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THE DEATH OF THE HANDSOME PANCHYTOS

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THE DEATH OF THE HANDSOME PANCHYTOS¹

In the vase collection of the Antikenabteilung Berlin-Charlottenburg there is a tripod exaleiptron (V.I. 4859),² dated by Kunisch (1971) to the 3rd quarter of the 6th century B.C.³ and said to have come from Boiotia. It has two painted inscriptions on it (a. and b.), written in the Boiotian local alphabet.

Inscription a., written in a circle on the underside of the lid, is easily legible: πολυτιμιδασκαλοσπανχυτοεκαλος. The letters lean backwards - no doubt because the painter failed to revolve the lid as quickly as he progressed with the inscription. Inscription b. is written in a circle on the surface of the slightly deepened rim into which the lid fits. Though partly damaged, it must have been identical with a. in its first and major part. Kern's reading (1913) is a. Πολυτιμίδας καλὸς Πανχύτοε, καλός, b. Πολυτιμίδας καλὸς Πανχύτοε, καλὸ[ς] ναέ. Kunisch (1971) reads a. Πολυτιμιδας καλος Πανχυτοε καλος, b. Πολυτ[ι]μιδας καλος Πανχυτ [.....] εοναε. There is no doubt that both Kern's reading and drawing of b. are more complete than Kunisch's, probably because the surface of the rim has been further damaged by careless handling of the lid in the meantime. In one point, however, Kern's reading has to be modified: By today's conventions we would write καλὸ(ς) ναέ instead of καλὸ[ς] ναέ, since there is no letter space between the omikron and the ny.⁴ So the reading of b. without word division is: πολυτιμιδασκαλοσπανχυτοεκαλο(ς)ναε.

It was clear from the beginning that our texts are similar to the kalos-inscriptions so common on Attic vases. In fact, if Kunisch's date is right, they are amongst the earliest kalos-inscriptions preserved.

¹ This note is the result of some extensive epigraphical checking which I am conducting for a work on the language of non-Attic vase inscriptions.

² Bibliography: First mentioned by R.M. Burrows and P.N. Ure, *JHS* 31 (1911) p. 76 n. 33, p. 80 n. 64, who knew of it from O. Kern; then: O. Kern, *Inscriptiones Graecae* (1913) p. IX f. with a good drawing of inscription b. *ibid.*, and a photo of inscription a. on p1. 10; K.A. Neugebauer, *Führer durch das Antiquarium II, Vasen* (1932) p. 17; I. Scheibler, *JDAI* 79 (1964) p. 95 (saying that the vase was on the market, adding a photo fig. 16 on which however the inscriptions are invisible); I.K. Raubitschek, *Hesperia* 35 (1966) p. 162f. with *ibid.* a new drawing of b. by N. Kunisch, and a photo of a. on p1. 52 b; I. Scheibler, *AA* 1968 p. 394; U.L. Gehrig - A. Greifenhagen - N. Kunisch, *Führer durch die Antikenabteilung* (1968) p. 54; N. Kunisch, *CVA Deutschland* 33 (1971) p. 71 f. with again a new drawing of b. *ibid.* and a photo of a. on p1. 198.5 as well as one of b. (hardly visible) on p1. 198.3; J.-J. Maffre, *BCH* 99 (1975) p. 423 n.56.

³ The authors of the Museum guides dated it to about 575 B.C.

⁴ It is impossible to say whether this is just a spelling error or represents a real phonetic change, e.g. an assimilation [-ς v-] > [-vv-] written v.

Kern (1913) suggested that οε could be an example of the spelling, relatively frequent in archaic Boiotian, of the i-diphthongs with ε, as is certainly the case in the last word of b. (ναέ for ναί).⁵ He understood the sentence as 'Panchytos thinks Polytimidas is handsome, handsome (indeed)', comparing Ἄνδοκίδεος καλὸς δοκεῖ Τιμαγόρῃ on an Attic vase.⁶ But one feels somewhat uneasy about this in view of the lack of δοκεῖ in our inscription. No better is the interpretation which emerges from Neugebauer's translation in the Museum Guide (1932, taken over by Gehrig et al. 1968): "Der schöne Politimidas dem schönen Panchytos". Of course this could be right only if we had καλῶι at the end. A dative Πανχύτῳε (or feminine Πανχυτοῦε) would perhaps be possible if we read the last word as adverb καλῶς. That is unknown in kalos-inscriptions, however, and gives a totally unusual meaning to what otherwise looks like a typical example of them.

Since the word καλός occurs twice on each inscription Maffre (1975) tried to take Πανχυτοε as a second nominative, interpreting the inscriptions as a praise of two youths.⁷ He groups the form with the Boiotian short names in -ἔ, later -ει. But the formation of his alleged Πανχυτόε, which he probably thought to be derived from the full name *Πάγχυτος suggested by Kern, would be strange: Not only should a vocalic suffix -ἔ be added to an o-stem without the thematic vowel in Greek, but also the resulting "short" name would indeed be longer than the original one. We should rather expect *Πανχύτῃε or even *Πάνχῃε. Moreover it is rather hard to imagine a meaning for a proper name *Πάγχυτος at all ('poured out by everybody', 'poured out totally' ?).

The solution presented here is entirely different: There is but one handsome youth praised in these inscriptions, but all the more enthusiastically: Πολυτιμίδας καλός· πάνχυ τοε καλός (ναέ) 'Polytimidas is handsome - Yes, very handsome (indeed)!'. Similar short texts of course quite often occur in Attic vase inscriptions, e.g. Λάχῃς καλός· ἡο παῖς ναίχῃ καλός,⁸ or even more closely to our text: ἡο πα[ῖς κ]αλό[ς], with, on the other side, κάρτ[α] ναίχ[ι] 'very much so, yes!'⁹ Some of these texts probably were meant to be short imaginary dialogues, which is, I think, also the case of our inscription.

Let us now look at the vocabulary used on our Boiotian vase: ναί is quite frequent in Attic dialogue (as it is still today), but rather rare in earlier poetic literature:¹⁰ In Homer who notoriously avoids colloquialisms it is only used in formulae and is confined to the beginning

⁵ See e.g. A. Thumb - A. Scherer, *Handbuch der griechischen Dialekte II* (2nd ed. 1959) p. 24-26.

⁶ See J.D. Beazley, *ABV* (1956) p. 174 No.7.

⁷ As e.g. att. Νικόστρατος καλός, Λάχῃς καλός, see J.D. Beazley, *ARV* (1963) p. 337 No. 26.

⁸ See Beazley *ARV* p. 336 No. 14.

⁹ *Ibid.* p. 88 No.4. More bibliography on the kalos-inscriptions, which are of special importance for Attic prosopography and the dating of vases, can be found e.g. via H.A. Shapiro's article in *Hesperia* 52 (1983) p. 305-10; see also *AJA* 91 (1987) p. 304 about his and R. Cromey's project "Prosopographia Vasorum Atticorum".

¹⁰ See. E. Schwyzer - A. Debrunner, *Griechische Grammatik II* (1950) p. 570.

of a statement. Later poets use it mainly in the formulae ναί (μὰ) ... with a deity's name (e.g. Ar.Ach.867 νῆ τὸν Ἴόλᾱον, spoken by a Boiotian). So an instance like Soph. El.1445 σέ τοι, σὲ κρίνω, ναὶ σέ, spoken by Aigisthos in his first few verses, has a decidedly colloquial touch and contributes to the picture of a rather mediocre character the poet wants to draw of him. In Attic vase inscriptions on the other hand ναί(χι) is very frequent indeed already a century earlier and often occurs at the end of a statement.¹¹ Our Boiotian inscription suggests that this was a common colloquial feature shared by more than one dialect at least as early as the 6th century.

The enclitic particle τοι is quite frequent too.¹² In early Greek literature it mainly occurs in direct speech and has the function of involving the audience ('you know', 'I tell you').¹³ Exactly as it is used in our inscription it occurs in Attic literature too, namely "conveying a criticism, favourable or unfavourable, of the previous speaker's words"¹⁴ (e.g. Ar. Pax 934 Εὐ τοι λέγεις, id. Plut. 198 Εὐ τοι λέγειν ἔμοιγε φαίνεσθον πάνυ). I could not find any clear cases in inscriptions.¹⁵

On the other hand πάγχυ appears to be a special word.¹⁶ It is true that it occurs some 25 times in Homer, 14 times in Herodotus and once each in Hesiod, Sappho, Pindar, and Epicharmus. But in Attic literature¹⁷ we find it only twice. Aesch.Sept. 641 (in a messenger's speech) and Ar.Ran. 1531 (in solemn hexameters supposed to be in Aeschylean style). This word is clearly non-Attic, and since our inscription is anything but poetic it must belong to the current Boiotian language of the time. If we then consider the fact that the Sapphic verse containing πάγχυ (16.5 L.-P.) is clearly - and no doubt intentionally - simple

¹¹ Apart from the second example with ναίχι cited above, see e.g. Beazley, ARV p. 25 bottom No. 1 and p. 99 No.4 ἡο παῖς καλὸς ναί, p. 99 No.5 Ἡίπαρχος καλὸς ναί, p. 332 No.30 Λύ[κ]ο[ς] καλὸς ναίχι (see p. 329 No. 132 with different word order), or in a painter's inscription ibd. p. 28 No. 11 Εὐθὺμίδῃς ἔγραψεν ἡο Πολίῳ εὐγῆ ναίχι. See also the many inscriptions like Σῆρῆν ἡοδί γε ναίχι 'This one here is a Siren, you know, that's for sure!' etc. on a band cup discussed by M. Scheller, MH 38 (1981) p. 220-27. See also W. Schulze, Kleine Schriften (1933) p. 706.

¹² For the following see J.D. Denniston, The Greek particles (2nd ed. 1954) esp. p. 537-39, and Schwyzer-Debrunner cit. p. 580-82.

¹³ We find it in Homer, Hesiod, Empedocles, Parmenides, Pindar, Herodotus etc. In Attic it eventually got a rather weak meaning, especially in combinations like γάρ τοι, γέ τοι, οὐ τοι etc., but when used on its own it still mainly occurs in dialogue (see e.g. the verse from Soph.El. cited above).

¹⁴ Denniston cit. p. 542 No.7, with examples.

¹⁵ A possible Attic example is Beazley ARV p. 308 No.3: Λυσέας καλός· ναίχι δοκεῖ τοι 'Lyseas is handsome - Yes indeed, I think so too' (I depend on Beazley's reading. The photo in the Beazley Archives, Oxford, shows -οι, but not the tau).

¹⁶ It does not seem to be used together with τοι anywhere else but here; in Il. 19.343 τοι is a real dative.

¹⁷ Here πάνυ, probably a specific Attic creation, is predominant. See e.g. the verse from Ar.Plut. cited above.

and prosaic in style,¹⁸ it is likely that the word was used in contemporary Lesbian too. So the attestations in Homer might well belong to the Aiolic layer.¹⁹

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ADDENDUM

P.J. Parsons and R. Kassel after reading this note both reminded me of Callimachus' epigram II (A.S.F. Gow and D.L. Page, *The Greek Anthology, Hellenistic Epigrams*, Cambridge 1965, I p.57, II p. 155-57 [= No.28 Pfeiffer]) v. 5 σὺ δὲ ναίχτι καλὸς, καλός. There is some dispute about whether v. 5 and 6 belong to v. 1-4 or are a later addition (see *ibid.* II p. 156f.). Or are they a separate epigram? I think there may be some support for Callimachus' authorship in the echoing οὐχί of epigr.V: καλὸς ὁ παῖς ... λίην καλός, εἰ δέ τις οὐχί φησὶν ..., not mentioned by Gow and Page *loc.cit.* - Perhaps even more important however are the conclusions we can draw from this line for the whole genre of kalos-inscriptions: (1) the phrase καλός ναίχτι vel sim. was not confined to pots but was generally used to praise one's favorite youth; (2) if the line is by Callimachus or at least not earlier, the phrase was still in use well over a century after the latest preserved kalos-inscriptions, which seem to stop around 420/10 B.C.

¹⁸ I owe this remark to Anna Morpurgo Davies. See also D. Page, *Sappho and Alcaeus* (1955) p. 56: 'in a phrase which rings dull in our doubtful ears, she proceeds...".

¹⁹ The other attestations are more difficult to judge: Is the example in Hesiod a Boiotian feature or simply epic (Op. 264, he is addressing the kings who were local people)? Where did Pindar (P. 2.82, used of a lower class fawning citizen) take the word from? Considering that it occurs in Epicharmus, can it be that the examples in Herodotus are Doric rather than Ionic?