet Περικτιόνιος in Sch. E. Ph. 651.

Neither the sanctuary mentioned in the Chania tablet nor the one referred to in the Pylos table have been excavated, and there are no figurative representations from Mycenaean times currently available to us that could be unequivocally identified with Dionysos. Nonetheless, there are a couple of interesting instances of possible images of the god.

First, Hallager, Vlasakis and Hallager⁶⁰ have compiled a repertory of god images known from around the times of the tablet KH Gq 5 from the area of Chania, that could represent either Zeus or Dionysos. Among them the most suitable for the latter would be the image carved in a gem currently kept in the Benaki Museum,⁶¹ which represents a naked youth standing wearing a belt among consecration horns, flanked by two animals in heraldic position, a winged wild goat, and a 'genie' (conventional designation for some half-beast figures of difficult interpretation in Mycenaean iconography) who is holding his libation jar (Fig. 3.2). The possibility that during the cult there were people in disguise with masks and/or animal skins and that this represents an offerer of this type should not be excluded. Weilhartner and Ricciardelli have offered very interesting evidence for people wearing animal masks in the Mycenaean world.⁶²

In addition, we know of the existence of a temple from the Bronze Age that was likely dedicated to Dionysos as well: the sanctuary excavated by Caskey in Ayia Irini, Keos,⁶³ one dedicated in historic times to the god and which gives evidence of the continuity of the cult throughout the Bronze Age. Remains of burnt offerings were evident in its interior, as well as remains of wine vessels and of twenty big clay statues of bare-breasted women, hands on their hips, who seem to be dancers. The most significant finding is the head of one of them, that was used in post Mycenaean times to be placed over a ring on the floor, as if it were emerging from the earth, and that has been interpreted as representing an *anodos* of Dionysos.⁶⁴ Probably this placing of the head in post-Mycenaean times was a manner to represent an *anodos* that would be celebrated in the sanctuary without images, already in Mycenaean times.⁶⁵

⁶⁰ Hallager/Vlasakis/Hallager 1992, 79.

⁶¹ Hallager/Vlasakis/Hallager 1992, 79 n. 60, *CMS* 5 Beih. 6 n. 201.

⁶² Weilhartner 2005, 198 and 215 n. 560; Ricciardelli 2006.

⁶³ J. L. Caskey 1962. *Cf.* M. E. Caskey 1981.

⁶⁴ M. E. Caskey 1981, 130. On the sanctuary of Ayia Irini *cf.* likewise Burkert 2007, 219.

⁶⁵ The cult to the god in the first millennium is well attested epigraphically, *cf.* Jiménez San Cristóbal forthcoming.

9 Conclusions

The paucity of data on Mycenaean times available to us allows us to draw only an incomplete survey about the status of Dionysos, in which some components are clearer than others. We could conclude that Dionysos is clearly attested in Pylos and in Chania and that his presence in Knossos is also possible, since it seems to be reflected in an anthroponym. In principle, we should not infer that the name corresponds to a god similar in every way to that of the first millennium, nor to one necessarily having the same features across the Mycenaean world, from Crete to the continent. In fact, we do not know his cultic position, although his clear connection to a sacrificial hearth in Pylos and the possible representation of the god's *anodos* in Ayia Irini point to a typology of a chthonic god. The possibility that he was a hero cannot be completely ruled out either. His dominant character trait would be of a youth, if the gem in Benaki Museum can be said to represent it so.

In Chania, he appears related to Zeus, maybe as his son. No document tells us the name of his mother.⁶⁶ His identification with Drimios, documented in Pylos as son of Zeus and as sharing the sanctuary with him and Hera, is more than problematic. Aside from the uncertain Drimios, there are no clear epithets for this god.

Neither there are clear references to women or goddesses as partners of the god, since it cannot be ascertained that the Lady of the Labyrinth is indeed Ariadne, nor that *i-pe-me-de-ja* is related to him.

However, it is possible that Silenus or the *sileni* were already known at the time as follower(s) of the god, according to the anthroponym *si-ra-no*, which seems to be a reading of Σιλᾶνος. Less certain is the existence of any links between Dionysos and any phallic symbols on the basis of the term *pa-re* (Φαλής?).

The representations of ivy in Minoan and Mycenaean art could lead us to infer an ancient link between the god and this plant. Far clearer is his relation to honey, offered to him in Chania, maybe to produce mead, and alcoholic drink that could induce inebriation,⁶⁷ but other uses are of course not to be excluded.

This Dionysos' connection to wine is very likely, according to the reference to some women from the 'Land of Wine' (*wo-no-wa-ti-si*) in one of the Pylos tablets

⁶⁶ Duev 2008, 229 thinks it might be the son of Persephone, if the reading *Preswā* for the name *pe-re*.*82 is present in PY Tn 316 and if this is a variant of Persephone's. But even the reading of *Preswā* is open to doubt; cf. Aura 1993, s.v. *pe-re*.*82.

⁶⁷ Cf. Melena 2001, 47, although it should be remembered that the offerings of honey appear in classical times in cults to chthonic heroes and deities; for example, in Sch. S. OC 159 and in Orph. Arg. 572–575 there is a reference to offerings of honey to the Erinyes.

where his name appears. The presence of *tu-ni-jo* in the same tablet and the possible relation of this name to the stem *θυίω* suggests (and only suggests) that the frantic exaltation, probably associated with wine, could have already been part of the cult.

On the other hand, it could be hazardous to suppose that the fact that a shepherd carries a name derived from the god's in Knossos could be indicative of the god's role as protector of farming activities.

With regard to his cult, there existed in Chania a sanctuary to Zeus where Dionysos also received cult and to whom offerings of honey were presented. Another sanctuary was dedicated to him in Pylos, where a sacrificial hearth, economically supported by the palace by means of granting the exploitation of farming plots to produce cereal, was perhaps presided over by a priest whose anthroponym or appellative could have been *sa-ke-re-u*, a term, however, that does not seem to be related to the first millennium *Σαγρεύς*. The cult from Pylos seems to be characteristic of chthonic gods or heroes, to which victims were cremated on a sacrificial heart, as it would have been the case of Ayia Irini in Keos, since there are in it remains of cremations and since he seems to be represented in an *anodos*. This last sanctuary seems to be dedicated to the god and to have been kept as such until the first millennium, in one of the clearer cases of continuity of the cult between the first and the second millennia. The terracotta statues of bare-breasted women, in an attitude similar to executing a dance, suggest a relevant feminine participation in the cult, maybe to celebrate with dances the appearance of the god from Netherworld. Such a presence of a group of women accords with the first millennium image of Dionysos accompanied by nurses, nymphs or bacchantes, an idea also suggested by the feminine ethnonym from Pylos *wo-no-wa-ti-si*, which, as it has been mentioned, seems to signify 'women from the land of wine.'

By way of summary, it is clear, first of all, that Dionysos was already a god or hero related to Zeus in Mycenaean times, contrary to the widespread opinion that considered him a latecomer to the Greek pantheon, an opinion that for far too long has influenced the interpretation of the Mycenaean data. It is also evident that the palaces contributed to the support of his cult. Although it cannot be asserted that Dionysos had by this time the majority of features that would come to characterise him in the first millennium, none of the ones that seem to be related to him in the second millennium is in conflict with them. On the contrary, they conform to an image not too different from the one of the god existing in archaic times.

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Marco Antonio Santamaría

The Term **βάκχος** and Dionysos **Βάκχιος***

1 Bacchus and the Bacchants

As part of this volume devoted to redefining Dionysos, it would seem useful to delve into the meaning and connotations of such common epithets as **βάκχος** and **Βάκχιος**, in order to establish which particular dimension of the god they were intending to highlight.

We shall begin by pointing out a striking feature of the Dionysian cults: both the god and his worshippers are given the same name: **βάκχος** and **βάκχοι**, with the female **βάκχαι**. To explain this fact, it has often been thought that these worshippers felt so close to the god that they came to identify themselves with him and therefore adopted his name.¹ Given that in Greek texts Dionysos is called **Βάκχος** with increasing frequency from the late 5th century BCE and in Rome it became the common name of the god² (from where it was transferred to western tradition), it is hard to imagine a time when the god did not have this name. However, detailed examination of the uses of the term **βάκχος** in Greek texts from the archaic and classical periods shows that the oldest instances of **βάκχος** designate the ecstatic worshippers of Dionysos and that from this form the epithets **Βάκχιος** and **Βακχεῖος**, meaning ‘god of the Bacchants,’ were coined. Over time, the god himself began to be called **Βάκχος**, ‘the Bacchant,’ a poetic name that became so popular and widespread that it became the common name of the god among the Romans and thereafter.

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1 For example, Rohde 1890, II, 14–15, n. 21; Gruppe 1897–1906, 732, n. 1; Dodds 1960², 83; Cole 1980, 229, and Ricciardelli 1992, 30. See n. 23.

2 Among the Romans, Dionysos was identified with *Liber* or *Liber Pater*, an Italic god, name by which he is often known: Varr. *RR* 1.1.5, 2.19; Cic. *ND* 2.24.62, *Leg.* 2.8.19; Serv. *Georg.* 1.5 and 7. However, *Bacchus* imposed itself over *Liber* as the common name of the god. Regarding the origin and diffusion of the Dionysian cult in Rome, see Bruhl 1953 and Pailler 1995, 127–191.

2 The Terms βάκχος, βάκχη, Βάκχιος and Βακχεῖος in Archaic and Classical Texts

To study the history of the terms βάκχος, βάκχη and Βάκχος, it is necessary to examine all their uses from the 7th to the 4th century BCE, and those of the derived forms, Βάκχιος and Βακχεῖος.³ To begin with, I shall give a brief account of what it is known about their origins.

The word βάκχος/-η is a foreign loan, like others belonging to the Dionysian cult, such as θύρσος, θιάσος, θριάμβος, διθύραμβος, ἵαχος, βασσάρα or the name of Dionysos' mother, Semele. It is not clear which language or languages these terms may have come from. It has been argued that βάκχος is a loan from Lydian, but it seems more likely that the Lydian took it from the Greek.⁴

The female form, βάκχη, is documented before βάκχος. It first appears in Alcman:⁵

πο[λλὰ] δ' ἐμνάσαντ' οο[... / ...]αν ἀπήρ[ι]τον Β[α]κχῶν Καδμ[ι]-
and often they remembered all the boundless... of the Cadmaean Bacchae...

In a fragment of Archilochus we find a term with the root βάκχ-, βακχίη, which refers to the delirium caused by the consumption of wine:⁶

ἔξωθεν ἕκαστος
ἔπινεν· ἐν δὲ βακχίη.
2 βακχίη West (cum codd.) : βακχίη(σιν) Berg, prob. Adrados
Outside each man drank and in them there was frenzy.

³ I prefer the form Βακχεῖος to Βάκχειος, which appears in some editions of various authors.

⁴ See data and analysis in Graf 1985, 287–291. The idea of the loan from the Lydian comes from a bilingual text in which the anthroponym *Bakivaś* is translated into Greek as Διονυσικλῆς. The theonym **Bakiś* has been reconstructed from *Bakivaś*, from the adjective *bakilliś*, which gives name to a month, and from the name of a priest, *kavēś bakilliś*. Nilsson 1941, 578 and 581 admits that Βάκχος is a theonym of Lydian origin: 'Der andere Name des Gottes, Bakchos, ist lydischen Ursprung.' On the other hand, Jeanmaire 1951, 58; West 1978, 374, n. 7; Graf 1985, 291 and Burkert 1985, 163 consider the loan from the Lydian to the Greek to be doubtful. Burkert refers to the possibility of βάκχος being a Semitic loan with the meaning of 'weep' (cf. Hsch. s.v. βάκχον· κλαυθμόν. Φοίνικες).

⁵ Fr. 7.14 *PMG*, transl. by Campbell 1988.

⁶ Fr. 194 West.

The word βάκχος with the meaning of ‘Bacchant’ is first documented in a fragment of Heraclitus,⁷ in a list of followers of Dionysos:

τίσι δὲ μαντεύεται Ἡράκλειτος ὁ Ἐφέσιος; νυκτιπόλοις, μάγοις, βάκχοις, λήναις, μύσταις·
τούτοις ἀπειλεῖ τὰ μετὰ θάνατον, τούτοις μαντεύεται τὸ πῦρ.

For whom does Heraclitus of Ephesus prophesy? For night-wandering, wizards, Bacchants, Lenaeans, initiates. These are the ones he threatens with the things that come after death, for these he prophesies fire (transl. by Robinson 1987).

Xenophanes also used the term, but with the meaning of ‘branch’:⁸

ἐστᾶσιν δ’ ἐλάτης (ν. l. ἐλάτη) (βάκχοι) πυκινὸν περὶ δῶμα.
Branches of pine stand all around the steady house.

The insertion of (βάκχοι) is a conjecture by Wachsmuth accepted by editors (Diels, Gentili-Prato). The appearance of the term is guaranteed because the verse is quoted in a scholium to Aristophanes⁹ as an example of βάκχος meaning ‘branch used by initiates.’ A verse of Nicander¹⁰ is also quoted as an example of βάκχος meaning ‘crown.’

Some scholars have argued that the original meaning of βάκχος was ‘branch’ and that it then came to designate by metonymy those who carried ritual branches in processions in honour of Dionysos, that is, the followers of the god who went into ecstasy,¹¹ as in the fragment of Heraclitus. However, given that βάκχος is very rarely used with the meaning of ‘branch’ and that the terms derived from this root nearly always refer to ritual delirium, it seems more likely that this was its original meaning and that it was only later used as the name of the branches carried by initiates, a hardly spread meaning.¹²

⁷ B 14 D.-K., *ap.* Clem. Al. *Prot.* 2.22.2. It is discussed whether the fragment is authentic and which parts of it are. The enumeration ‘night-wandering, wizards, Bacchants, Lenaeans, initiates’ is considered spurious by Marcovich 1967, 464–467, versus Conche 1986, 167; Bremmer 2002, 19 and Burkert 1999, 94, whose position seems more plausible.

⁸ Fr. 17 D.-K. = 12 Gentili-Prato, transl. by Edmonds 1932.

⁹ Sch. Ar. *Eq.* 408a.

¹⁰ Fr. 130 Gow-Schofield.

¹¹ This is defended by West 1978, 374 and Cole 1980, 229. A scholium to Ar. *Eq.* 408, which is the source of the fragment of Xenophanes, says that the βάκχοι are τοὺς κλάδους, οὓς οἱ μύσται φέρουσι. Hsch. s.v. βάκχος: ὁ ἱερεὺς τοῦ Διονύσου, καὶ κλάδος ὁ ἐν ταῖς τελεταῖς; Phot. β 34 βάκχους τοὺς κλάδους. οὕτως Θεόπομπος (fr. 89 Kassel-Austin). Cf. E. *Ba.* 109–110: καὶ καταβακχιούσθε δρυὸς / ἢ ἐλάτας κλάδοις; 308: πάλλοντα καὶ σείοντα βακχεῖον κλάδον, and Sch. E. *Or.* 1492.

¹² This is held by Clinton 1997, 410.

The low incidence of βάκχη and βάκχος in the texts from 7th and 6th centuries BCE contrasts with its frequency in works from the classical period, especially in tragedy. In the 5th century BCE, the form βάκχη is well documented. Βάκχαι was the title of many tragedies: by Aeschylus, perhaps Sophocles, Xenocles, Euripides (the famous *Bacchae*), Iophon and Cleophon, as well as comedies: by Epicharmus, Lysippus, Diocles and Antiphanes, and of a work of Philolaus.¹³ The term βάκχη appears several times in tragedy (above all in Euripides' *Bacchae*) and occasionally in satyr drama, comedy, epigrams and prose works such as Plato's dialogues.¹⁴

The form βάκχος referring to the followers of Dionysos is much rarer than βάκχη, since it only appears five times, three in Euripides and two in Orphic poetry.¹⁵ On the other hand, Βάκχος is applied to Dionysos in many texts: in tragedies (especially in choral parts), in elegy, in choral lyric and in some inscriptions.¹⁶ In nearly all these examples, the name 'Dionysos' is absent.¹⁷ On several occasions, Βάκχος refers to wine, named with an epithet of Dionysos by metonymy.¹⁸

In the 5th century texts, it is very common to designate Dionysos with the epithet Βάκχιος, of which there are many examples in tragedy and satyr drama, above all in Euripides' *Bacchae* and *Cyclops*, but also in lyric, in comedy and in the Orphic lamellae.¹⁹ There are over forty appearances. Βακχεῖος is also used as

13 A. fr. 22 Radt; S. p. 170 Radt; Xenocl. fr. 1 Snell; Iophon fr. 2 Snell; Cleophon fr. 1 Snell; Epich. fr. 16–17 Kassel-Austin; Lysipp. fr. 1–7 K.-A.; Diocl. Com. fr. 1–5 K.-A.; Antiph. fr. 58 K.-A.; Philol. fr. 19 Huffman.

14 *Trag. Adesp.*, fr. 645.9 Kannicht-Snell; A. *Eu.* 25; S. *Ant.* 1122, fr. 674.1 Radt; E. *Hipp.* 551, *Hec.* 121, 1076, *Hel.* 543, *Ph.* 1489, *Or.* 1493a (corrupt verse), *Io* 717, *Cyc.* 64, 72, *Ba.* 51, 62, 83, 129, 152, 153, 169, 259, 415, 443, 499, 578, 664, 690, 735, 759, 779, 785, 791, 799, 837, 842, 847, 915, 940, 942, 946, 987, 1020, 1029, 1093, 1131, 1160, 1168, 1224, 1387; Ar. *Nu.* 605, *Lys.* 1313; [Sim.] *AP* 16.60.1 (on a statue of Scopas, 4th c. BCE); Pl. *Io* 543a, *Phdr.* 253a; Aeschin. *Socr.* fr. 11c Dittmar; Palaeph. 33.3.

15 E. *HF* 1119, *Ba.* 491, *Cret.* fr. 472.15 Kannicht; gold tablet from Hipponion (*OF* 474.15–16, c. 400 BCE), *OF* 576, *ap. Pl. Phd.* 69c.

16 S. *OT* 211 (lyr.); E. *Hipp.* 560–561 (lyr.), *IT* 164 (lyr.), *IA* 1061 (lyr.) (= wine), *Ba.* 623, 1020 (lyr.), *Protesilaus* fr. *646a.15 Kannicht, [E.] *Rh.* 972; *Trag. Adesp.* fr. 204 Kannicht-Snell; Even. fr. 2.1 West, Gentili-Prato (= 'wine'); Philox. *Cyth. PMG* fr. 815.2; *Carm. Pop. PMG* 851 (b) 1; [Sim.] *AP* 16.60.2; inscription from Berezan, 5th century BCE, *SEG* 32, 1982 nr. 745: [Διονύ]σῳ Βά[κχ]ῳ (or better: Βα[κχεῖ]ῳ or Βα[κχί]ῳ); inscription from Olbia, 5th century BCE, Dettori 1996, 301a: ΒΑΚΧΟ; Delph. *orac. ap. D.* 21.52. Βάκχος is applied to Apollo in E. *Licymnius* fr. 477 Kannicht (lyr.): δέσποτα φιλόδαφνε Βάκχε, παῖδ' Ἀπολλων εὐλύρε.

17 The 'Dionysos Bacchus (or Bacchius)' sequence appears only in the inscription from Berezan, 5th century BCE; see n. 16.

18 E. *IT* 164 (lyr.), *IA* 1061 (lyr.); Even. fr. 2.1 West, Gentili-Prato. Alex. fr. 232.3 Kassel-Austin uses Βρόμιος with the meaning of 'wine.'

19 S. *Ant.* 154 (lyr.), fr. 1130.7 Radt (*Dubia et spuria*); E. *Io* 550, 552, 553, 716 (lyr.), *IT* 953, *Ba.* 67–68 (lyr.), 195, 225, 366, 529–530 (lyr.), 605, 632, 998 (lyr., corrupt verse), 1089, 1124, 1145, 1153 (lyr.), 1189 (lyr.), *Cyc.* 9, 38, 143, 156, 429, 446, 454, 519, 521, 575, 709, *Oen.* fr. 562.1 Kannicht, *Hyps.* fr.

an epithet of the god: it appears in a *Homeric Hymn*, in Herodotus, in tragedy and in comedy (in both genres, always in choral parts).²⁰

In all these uses of the terms βάκχη, βάκχος, Βάκχος, Βάκχιος and Βακχεῖος in texts from the 7th to the 4th centuries BCE, we observe the following phenomena:

- 1) βάκχη and βάκχος are used to designate people from the 7th and 6th centuries (Alcman, Heraclitus), whereas the first evidence of Βάκχος applied to Dionysos is in a choral song of Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex* (211). From this we can deduce that the application of the term to the faithful is older than its application to the god.
- 2) Βάκχιος is used as a name of Dionysos much more often than Βάκχος. The latter appears above all in the choral parts of tragedy, whereas Βάκχιος is used in the recited parts: of 36 appearances of Βάκχιος in tragedy and satyr drama, only 6 are in choral songs (16.66%), whereas Βάκχος appears in choral parts in 5 out of 9 appearances (55.55%). This indicates that Βάκχιος is more common, whereas Βάκχος seems a bolder use of language and is therefore reserved for the choral parts to create a greater poetical effect. In these songs Βάκχος is sometimes also used metonymically with the meaning of 'wine,' which is not documented in prose or in tragedy dialogues.
- 3) βάκχιος and βακχεῖος are also used as adjectives with the meaning of 'Dionysian,' but there is no evidence of them being applied to the followers of Dionysos.

3 The Original Meaning of Βάκχος and the Appearance of Βάκχιος

All these data show that the primary use of βάκχος and of βάκχη is that of 'worshipper of Dionysos in a state of frenzy'²¹ and that from these substantives

759a.1627 K. (Βα[κ]χ[ίου]), *Incert. Fabul.* fr. 896.1 K.; Moschio fr. 6.24 Snell; *Trag. Adesp.* 397.2: †φῦλα Βακχίου†; Tim. fr. 780.4 Hordern (= wine); Ar. *Ach.* 263 (lyr.), *Ec.* 14; Antiph. fr. 234 Kassel-Austin (= wine); gold tablets from Pelinna (Thessaly) *OF* 485–486.2, 4th c. BCE; gold tablet from Amphipolis (Macedonia) *OF* 496n, 4th–3rd cc. BCE: Διονύσου Βακχίου (the only case among all the other quoted in which Bacchios goes together with Dionysos).

20 *h.Pan.* 46, 5th–4th centuries BCE: ὁ Βάκχειος Διόνυσος; Hdt. 4.79.2: Διονύσω Βακχεῖω, 4.79.12: τῷ Βακχεῖω; S. *OT* 1105 (lyr.): ὁ Βακχεῖος θεός; E. *Cyc.* 74 (lyr., corrupt text): ...ὦ φίλε Βακχεῖε; Ar. *Th.* 987 (lyr.): κισσοφόρε Βακχεῖε, *Ra.* 1259 (lyr.): τὸν Βακχεῖον ἄνακτα.

21 Several authors argue that originally βάκχος is not linked with Dionysos: Jeanmaire 1951, 89–90; Bianchi 1976, 90 and West 1974, 24 ('before the fourth century the word has no necessary connection with Dionysos') and 1975, 234–235. But Burkert 1975, 90, n. 17 (= 2006, 27, n. 17);

the epithets of the god Βάκχιος and Βακχεῖος were formed, with the meaning of ‘(god) of the βάκχοι, he who causes the frenzy.’²² In parallel, the term for the faithful themselves, βάκχος, was applied to the god, who, being named Βάκχος, is imagined to be just one more of their number. Therefore, βάκχος is not originally a name of the god which is later adopted by his followers, who would thus show their identification with him, despite what some scholars have believed.²³ If this were the case, the faithful would also call themselves ‘διδόνουσι,’ of which there are no examples.²⁴ Moreover, if βάκχος were originally the name of the god, it would not make sense that the form Βάκχιος should derive from it, and even less that it should be much more common than Βάκχος as an epithet for Dionysos in

Pugliese Carratelli 1976, 464–465 and Cole 1980, 226–231 have demonstrated that βάκχος and other derived terms are closely linked with Dionysos. Cole has pointed out that when βάκχος and other terms are associated with other gods they have a metaphorical meaning. About the sense of βάκχος and βακχεία see also Jeanmaire 1951, 57–58, 89–90; Dodds 1951, 270–282; Zuntz 1976, 147; Henrichs 1982, 146, nn. 89–93; Burkert 1985, 291–292; 1987, 112; Pugliese Carratelli 1990, 391–402; Turcan 1992, 224–225; Schlesier 1993, 93–94; Pailler 1995, 34 and, in Orphic milieu, Turcan 1986 and Jiménez San Cristóbal 2009.

22 See D. S. 4.5.1: Βακχεῖον μὲν γὰρ ἀπὸ τῶν συνεπομένων βακχῶν ὀνομάσαι; West 1975, 234: ‘βάκχος ist zunächst ein Attribut von Menschen, kein Gottesname’ and considers Βακχεῖος as ‘Gott der βάκχοι’; 1978, 374: ‘[ὁ Βακχεύς, ὁ Βάκχειος θεός, Βάκχιος] must be taken to mean “god of the βάκχοι”.’ Graf 1985, 286–287: ‘die... Epiklesen [Βάκχιος, Βάκχειος, Βακχεύς] weisen ihn aus als zum βάκχος gehörig, als “Gott der Bakchanten”’; Graf 1991, 89: ‘Bacchos est l’épiclese du dieu des βάκχοι, des adorants extatiques’; 1993, 243; Pailler 1995, 34: ‘bacchos, d’abord adjectif caractérisant les bondissements de la possession divine, a fini par qualifier le dieu lui-même en grec, puis par le désigner en latin’; Clinton 1997, 410: ‘Dionysos Bakchos ist dementsprechend der Gott der Bakchoi.’ Cf. Jiménez San Cristóbal 2009, 46. *Contra*: LSJ s.v. Βάκχος ‘Bacchus, name of Dionysos’ and DGE s.v. Βάκχος: ‘Baco, otro nombre de Dioniso.’

23 Rohde 1890, II, 14–15, n. 21 speaks of the ‘Gleichsetzung der Gottheit und ihres ekstatischen Verehrers’ regarding the pairs Σαβάκιος/σαβάκιος, Σάβος/σάβοι, Κυβήκη/κύβηβοι and Βάκχος/βάκχοι to denominate a god and his worshippers. Gruppe 1897–1906, 732, n. 1: ‘Als von Gotte erfüllt, tauschen die Verehrer und Verehrerinnen des Dionysos mit diesem Namen, Attribut und Funktion’; Dodds 1960², 83: ‘Some degree of identification with the god seems to be implied in calling human participants in Dionysiac rites βάκχαι and βάκχοι.’ He says that regarding the expression Βρόμιος ὅστις ἄγῃ θιάσους, ‘whosoever leads the worshipping companies is Bromius,’ in E. Ba. 115. The reading ὅστις is arguable: it appears in L², versus ὅτ’ in LP, corrected by Elmsley in εὔτ’ ἄν, which fits much better for its meaning, since the previous phrase is αὐτίκα γὰρ πᾶσα χορεύσει. In the commentary, Dodds says he prefers this conjecture by Elmsley. εὔτ’ is more subject to corruption into ὅτε than ὅστις. Cole 1980, 229: ‘Because the worshipper is in some sense identified with the god, both god and follower can be called by the same term.’ Ricciardelli 1992, 30, about the Orphic tablets from Pelinna: ‘Il morto, in quanto fedele di Bacco, è anch’egli Bacco e il dio a sua volta è Βάκχιος, come il suo fedele.’

24 As it is pointed out by Burkert 1975, 90 (= 2006, 27): ‘sarebbe impossibile chiamare un uomo “Dioniso”,’ and West 1978, 374: ‘why are they never διόνουσι or βρόμιοι?’

the 5th century texts. The variant Βάκχος, common in tragic choral songs in the 5th century, is undoubtedly more novel and striking than Βάκχιος.

Consequently, we cannot speak of the mutual exchange of names between faithful and god, since the faithful are never called Βάκχιοι. The movement is only in one direction: the god adopts the name of his followers and is more and more often called Βάκχος, a form that will eventually displace Βάκχιος from the 3rd century BCE. Dionysos is conceived as the ultimate Βάκχος, the leader of the other Βάκχοι.²⁵ The participle βακχεύων is also applied to him.²⁶ It is worth noting that in the first literary testimony concerning Dionysos, in the *Iliad*, the god is called μαινόμενος,²⁷ a state more typical of his followers than of himself.²⁸

Graf²⁹ alludes to a fact of great importance: in inscriptions reflecting cults, Βάκχιος, Βακχεῖος, Βακχεύς and even Βάκχος never appear as names of Dionysos, always as epithets. Only the poets call the god by these epicleses. This is further proof that Βάκχος and Βάκχη, ‘Bacchants,’ are primary and refer to his worshippers, from which the epithets Βάκχιος, Βακχεῖος and Βακχεύς were derived, with the meaning of ‘(god of) the Bacchants,’ as well as Βάκχος, which designates him as ‘the ultimate Bacchant.’ Graf mentions as a parallel the fact that the Cretan κούροι called Zeus μέγιστος κούρος. Only by interpreting Βάκχος as ‘ecstatic Bacchant’ can it be understood why Aeschylus should call Apollo βακχεϊόμαντις and Euripides Βάκχος,³⁰ epithets that express the similarities between mantic trance and the ecstasy aroused by Dionysos.

25 Cf. the epithets: Ἀρχέβακχος (Seleucia and Calycadnum, II BCE, in Graf 1985, 287); ὀσιβάκκας (B. 18.49); τελετάρχα (Orph. H. 52.3); ἀγέτα κώμων (Orph. H. 52.7). Jeanmaire 1951, 58: ‘ce n’est pas à dire que les fidèles aient pris le nom du dieu, dans la croyance, par exemple, qu’ils l’incarnaient momentanément. Il serait plus exact de dire que le dieu a pris ce nom de ses sectateurs. Il est le “Bacchant” par excellence.’ Preller/Robert 1894⁴, I, 665: ‘Der Gott selbst führt von diesen schwärmenden Umzügen und ihren tobenden Lust den Namen Βρόμιος, Βάκχος, Βακχεύς, Ἰακχος, Εὖιος, u.s.w.’ Boyancé 1936, 87, n. 3: ‘[L’]initié ne devient ni Zagreus, ni Dionysos. Il ne s’agit nullement d’une union mystique avec la divinité’; Roux 1972, 293, n. 145: ‘ὁ Βακχεύς: le bacchant par excellence, le dieu lui-même, jouant son rôle d’exarque et considéré comme le modèle des initiés.’ Graf 1985, 286: ‘in griechischen Religion ist Bakchos Epiklese des Gottes des ekstatischen Riten’; 286–287: Βάκχος ‘bezeichnet den Gott als Prototyp seines ekstatischen Verehrens.’

26 Orph. H. 52.8.

27 Il. 6.132.

28 Euripides and Plato record a rare myth in which Dionysos was punished by Hera with madness: E. Cyc. 3–4; Pl. Lg. 672b. Cf. Apollod. 3.5.1; Nonn. D. 32.98–150. This episode is comparable to the one narrated in the *Homeric hymn to Aphrodite*, when the goddess is forced to fall in love with a mortal and suffer for once the same effects that she caused (45–52, 247–255).

29 Graf 1985, 286.

30 A. fr. 341 Radt; E. fr. 477 Kannicht.

The forms Βάκχιος and Βακχεῖος are not the only ones derived from βάκχος. We have cited Βακχεύς, which also appears in classical texts³¹ and which is better explained as a derivative of βάκχος than as a variant of the theonym Βάκχος. There are other similar epithets of Dionysos, some documented from the classical period on: Βακχειώτης,³² Βακχᾶς,³³ Βακχιώτας,³⁴ and βακχευτής.³⁵ All these terms have been derived using different suffixes from the simple form βάκχος, ‘Bacchant,’ so their meaning must be ‘(god) of the Bacchants,’ showing the god’s proximity to and interest in his followers.

We can adduce a similar case in which what was originally an epithet ends up becoming the name of a god. It is probable that the name of Athena, Ἀθηναία (jon. -η), was originally an epithet of Παλλάς, the oldest name of the goddess, and referred to her special connection with Athens (Ἀθῆναι), just as Hera of Argos was called Ἀργεῖη³⁶ or Apollo of Delos, Δῆλιος.³⁷ Over time, it eventually replaced Pallas and became the most common name of the goddess.³⁸

4 Other Epithets of Dionysos Derived from Worship

We can enumerate many epithets of Dionysos which, like Βάκχιος, are derived from the name of his followers and from diverse elements of worship. The closest parallel with Βάκχιος and βάκχοι/-αι is provided by the epithet Ληναῖος, which almost certainly derives from Λῆναι, ‘maenads,’ and which means ‘(god) of the maenads.’³⁹ There is an inscription of Mykonos⁴⁰ that names Dionysos Ληνεύς,

31 S. *Ant.* 1121 (lyr.); E. *Io* 218, *Ba.* 145 (lyr.). In later texts: Orph. *H.* 45.2, 52.1; *AP* 16.156.3 and inscriptions.

32 *Lyr. Adesp.* S 318 (*ap. Him. Or.* 46.47), *hapax*.

33 S. fr. 674 Radt; *Suda s.v.* Βάκχας.

34 S. *OC* 678.

35 Phanod. *FGrHist* 325 F 12 (4th c. BCE); βακχευτής θεός *AP* 16.290 (Antipater of Thessalonica, 1st c. BCE–1st c. AD). We can add Βακχιαστής, a term that usually designates the faithful: ἅλλὰ δέχεσθε Βακχ[ιαστὰ]ν Δι[ό]νυσ[ον]; Philod. *Scaph.* 1.144; *IGBulg* I².20.3, Dionysopolis, 3rd c. BCE (Βακχεαστής); *IG* XII.3.1296.2, Thera 2nd c. BCE (Βακχιστής).

36 *Il.* 4.8.

37 S. *Ai.* 703–704.

38 Cf. Burkert 1985, 139, with more references.

39 Diodorus (3.63.4) says that Ληναῖος comes from ληνός, ‘winery,’ because Dionysos taught the pressing of the grapes. The explanation is accepted by *LSJ s.v.*

40 *SIG* 1024.24.

which is a form comparable to Βακχεύς. We even have an additional parallel. The female followers of Dionysos were often called βασσάραι, a name documented in the homonymous title of Aeschylus' tragedy. This term is the origin of Dionysos' epithet Βασσαρεύς,⁴¹ and even Βάσσαρος (Orph. *H.* 45.2), which follow the same pattern of Βακχεύς and Βάκχος.

Just as the term Βάκχιος derives from the worshippers of Dionysos, we can list many other epithets of gods that were created from the name of their worshippers, or from a specific group protected by the god. These epithets are usually formed with the suffix -ιος. For example, Zeus is called Φίλιος, of the φίλοι;⁴² Ξένιος, of the ξένοι;⁴³ Ἰκέσιος, of the ικέται;⁴⁴ ἑταιρεῖος, of the ἑταῖροι;⁴⁵ as Ὀρκιος, he defends those who have taken an oath.⁴⁶ He is also considered god of the city (Πολιεύς)⁴⁷ and of the Greeks as a whole (Ἑλλήνιος, Πανελλήνιος).⁴⁸

On the other hand, Dionysos is given epithets arising from various elements of the cults held in his honour, such as processions, dances, ritual cries, the eating of raw meat, madness, liberation or their nocturnal nature. The performance of these activities, typical of his worshippers, was often attributed to him. In this way, the faithful would express their conviction that Dionysos appeared among them as their leader and behaved in the same way.⁴⁹ Thus, at the beginning of Euripides' *Hypsipyle*, the god is described as practising ὀρειβασία by Parnassus with thyrsus and nebris:

Διόνυσος, ὃς θύρσοισι καὶ νεβρῶν δοραῖς
καθαπτὸς ἐν πεύκησι Παρνασὸν κάτα
πηδᾷ χορεύων παρθένους σὺν Δελφίσιν.⁵⁰

41 Corn. *ND* 30 and Hor. *C.* 1.18.11.

42 Paus. 8.3.14 speaks of a temple of Ζεὺς Φίλιος in Megalopolis; see Diod. *Com. fr.* 2.5 and 20 K.-A.; in oaths: Pl. *Phdr.* 234e; Men. *fr.* 53 K.-A.; in familiar language without Ζεὺς: Ar. *Ach.* 730; Pherecr. *fr.* 102.4 K.-A.; Pl. *Grg.* 500b, 519e, *Euthphr.* 6b.

43 Ζεὺς δ' ἐπιτιμήτωρ ικετῶν τε ξείνων τε, / ξείνιος, ὃς ξείνοισιν ἄμ' αἰδοίοισιν ὀπηδεῖ *Od.* 9.270–271, *cf. Il.* 13.625; A. *A.* 61, 362. There is a variant, Ζεὺς ἐπίστιος or ἐφέστιος, as presiding over hospitality, Hdt. 1.44; S. *Ai.* 492.

44 A. *Supp.* 616; S. *Ph.* 484; E. *Hec.* 345; *SIG* 929 (Cos). Ἰκέσιος alone: *IG* XII.3.402 (Thera). πρὸς Ἰκεσίου: Luc. *Pisc.* 3.

45 Hdt. 1.44; Diph. *fr.* 20.2 K.-A.; D. *Chr.* 1.39.

46 S. *Ph.* 1324; E. *Hipp.* 1025; [Arist.] *Mir.* 845b 33; Paus. 5.24.9.

47 [Arist.] *Mu.* 401a19–20; Corn. *ND* 9; Paus. 1.24.4.

48 Ἑλλήνιος: Zeus and Athena: Rhethra *ap. Plu. Lyc.* 6. Zeus: Hdt. 9.7; Pi. *N.* 5.10; *IG* XII.5.910 (Tenos). Athena: E. *Hipp.* 1121. Gods: Hdt. 5.49 and 92; Luc. *Herc.* 2; Hld. 2.23. Πανελλήνιος: Paus. 1.18.9, 1.44.9, 2.29.8 and 2.30.3.

49 D. *S.* 4.3.2–3: τὰς δὲ γυναῖκας... τὴν παρουσίαν ὑμνεῖν τοῦ Διονύσου. E. *Ba.* 116: Βρόμιος εὔτ' ἄν ἄγῃ θιάσους.

50 Fr. 752 Kannicht. Similar passages can be found in E. *Ba.* 135–141 and 144–150.

Dionysos, who with thyrsus wands and fawnskins
bedecked amidst the pines on Mount Parnassus
bounds dancing with the maidens of Delphi.

Many elements of worship gave rise to epithets of the god. In several anonymous choral poems he is related to dance, when he is called χορευτάς, χοραγός and φιλοχορευτάς.⁵¹ Numerous times in the *Bacchae* the god is called Εὔιος⁵² and Βρόμιος,⁵³ adjectives with the suffix -ιος derived from the cultic cry εὐαῖ, εὐοῖ and from βρόμος, the noise caused by the procession. The terms ἐρίβρομος, ἐριβόας and ἐριβρεμέτας⁵⁴ have similar meaning. From the rite of eating raw meat, ὠμοφαγία, the god is called ὠμηστής and ὠμάδιος.⁵⁵ Other adjectives refer to madness as a component of his rites, such as μανικός, μαινόλης and μαινόλιος.⁵⁶ Several epithets show his capacity to liberate through ritual: Λύσιος, Λυσεύς and Λυαῖος.⁵⁷ Since some of the rites in honour of Dionysos took place at night, the god is called Νυκτέλιος, 'nocturnal'.⁵⁸ The cultic term Λικνίτης⁵⁹ refers to his relationship with the λίκνον, an object that served as his cradle and that was used in the rite. Διθύραμβος and Θρίαμβος give the name to the hymn in honour of Dionysos, but also to the god himself.⁶⁰

51 Χορευτάς: *Lyr. Adesp.* 937.3 PMG; Orph. *H.* Εὐχή 9; χοραγέ: *Lyr. Adesp.* 1027 (d) PMG; φιλοχορευτά: *Lyr. Adesp.* 992 PMG.

52 S. *OT* 211; E. *Ba.* 157, 566, 579; Ecphantid. fr. 4 K.-A. There is a parallel to this adjective, the term ἵλιος, applied to Apollo, who was usually invoked with the cry ἱή or ἱή παιών: ἱήϊε παιάν Pi. *Pae.* 2.35; cf. A. A. 146; S. *OT* 154, 1096; Ar. *V.* 874; A.R. 2.702; Duris *FGrHist* 76 F 79.

53 Βρόμιος: Pi. fr. 70b.6 Mae., 75.10 Mae.; A. *Eu.* 24; E. *Cyc.* 1, 63, 99, 112, 123, 620, *Hel.* 1365, *HF* 682, *Ph.* 649, 785, 1751, *Io* 216, *Ba.* 66, 84, 88, 115, 140, 329, 375, 412, 446, 536, 546, 582, 592, 629, 726, 790, 976, 1031, 1250; Ar. *Th.* 990–991: ὦ Διόνυσσε / Βρόμιε.

54 Ἐρίβρομος: *h.Hom.* 7.56; Anacr. fr. 20.1 PMG; Panyas. fr. 17.2 Bernabé. ἐριβόας: Pi. fr. 75.10 Mae. ἐριβρεμέτας: D. P. 578.

55 Ὠμηστής: *AP* 9.524.25; Plu. *Them.* 13.3. ὠμάδιος: Orph. *H.* 30.5; cultic epithet in Chios: Euelpis of Carystos, *ap. Porph. Abst.* 2.55.

56 Μανικός: Orph. *H.* 52.1 (μαινόλα Hermann). μαινόλης: Ph. *Plant.* 148; Corn. *ND* 30. μαινόλιος: *AP* 9.524.13.

57 Λύσιος: Plu. *Quaest. Conv.* 613C; Corn. *ND* 30; Paus. 2.2.6, 8.19.2, 9.16.6; Orph. *H.* 50, title, 2 and 8. Λυσεύς: Orph. *H.* 42.4. Λυσεύς: Orph. *H.* 52.2 (Κισσεῦ Lobeck); Dam. *in Phd.* 1.11 Westerink (citing *OF* 350). Λυαῖος: Plu. *Quaest. Conv.* 613C; *Anacreont.* 4.20, 8.13, 12.9 West; *AP* 16.156.1; *IG* V.2.287 (Mantineia, 1st–2nd c. AD); cf. Lat. *Lyaeus*.

58 *AP* 9.524.14; Plu. *De F ap. Delph.* 389A; Paus. 1.40.6; Ov. *Met.* 4.15. Festivals called Νυκτέλια were held in his honour: Plu. *Quaest. Rom. et Gr.* 291A, *Quaest. Conv.* 672A; Serv. *Aen.* 4.303.

59 Orph. *H.* 52.3.

60 Διθύραμβος and Θρίαμβος as epithets: Ath. 1.30b. Διθύραμβος: E. *Ba.* 526; Philod. *Scaph.* 1.1; *EM* 274.45. Θρίαμβος: *Lyr. Adesp.* 1027d PMG; D. S. 4.5; Plu. *Marc.* 22; Arr. *An.* 6.28.2.

There are several significant epithets which, like Βάκχος, designate Dionysos with the name of his followers. Thus, he is called μύστης, κωμαστής or member of the κῶμος, θιασώτης, ναρθηκοφόρος and βάσσαρος.⁶¹ Λαφύστιος was an epithet for Dionysos in Boeotia⁶² and could also designate the maenads.⁶³ The adjective νυκτιπόλος is applied to the initiates and to Zagreus, who is possibly Dionysos.⁶⁴ The god is sometimes described carrying a torch.⁶⁵ From Dionysos' identification with Sabazius, he also receives the name of Σάβος,⁶⁶ typical of the followers of this god, the σάβοι.⁶⁷ These parallels reinforce the idea that in being called Βάκχος Dionysos is seen as one more of his worshippers.

5 Dionysos Βάκχιος in the Maenadic Cults and the βακχεία as a Gift

When Dionysos is named with the epithets Βάκχιος and other derivatives, it is undoubtedly to highlight his protection of the βάκχοι or βάκχαι, but also his proximity and participation in the ritual and its effects. Indeed, Otto coined the fortunate phrase of 'der kommende Gott,' the god who comes to join the worship (and who will leave when the party ends).⁶⁸ Thus, the chorus of Theban citizens in *Antigone* invokes the god as Βάκχιος in the parodos so that he may guide them to the temples of the gods (153–154) and in the *Ion* the chorus says that in Delphi Βάκχιος holds the torches and dances with the Bacchae (ἄμα σὺν Βάκχαις, 716–719). As this text shows, the proximity is such, that Dionysos adopts the garb and gestures of his followers and mingles among them,⁶⁹ which justifies the fact that he receives the same name. Therefore, it is natural for the chorus of the *Bacchae*

61 Μύστης: Paus. 8.54.5; AP 9.524.13. κωμαστής: Ar. Nu. 606. θιασώτης: AP 9.524.9. ναρθηκοφόρος: Orph. H. 42.1. βάσσαρος: Orph. H. 45.2.

62 EM 557.51.

63 Lyc. 1237. Sophocles calls Dionysos ταυροφάγος (fr. 668 Radt) and then Aristophanes speaks of the mysteries (Βακχεία) of Cratinus ταυροφάγος (Ra. 357).

64 Initiates: Heraclit. fr. B 14 D.-K.; E. Io 718. Zagreus: E. fr. 472.9–19 Kannicht (OF 567).

65 E. Io 716; fr. 752 Kannicht.

66 Orph. H. 49.2.

67 Plu. *Quaest. Conv.* 671F.

68 Otto 1948², cap. 5. See Detienne 1986.

69 In the *Bacchae*, Dionysos appears as one more of his followers and Pentheus refers to him as βάκχος (491). By using these examples from tragedy, I am not assuming that they accurately reflect contemporary rituals, but they do echo the views of the authors (and almost certainly those of their audience) regarding the nature of the god. For the mutual relations between the maenadic

to call him this way when they call for his presence in the θίασος,⁷⁰ and for the chorus of *Oedipus Rex* (209–215) to invoke him with this epithet so that he may approach them, while highlighting the fact that he is a companion of the maenads (Μαινάδων ὁμόστολον). The connotations of epiphany and proximity of both Βάκχιος and Βάκχος are evident.

The clearest evidence of the god's appearance among the faithful is that they become βάκχοι; they go into delirium. The means of causing this might be the consumption of wine (considered a manifestation of the god himself that entered the body and acted by creating euphoria) and/or the exaltation due to the music and dance. The phenomenon was often regarded as the possession of the faithful by the god, as expressed by the terms ἔνθεος and ἐνθουσιάζω, very close to βάκχος and βακχεύω.⁷¹ In line with this, we can attribute an active nuance to the epithet Βάκχιος: 'he who converts men into βάκχοι,' more evident in Βακχεύς, with the agent suffix, -εύς. The βακχεία caused by the appearance of Dionysos is no more than another name for the ritual μανία, as shown by the fact that the terms μαινάδες and βάκχαι are used indistinctly and often in a coordinated way,⁷² as occurs with the substantives, verbs and adjectives of the same root: μανία and βακχεία, μαίνομαι and βακχεύω, μαινῶδες and βακχεύσιμον.⁷³

rites and the plot of the *Bacchae*, see the classical studies of Henrichs 1978, 143–144, 147–148; 1982, 143, 146 and 156, and Versnel 1990, 135–137.

70 E. *Ba.* 1018–1020.

71 Sophocles calls the Bacchae ἔνθεοι γυναῖκες (*Ant.* 963–964). Ἐνθουσιάζειν and βακχεύειν appear together in A. fr. 58 Radt: ἐνθουσιᾷ δὴ δῶμα, βακχεύει στέγη and *Th.* 497–498: ἔνθεος δ' ἄρει / βακχᾷ. It is noteworthy that ἔνθεος and ἐνθουσιάζειν do not appear in the *Bacchae*. The statement of Herodotus (4.79) on the divine possession of the Scythian king Scylas is highly graphic: βακχεύομεν καὶ ἡμέας ὁ θεὸς λαμβάνει. νῦν οὗτος ὁ δαίμων καὶ τὸν ὑμέτερον βασιλέα λελάβηκε, καὶ βακχεύει καὶ ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ μαίνεται.

72 For example, in Euripides' *Bacchae* we often find μαινάδες (19×) next to the more common form βάκχαι (38×). In 915 both forms appear together (γυναικὸς μαινάδος βάκχης), and in 50–51 and 1020–1023 in the same sentence. Cf. Ph. *Plant.* 148: ἐκάλεσαν οἱ πρῶτοι καὶ τὰς ἐξ αὐτοῦ κατασχέτους γενομένας βάκχας μαινάδας.

73 S. *Ant.* 135–136: μαίνομένα ξὺν ὀρᾷ / βακχεύων; Hdt. 4.79: βακχεύει καὶ ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ μαίνεται; Pl. *Smp.* 218b: πάντες γὰρ κεκοινωνήκατε τῆς φιλοσόφου μανίας τε καὶ βακχείας. When Apollodorus narrates how Dionysos drove the Theban and Argive women insane, he says, respectively: τὰς γυναῖκας ἠνάγκασε... βακχεύειν and ἐξέμηνε τὰς γυναῖκας (3.5.2). E. *Ba.* 288–289: τὸ γὰρ βακχεύσιμον / καὶ τὸ μαινῶδες μαντικὴν ἔχει. The testimony of the lexica is very clear: Hsch. s.v. βακχεύει· μαίνεται; s.v. βακχία· μανία; Suda s.v. βακχεύων· μαίνομαι; s.v. ἐκβακχευθεῖς· ἐκμανεῖς; s.v. μαινάδας· μαίνομένας, ζητούσας βακχεύειν.

Such a state of mental alteration caused by Dionysos was undoubtedly beneficial to his followers, since it freed them from their anxieties⁷⁴ and from the constraints of their everyday life.⁷⁵ The epithets Λύσιος, Λυσεύς or Λυαῖος emphasise this ability of the god.⁷⁶ Thanks to him, women could leave the *gynaecium*, stopping their weaving tasks and running freely through the mountains (performing the rite of ὀρειβασία).⁷⁷ In a famous passage from the *Phaedrus*, Plato spoke of ‘the great good that comes to men through the madness granted as a divine gift.’⁷⁸

The connection between madness and liberation is clearly observed in two passages of Pausanias concerning the Dionysian epithets Βάκχιος and Λύσιος. In a night procession held annually in Sicyon, they carried a statue known as Βάκχειος and, behind it, another known as Λύσιος (2.7.5–6). Marcel Detienne quite rightly describes these statues as an ‘analytic staging of *mania*,’⁷⁹ since the first presented Dionysos as the god of frenzy and the second as the god of the liberation and purification attained in such a state.⁸⁰ Even more revealing is the

74 E. Ba. 381: ἀποπαύσαι τε μερίμνας. At several times in the tragedies, he is celebrated for having given men wine, which removes sorrows: οἶνου τέρψιν ἄλυπον (243, the chorus); (the wine) παύει τοὺς ταλαιπώρους βροτοὺς / λύπη (280–281, Teiresias); τὴν παυσίλυπον ἄμπελον δοῦναι βροτοῖς (772, the messenger). See Pl. *Phdr.* 244de: νόσων γε καὶ πόνων τῶν μεγίστων... ἡ μανία... ἀπαλλαγὴν ἡὔρετο, ...λύσιν... τῶν παρόντων κακῶν εὐρομένη; Plu. *Quaest. Conv.* 654F: τὴν γὰρ ἐσπέραν, ὦ ἑταῖρε, τῶν πόνων ἀνάπαυσιν... καὶ τὴν μὲν ὁ Λύσιος ἐπισκοπεῖ Διόνυσος; Corn. 30, p. 59, 2–3 Lang: ἀφ’ ἧς ἀρχῆς καὶ λύσιον αὐτὸν καὶ λυαῖον ἐπωνόμασαν [λύοντα τὰς μερίμνας]; Sen. *Tranq. Anim.* 17.8: *Liberque... dictus est inventor vini, ... quia liberet servitio curarum animum.*

75 Pl. *Phdr.* 265a: τὴν δὲ (sc. μανίαν) ὑπὸ θείας ἐξαλλαγῆς τῶν εἰωθότων νομίμων γιγνομένην.

76 Dodds 1951, 76: ‘He is Lusios, “the Liberator”, the god who... enables you for a short time to stop being yourself, and thereby sets you free’ (Dodds’ emphasis). See Versnel 1990, 139. About Dionysos *Lysios*, see the abundant information and reflections provided by Casadio 1999, 123–143. He distinguishes between two classes of liberation: of the anxieties of this world and of the terrors of the afterlife, this one developed in mysteries (129).

77 E. Ba. 116–119, 217–220, 1236. Cf. Bremmer 1984, 282–286.

78 244a: νῦν δὲ τὰ μέγιστα τῶν ἀγαθῶν ἡμῖν γίγνεται διὰ μανίας, θεῖα μέντοι δόσει διδομένης.

79 Detienne 1989, 25.

80 Versnel 1990, 139: “Bacchios” characterizes him as the god of *orgia* and ecstasy, “Lusios” as the one who liberates man from chafing bonds and daily sorrows; Casadio 1999, 128: ‘Nel rituale bacchico, delirio frenetico e liberazione della angoscia costituiscono due momenti della medesima esperienza.’ Contra Faraone 1993, 2, who sees a ‘ritual antithesis’ in both statues, and Graf 2010, 179: ‘as Bakcheios, he induces ritual madness; as Lysios, he releases the *bakchoi* back to normalcy.’ This idea goes back to Rohde 1898², 383–384 and had many followers, see Casadio 1999, 128, n. 81. The trouble with this interpretation is that no text indicates that Dionysos releases his faithful from their madness, because this is not considered an evil. He does cure madness and illness when they are a punishment that he has inflicted. See Sch. Ar. *Ach.* 242; Suda s.v. Μέλαν, quoted by Boyancé 1936, 64–67 regarding the cathartic power of Dionysos.

testimony of the Periegetes about Corinth (2.2.7). In the agora of this city, two identical wooden statues (ξύανα) were displayed, covered with gold except for the face, which was painted crimson. The two statues were also called Βάκχειος and Λύσιος and were said to come from the same tree, the one from which Pentheus spied on the *Bacchae*. As Detienne points out,⁸¹ the shared origin of the two statues affirms the identity of both aspects of the god, as Βάκχειος and as Λύσιος. No effort has been made to distinguish them by the material, the shape or the colour, as the Naxians did with two masks of the god: they said that one, made from vine wood, was of Dionysos Βακχεύς, whereas the other was from a fig tree and was of Dionysos Μελίχιος, the Soothing.⁸² This made clear two very different facets of the god, as maddening or as a gentle figure,⁸³ whereas the identical Corinthian *xoana* demonstrated that madness and liberation go hand in hand.

This liberating capacity of the god appears clearly in two important Orphic documents, the lamellae of Pelinna (*OF* 485–486), which use the epithet Βάκχιος to refer to Dionysos. In these texts, the initiate is told that when his soul is before Persephone, he must say that he was liberated by Dionysos himself (εἰπεῖν Φερσεφόναί σ' ὅτι Βάκχιος αὐτὸς ἔλυσε, 'Tell Persephone that Bacchius himself has liberated you').⁸⁴ This is the liberation from the cycle of transmigrations and of punishments in Hades. The use of the epithet Βάκχιος, '(god) of the Bacchae,' shows the proximity of Dionysos, who acts in person (as indicated by αὐτός), purifying the faithful who celebrate the ritual in his honour. In this case, Βάκχιος has no relation with madness (an aspect which the Orphics have eliminated from their rituals along with the spilling of blood), but it does have to do with liberation (*cf.* ἔλυσε), which recalls the link between the epithets Βάκχειος and Λύσιος in the images of Dionysos from Sicyon and Corinth referred to by Pausanias.

6 The βακχεία as a Punishment

The madness imparted by Dionysos is not always a source of jubilation and healing, but also has its dark side, as often occurs in many manifestations of this ambivalent god.⁸⁵ Indeed, the μανία can become an instrument with which the god punishes his adversaries, as exemplified by several mythical legends. For

⁸¹ Detienne 1989, 25–26.

⁸² Ath. 3.78c (= Aglaosthenes *FGrHist* 499 F 4).

⁸³ See Faraone 1994, 2.

⁸⁴ For an in-depth interpretation of this expression, see Bernabé/Jiménez San Cristóbal 2008, 66–76.

⁸⁵ About Dionysos' polarity, see Versnel 1990, 132–134, with bibliography in n. 157.

example, Proetus' daughters are driven mad by the god for not accepting his mysteries.⁸⁶ Not wanting to become βάκχαι voluntarily, they are made to do so by force. The raptures of these detractors of the god are often the trigger for greater evils, since they are driven to commit atrocities such as killing their children: Lycurgus, king of Thrace, suffers a hallucination and kills his son, Dryas, with an axe, believing he is pruning a vine;⁸⁷ Leucippe, one of the daughters of Minyas who had refused to join the Bacchae, dismembers her son, Hippasus, with the aid of her sisters;⁸⁸ when the god comes to Argos and sees that the women do not follow him, he drives them insane causing them to flee to the mountains and eat the flesh of their own children.⁸⁹ A peculiar case is that of Pentheus, king of Thebes, who opposed the Bacchic cult: Dionysos does not drive Pentheus himself mad, but rather his mother, Agave, and her sisters. Like Lycurgus, Pentheus' mother undergoes a hallucination; she believes her son is a lion and dismembers him with the aid of Ino, Autonoe and the other Bacchae.⁹⁰ But the consequences of punitive madness are not always bloody. According to Apollodorus, Dionysos induced madness in the Tyrrhenian pirates who had kidnapped him and later they were turned into dolphins.⁹¹ The Suda contains the information that Eleuther's daughters saw an apparition of Dionysos with a black goatskin and reproached him. The god was angered and drove them mad. Later, Eleuther received the oracle that the madness would end if they worshipped Dionysos *Melanaigis*.⁹²

In some uses of the epithet Βάκχιος this negative connotation of the Dionysian μανία seems to be present, for example, in the outcome of the *Bacchae*. When the god orders the maenads to punish Pentheus, the Messenger speaks of the κελευσμός Βακχίου (1089), which they make haste to fulfil. Before being sacrificed, Pentheus himself tells his mother who he is and begs her compassion, but she ignores him since 'she was possessed by Bacchius' (ἐκ Βακχίου κατείχεται, 1124) and is the first to mutilate him. Agave, still delirious after having killed her son in the *Bacchae*, says:

⁸⁶ Ἐμάνησαν: Hes. fr. 131 Merkelbach-West (*ap.* Apollod. 2.2.2).

⁸⁷ Apollod. 3.5.1.

⁸⁸ Ant. Lib. 10, based on Nicander and Corinna. The text does not speak about madness at this point, but it does discuss the fear that overcomes the daughters of Minyas when Dionysos appears before them in the form of a bull, lion and panther. Later, it is said that they left to act as Bacchae in the mountains.

⁸⁹ Ἐξέμηνε: Apollod. 1.9.12 and 2.5.2. Cf. Nonn. *D.* 47.481–495.

⁹⁰ E. *Ba.* 1114–1147, 1177–1300. Cf. 1296: Διόνυσος ἡμᾶς ὤλεσε, Opp. *C.* 4.309–315.

⁹¹ Apollod. 3.5.3: οἱ δὲ ἔμμανεῖς γενόμενοι κατὰ τῆς θαλάττης ἔφυγον. The story is narrated in *Homeric Hymn* 7, where there is no allusion to the pirates' madness.

⁹² Suda s.v. Μέλαν.

ὁ Βάκχιος κυναγέτας
σοφὸς σοφῶς ἀνέπηλ' ἐπὶ θῆρα
τόνδε μαινάδας.⁹³

Bacchius, a wise huntsman,
wisely set the maenads
against this beast.
(Trans. by T. A. Buckley)

Then she descends from the Cithaeron towards the city with her son's head skewered on the thyrsus 'calling Bacchius her fellow hunter, her accomplice in the chase' (ἀνακαλοῦσα Βάκχιον / τὸν ξυγκύναγον, τὸν ξυνεργάτην ἄγρας, 1145–1146). The following chorus begins with an exhortation to dance in honour of Bacchius and to proclaim the misfortune of Pentheus (1153–1155). In all these passages relating the vengeance of Dionysos against his persecutor, the most commonly used epithet is that of Bacchius, more so even than the name of the god.⁹⁴ It is clear that in these cases Βάκχιος presents Dionysos as a cause of destructive madness, which leads the Bacchae to kill Pentheus in the most violent way. It is the terrible aspect of the βακχεία of the god, who does not cause exultation in his enemies but rather a murderous impulse against their loved ones and enormous sorrow after the atrocities committed.

7 Conclusions

The peculiar fact that in Greek texts Βάκχος is used as a name of Dionysos and at the same time of his worshippers has often been attributed to the latter's desire to identify themselves with their god to the extent of even taking on his name. However, an examination of the uses of βάκχος (along with its female form, βάκχη), Βάκχος and other derivatives of the root, such as Βάκχιος, in archaic and classical texts does not support this idea. If it were true, the worshippers of the god would probably also have called themselves διόνυσσοι (or βρόμιοι, or εὔιοι), for which there is no evidence.

The form βάκχος and the more common βάκχη are used in the archaic and classical periods to designate the worshippers of Dionysos. It seems that from their first appearances these terms had the meaning of 'insane, frantic,' given that

⁹³ E. *Ba.* 1189–1192.

⁹⁴ We only find ξένος: 1059, 1068, 1077; Διόνυσος: 1079, 1296, 1302; θεός: 1094, 1108, 1128, 1293; εὔιος θεός: 1166; Βρόμιος: 1250.

Archilochus associates the consumption of wine with the βακχία, which almost certainly meant 'delirium.'

Βάκχος as a name of Dionysos is not found until Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex*. It appears frequently in choral songs by Euripides and in some elegiac and choral texts, which indicates that it is a poetic use that became widespread in the late 5th century BCE. On the other hand, the form Βάκχιος, documented in Sophocles' *Antigone* and thereafter, is more common than Βάκχος and is often used by Euripides in recited parts. All this indicates that it is a more usual form than Βάκχος, which is more poetic.

It seems clear that the form Βάκχιος and Βακχεῖος are originally epithets derived from the substantive βάκχος using the suffixes -ιος and -εῖος. They were applied to Dionysos with the meaning of '(god) of the Bacchae, of delirium.' Later, in a bolder use typical of dramatic choruses, Dionysos was even called Βάκχος, 'the insane,' as a variant of Βάκχιος, but with a more emphatic meaning. The god would no longer be just the one who causes madness, but he himself would take part in it, as one more Bacchant in the midst of his entourage.

We have adduced many parallels in which a god, including Dionysos, receives an epithet related to his followers or to a specific group protected by him, such as Ζεὺς Φίλιος, Ξένιος or Ἰκέσιος. On the other hand, just as Βάκχιος and Βακχεῖος refer to the madness caused by the god, other Dionysian epithets with the same formation reflect different aspects of the cult, such as Εὔιος, Βρόμιος, ὠμάδιος, μαινόλιος, Λύσιος or Νυκτέλιος.

There are also parallels for the fact that the god receives the name of Βάκχος, 'Bacchant,' belonging to his followers. Thus, in texts from different periods he is called μύστης, κωμαστής, θιασώτης, ναρθηκοφόρος, βάσσαρος, νυκτιπόλος or Σάβος. In this way, the faithful expressed their feeling that the god was so close that he was present among them and took part in their rites.

The epithet Βάκχιος indicates the link of Dionysos with his worshippers and his ability to cause madness leading to exaltation and ecstasy. In this case, it presents very positive connotations of proximity, generosity, jubilation and liberation, since for the faithful madness is a gift which brings joy and release from suffering. However, several mythical stories show that madness can also be a punishment for those who fail to accept Dionysos as a god and either refuse to take part in his cults or repress them. There are many mythical examples of this aspect: the Tyrrhenian pirates, Minyas' daughters, Proetus' daughters, the women of Argos or, in the case of rulers, Lycurgus and Pentheus. Many of them are victims of a lethal madness that drives them to kill their children and suffer the consequent sorrow. Frequently, as in the end of Euripides' *Bacchae*, the use of the epithet Βάκχιος indicates this dark side of the god. Madness, like drunkenness, is a dangerous instrument in the hands of the

ambivalent Dionysos, which can turn pleasant euphoria into the road to misfortune.

Abbreviations

DGE: Adrados/et al. 1986, F. R.: *Diccionario Griego-Español*, II, Madrid, 1986.
 LSJ: Liddell/Scott/Jones/Mc Kenzie 1996, H. G./R./H. S./R.: *A Greek-English Lexicon*, Oxford 1996, with P. G. W. Glare and A. A. Thompson, *Revised Supplement*.

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Emilio Suárez de la Torre

Apollo and Dionysos: Intersections

1 Introduction

1.1 The Point of Departure

Greek gods are not separate entities. Or, at least, to consider them as isolated figures, either historically or synchronically speaking, is not a correct method of analysis. Greek religion (or however we might label it) has evolved into a complex *system* of relations between what we (and the Greeks) categorize as ‘gods/goddesses,’ in order, through concrete humanized beings, to articulate all possible paradigms of behavior, moral principles, intellectual and physical powers, vital force and so on, even including aspects that, from our point of view, are not always deemed positively. In other words, they are more ‘immortal super-humans’ than what can be defined as a god in other cultures. However, this is neither a rigid nor an arbitrary system. It is subject to continuous *dialectics*, to a rich chain of interactions, coming from outside the system and, simultaneously, caused by strong internal forces. In the first case, the normal tendency is to assimilate the new elements. In the second, there is a search for internal balance. Under these circumstances, there is a ‘creative’ conflict between old and new forces, or (as it is usually described), between tradition and innovation.

I have begun with this theoretical reflection not only to concretize my general point of view on how a Greek pantheon works, but also to make the rich process of dialectics between the two deities mentioned in the title of my paper more understandable. In fact, according to the theoretical principles I cite above, even the isolation of two gods can be seen as an arbitrary one. The interactions among deities form a ‘cluster’: if you pick up one of them, others come together. Nevertheless, the interactions between Apollo’s and Dionysos’ spheres are of a very particular and persistent nature.¹ And I hope to show by means of the following examples that they are *not* the product of a *natural* process. Religion is not an

¹ For a good abstract, see Graf 2008, 170: ‘Both were sons of Zeus (...) Both were eternally young (...) Dionysos married Ariadne and was strictly heterosexual (...), while Apollo remained decidedly bisexual. Both were connected with altered states of mind, Apollo with prophetic possession, Dionysos with ecstasy of dance and drugs. Both had their music, Apollo the stately music of the grand lyre (*kithara*), Dionysos more often the frenzied sounds of pipes and drums and of smaller string instruments.’

isolated entity operating in a spontaneous manner. At each moment of History, somebody is ‘spinning the threads.’

1.2 The Relation between Apollo and Dionysos in the Scholarly Research

What I call ‘intersections’ between Apollo and Dionysos have been observed since Antiquity (see *infra*), every time a theoretical reflection has focused on them.² What characterizes the analysis of the links between both deities in modern times is: (a) the use of this link as a symbolic instrument to illustrate an aprioristic point of view about the ‘nature’ of Greek culture; (b) the no less aprioristic idea that every Greek god has a consolidated personality that determines the historical developments; (c) after Nietzsche, the role of Delphi as the main place where the encounter takes place. The two first characteristics are due to methodological reasons, but the third is but a natural consequence of the accumulation of testimonies concerning the relationship of the gods. I shall illustrate these ideas with some representative examples.

(a) When treating these themes, modern scholars, not without some embarrassment, must inevitably cite Friedrich Nietzsche’s *Die Geburt der Tragödie aus dem Geiste der Musik* (*The Birth of Tragedy out of the Spirit of Music*, Basel 1872). The reason is easy to understand: this is not a philological work *sensu strictu*, not to mention the important fact that it is inspired by Wagner’s music (and dedicated to him).³ The author himself defined the book in 1886 as ‘dubious,’ ‘unpleasant,’ and ‘strange.’ However, under Nietzsche’s passionate and even visionary style, a good amount of brilliant intuitions can be found. Unfortunately, a general trend to oversimplify his assessments has reduced his thesis to a mere contraposition between the ‘Apolline’ and the ‘Dionysian’ as a distinctive feature not only of Greek tragedy, but of Greek culture as a whole. Nevertheless, we must bear in mind, first, that Nietzsche had limited his analysis to Greek tragedy (including a particular vision of its antecedents), and second, that he emphasized the opposition as much as the complementary aspects of both deities. Allow me to select just a couple of lines that help illustrate this opinion:

When Archilochus, the first Greek lyric poet, announces his raging love and, simultaneously, his contempt for the daughters of Lycambes, it is not his own passion which dances

² A useful summary of the points of contact between Apollo and Dionysos can be found in González Merino 2009, 149–152.

³ On the polemics about Nietzsche’s work among his contemporaries, see Gründer 1989.

in front of us in an orgiastic frenzy: we see Dionysos and the maenads; we see the intoxicated reveller Archilochus sunk down in sleep – as Euripides describes it for us in the *Bacchae*, asleep in a high Alpine meadow in the midday sun – and now Apollo steps up to him and touches him with his laurel. The Dionysian musical enchantment of the sleeper now, as it were, flashes around him fiery images, lyrical poems, which are called, in their highest form, tragedies and dramatic dithyrambs.

After some years working on Archilochus you can imagine my retrospective satisfaction at seeing him as a representative (in an individual dimension) of the process that gave birth to tragedy. But this is a good theme for another article. I just want to underline now that Nietzsche's pronouncements about Apolline and Dionysian intersections are not scarce in his work. He even asserts that the Apolline and Dionysian 'spirits' reinforce themselves mutually.

(b) The irruption of Delphi as a scene fitting the needs for the divine encounter finds a masterful example in chapter nine of E. Rohde's *Psyche* (1890/1894, 1897²), where he studies the 'coming' of Dionysos to Greece and describes the influence of the 'new' ecstatic and orgiastic rites in the irruption of new kinds of – in modern words – 'altered state of mind,' that is, the so-called inspired divination.

(c) W. Otto's chapter on Apollo and Dionysos (1933),⁴ though including some references to Delphi, is mostly an analysis of the parallelism between the mythical couples Zeus-Semele and Apollo-Hiakynthos. As we shall see below, this parallelism reappears in the work of Guthrie on Orphism, though under a different perspective.

(d) A fourth testimony of the irresistible attraction of linking both divinities, conditioned again by the theoretical principles of each scholar, can be seen in the clear-cut description we find in Jane Harrison's *Themis. A Study in the Social Origins of Greek Religion*. Talking about the arrival of both deities in Delphi, she affirms: 'Were they, who seem so disparate, really the same? So far as they are Kouroi and Year-Gods, yes. But they are Kouroi and Year-Gods caught and in part crystallized at different stages of development' (p. 443). And she will add that another important difference is that Apollo is an Olympian.

These four examples are quite representative of some important scholarly trends, developed during the 20th century, which constitute the *status quaestionis* on that issue.⁵ But now it is time to go to the 'navel' of the discussion.⁶

⁴ Otto 1933, 182–188.

⁵ For further illustrations of the current opinions, among others see: Amandry 1950, 196–200; Jeanmaire 1951, 187–8; 492–3; Guthrie 1950, 198ff.; Burkert 1983; Detienne 1989, 1998, 2001, or Dietrich 1992. Dietrich resolutely argued for Dionysian precedence at Delphi.

⁶ For further details about some of the points to be dealt with in the next paragraph here, see my previous works: Suárez 1998a, 1998b, 2002, 2005. See also Sourvinou-Inwood 1988².