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Egyptian Influence in Tibullus¹

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INTRODUCTION

Living in a time which brings distant and different cultures nearer to each other and exposes them to the influence of each other, scholars observe with growing interest how the Roman poets came to grips with the strange Egyptian culture and were influenced by it, at least from the time when Egypt became a part of the imperium Romanum in 30 B.C. As long ago as 1924, E. Norden tried to make it clear that Vergil in his fourth eclogue was influenced by old Egyptian traditions; in the present generation further research pointed to the Egyptian influence in Roman literature. In 1955, the Egyptologist A. Hermann pointed out astonishing similarities between the Egyptian and Roman form of the paracausithyron which the lover who found no admittance into his loved one's house sang before her door, bringing offerings to the door as to a goddess.² In 1962, H. Fuchs

¹ This paper was read on three separate occasions in January 1974 at Ann Arbor, Duke, and Urbana, and its German prototype in June 1969 at Cologne and later in Bonn. I enjoyed encouragement and criticism, especially from Professors F. O. Copley, H. Dahlmann, Ph. Derchain, A. Henrichs, R. Merkelbach, J. K. Newman, and W. H. Willis, and by my friend Dr. Gumbert Ludwig, a Franciscan priest in Cairo. I thank J. G. Shelton for his help in phrasing the English version of my paper. Lately P. Grimal called the attention of scholars to the Egyptian ideas in Tibullus I, 7: "Le dieu Sérapis et le Génieus de Messalla" (paper read in Paris, February 1969, and published in the *Bull. Soc. Fr. Eg.*, 53-54, 1969, 42 ff.); he follows the same line of interpretation I do, and the reader may be referred to his paper for supplementary arguments and information.

² A. Hermann, *Beiträge zur Erklärung der ägyptischen Liebesdichtung*, Akad. Berl., Inst. f. Orientf., 29, *Ägypt. Studien H. Grapow gew.*, Berlin, 1955, 118 ff.; for the paracausithyron see pp. 134 ff. The offerings to the door in Plautus's *Curc.*, 71 ff. (cf. Tib. I, 2, 13 f.; Prop. I, 16, 41 ff.), are certainly a parody of Roman rites and Italian folklore (E. Burck, *Das humanistische Gymnasium*, 43, 1932, 194 ff. = *Das römische Menschenbild*, Heidelberg, 1966, 250 ff.; F. O. Copley, *Exclusus Amator*, Phil. Monogr., 17, Baltimore, 1956, 28 ff.), but this does not exclude the additional influence of Egyptian religious ideas and poetry by the way of Hellenistic mediation.

directed attention to an Egyptian parallel of Horace's Ode 3, 30: "exegi monumentum aere perennius/ regalique situ pyramidum altius."³ Horace may have thought of Cornelius Gallus, the first Roman governor of Egypt, who fixed inscriptions describing his deeds on the walls of the pyramids.⁴ But already in 1200 B.C. an Egyptian scribe on papyrus felt, quite similarly to Horace, that his work would last longer than brazen pyramids with tomb inscriptions of iron. After this parallel between Horace and the Egyptian scribe, other parallels collected by P. Gilbert in 1946 became more convincing. The "carpe diem" of Ode I, 11 and similar invitations to enjoy life follow the patterns of the Egyptian songs of the harper.⁵ Obviously the Greek poets in Alexandria took up Egyptian thoughts and formulations and passed them on to the Romans. In 1968, M. West pointed to similar invitations and expressions in Hellenistic poems, and indeed U. v. Wilamowitz-Moellendorff had already taken notice of correspondences between Hellenistic epigrams and old Egyptian poems.⁶

But the Romans were influenced by the Egyptians not only through Hellenistic poems. The fact that the Greeks did not hesitate to take up Egyptian influences justified the Romans in imitating the Egyptians directly. They adopted parts of the Egyptian ideology of kingship and took over even some of its ceremonial rites. When the Roman republic was followed by the principate, the Roman emperors had to look for an ideology in order to make the new form of personal government understandable and acceptable. They claimed to renew the old Roman traditions and to keep up the old institutions, but in fact they changed them, borrowing from several sources—among them from the old Egyptian ideology of kingship, which had already been adopted by the Greek kings of Egypt. This point was rightly stressed by I. Trencsényi-Waldapfel.⁷

³ H. Fuchs in: *Antidoron E. Salin zum 70. Geburtstag*, Tübingen, 1962, 149 ff.; cf. I. B. Borzsák, *Acta ant.*, 12, 1964, 137 ff.; I. Trencsényi-Waldapfel, *Acta ant.*, 12, 1964, 149; S. Morenz, "Die Begegnung Europas mit Ägypten," *Sb. Akad. Leipzig*, Phil.-hist. Kl., 113, 5, Berlin, 1968, 109; D. Korzeniewski, *Gymnasium*, 79, 1972, 382, n. 6.

⁴ E. Maróti, *Beitr. zur alten Gesch. und deren Nachleben*, Festschr. Altheim I, Berlin, 1969, 452 ff.

⁵ P. Gilbert, *Latomus*, 5, 1946, 61 ff.; cf. S. Morenz in: *Handbuch d. Orientalistik*, I, 1 Ägyptologie, Leiden and Cologne, 1970, 233 f.; but cf. also Eurip., *Alc.*, 785, and Menander, *Aspis*, 249. Gilbert already points to the above-mentioned parallel between Horace and the Egyptian scribe of 1200 B.C.

⁶ M. L. West, *HSCP*, 73, 1968, 113 ff.; U. v. Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, *Hellenistische Dichtung*, I, 120 n. 1.

⁷ *Éléments égyptiens dans la poésie de l'âge d'or*, *Ann. univ. sc. Budapestinensis de R. Eötvös nominatae*, sectio phil., 6, 1965, 3 ff.; idem, *Savaria*, 3, 1965, 125 ff. (Hungarian with a German summary); cf. E. Köberlein, *Caligula und die ägyptischen Kulte*, Meisenheim, 1962; L. Koenen, *Eine ptolemäische Königsurkunde*, Bonn, 1957, 14 f.

At the same time, when the religion of the Egyptian goddess Isis conquered the Greek and Roman world, Roman poets occupied themselves with this strange religion. In 1968 it was demonstrated that Tibullus and his imitator Lygdamus allude to an Egyptian rite. The old Egyptian dead had to assert before the court judging him: "I did not do this sin, I did not do that sin." According to the Mosaic Law such "negative confessions" were practised by the Hebrews, but later, obviously in the Egyptian tradition, also by priests and initiates of the mysteries. When Tibullus feels that his last hour is near, he states: "parce pater! timidum non me periuria terrent,/ non dicta in sanctos impia verba deos."⁸ Even Propertius plays with this rite when he proclaims to the goddess of his lady's door: "te non ulla meae laesit petulantia linguae, / quae solet irato dicere pota ioco."⁹ Later we read similar allusions in Petronius: "non templis impius hostis, admovi dextram,"¹⁰ which echoes Lygdamus's "nec nos sacrilegi templis admovimus ungues"¹¹ and also the oath of a priest: οὐδὲ οὐ μὴ κολλήσω τοὺς δακτύλους[ς τῶ ἑρῶ].¹² In another way Horace alludes to the mysteries of Isis. In Ode III, 26 Venus plays the part of Isis-Nemesis, the goddess who castigates the initiates for their former sins: "o quae beatam diva tenes Cyprum et/ Memphin carentem Sithonia nive/ regina, sublimi flagello/ tange Chloen semel arrogantem."¹³

Here we shall confine ourselves to Tibullus. He knew the mysteries of Isis. His mistress had been initiated, as the poet himself states (I, 3, 27ff.). Her sexual relationship to Tibullus was part of her religious devotion. If the poet wanted to please her and to win her, he had to show interest in

⁸ I, 3, 51 f.; cf. ZPE, 2, 1968, 31 ff.; R. Merkelbach, ZPE, 11, 1973, 82 f.; for the Hebrew practice cf. Deut., 26, 3 f., and 1 Sam. 12, 13 ff., and see G. v. Rad, *Gesammelte Studien zum Alten Testament*, München, 1958, 281 ff., esp. 290 f.

⁹ I, 16, 37 f. "ioco (Heinsius) is a certain emendation for 'loco'" Butler-Barber. The "irato" of the codices is confirmed by I, 6, 10, "quae solet irato," where "irato" is a wrong reading taken from I, 16, in order to replace the authentic "ingrato" preserved only by the Itali; "dicere ioco" instead of "dicere iocum," because "quae" is the accusative belonging to "dicere." "pota" (Heinse) is as good a conjecture as any and replaces the corrupt "tota" (cf. Sh. Bailey, Enk). I understand: "No wantonness of my tongue has hurt you by words it is accustomed to use when drunk and scoffing angrily." Cf. Tibullus's paraclausithyron, I, 2, 81 ff.

¹⁰ 133, 3, 7 f.; cf. O. Raith, *Studi class.*, 13, 1971, 112 ff.

¹¹ 5, 11: "ungues" conjectured by me for the corrupt "ignes" or "aegros" of the manuscripts; cf. R. Merkelbach, ZPE, 11, 1973, 83 n. 8. For the "negative confessions" in Roman literature see also Lygdamus 4, 15 f.; Prop. II, 28, 9 ff.; IV, 11, 41 ff., for the corresponding positive confession, see Prop. II, 26, 3. I hope soon to demonstrate this by detailed interpretations. W. D. Lebek refers to Stat., *Silv.*, 5, 5, 1 ff.

¹² SB, VI, 9641; τῶ ἑρῶ] supplevi; for other suggestions see R. Merkelbach, ZPE, 2, 1968, 18 to line 8. For the "negative confessions" see also Philod., AP, 10, 21, 5.

¹³ Cf. I. Trencsényi-Waldapfel, *Eléments* (see n. 7), 6.

her religious beliefs. He called her "Delia" with regard to the island of Delos. But Delos was one of the main places not only of the Greek god Apollo, but also of the Egyptian goddess Isis, whose son Horus was identified with Apollo. In the third century B.C. the cult of Isis at Delos was founded by an Egyptian priest coming from Memphis.¹⁴ And Horace showed his reverence to the Isis of Memphis in the ode just quoted, III, 26. From the second century B.C. on, Roman tradesmen brought the cult of Isis to Rome. In fact, this island was one of the stations along the route the cult of Isis went from Memphis to Rome.¹⁵ Therefore the name Delia connects the poet's mistress not only with Apollo, the god of the poets, but also with Isis, the goddess to whom this lady devoted herself. Thus the name Delia itself may be taken as a symbol of the Roman love elegy, which as poetry is devoted to the Greek Apollo, but at the same time as a love song to the beloved girl and her religious feelings dominated by the Egyptian Isis. The same is true for Propertius's Cynthia¹⁶ and Lycinna,¹⁷ but not quite for Tibullus's second mistress, whom he called "Nemesis."

¹⁴ *IG*, XI, 4, 1299; H. Engelmann, *The Delian Aretology of Sarapis*, Leiden, 1975. For Memphis as place of Isis, see J. Bergman, "Ich bin Isis," *Acta Univ. Upsal.*, Uppsala, 1968.

¹⁵ Delos was a free port used for transhipment by Roman merchants; there they became acquainted with Sarapis (P. Roussel, *Les cultes égypt. à Delos*, Paris-Nancy, 1916; cf. P. M. Fraser, *Ptol. Alexandria*, Oxford, 1972, I, 800). The importance of merchants for the spreading of the cult of Isis is stressed by P. M. Fraser, *Opusc. Athen.*, 3, 1960, 1 ff., esp. 20 ff. Köberlein, *loc. cit.* (see n. 7), 70 ff. Significantly, there was a priesthood of *μελανηφόροι* in Rome (L. Vidman, *Sylloge inscriptionum rel. Isiacae et Sarapiacae*, 426, 427; cf. idem, *Isis und Serapis bei den Griechen und Römern*, RGTV, 29, Berlin, 1970, 68 ff.) as well as in Delos (Roussel, 21, 26, 58, 95, 98, etc.; cf. Vidman, *SIRIS*, index I, p. 348 s.v.); besides this priesthood is known in Eretria only (*SIRIS*, 75). Isis herself is *μελανηφόρος* in the *Orph. hymn*, 42, 9, and in a hymn of Isidorus (*SEG*, VIII, 550, 34 = E. Bernard, *Inscr. métriques de l'Égypte Greco-Romaine*, Paris, 1969, 175, 2 = V. F. Vanderslip, "The Four Gr. Hymns . . .," *ASP*, 12, 1972, 3, p. 49 [cf. the note on p. 62]; see Th. Hopfner on Plut., *De Iside* 58 (II, 227); R. Merkelbach, *Roman und Mysterium in der Antike*, München-Berlin, 1962, 145, n. 6). In Preneste as well as in Delos, Isis was assimilated to Fortuna Primigenia (Roussel, 119 and 128). Certain devotional objects were called "Deliaca" (*Hist. Aug.*, Alex. Sev., 26, 8 = I, 270 Hohl; cf. F. Dunand, *Bull. de la Fac. des Lettr. de Strasb.*, Dec., 1968, 151 ff.). But for bringing Isis to Rome, other places were important too: Sicily, South Italy, Eretria, Chalcis (Vidman, *Isis*, 95 ff.) and Alexandria, which supplied Rome with its goods since the end of the second century B.C. (Fraser, *Alex.*, 155 f.).

¹⁶ For the connection of Zeus Kynthios and Athene with the cult of Isis see Roussel, *loc. cit.* (n. 15), 166, 187, 209; for Artemis Kynthia see, e.g., Prop. II, 34, 80; Artemis too was associated with Isis (Roussel, 179) and identified with her (Roussel, 127 and 128, "Ἄρτεμις Ἐκάτη"; cf. Merkelbach, *loc. cit.* (n. 15), 92. For the identification of Delian Apollo with Horus, see *Chron. d'Ég.*, 67, 1959, 110 ff.

¹⁷ Lycinna is named after Ἀπόλλων Λύκειος who at Lycopolis in Egypt was worshipped as Horus (Macr., *Sat.*, I, 17, 40; cf. D. Wortmann, *Philologus*, 107, 1963, 157 ff.).

The goddess Nemesis had no special relations with the poets, but she was identified with Isis, as already was seen in Horace's Ode III, 26.¹⁸ In short, Tibullus called his mistresses by such names as were given to the initiates in the course of their initiation. Many such names are to be found in literary works and in inscriptions, such as Nemesius, Memphius, Memphites, Tarsia, and so on.¹⁹

¹⁸ For Isis Nemesis cf. Roussel, *loc. cit.* (n. 15), 138-140.

¹⁹ The religious meaning of the "signa" (P. Wuilleumier, "Et. hist. sur l'emploi et la signification des signa," *Mem. prés. à l'Acad. des Inscr.*, 13, 2, Paris, 1932; cf. R. Merkelbach, *loc. cit.* [n. 15], 117 n.; L. Vidman, *Isis* [n. 15], 94 and 130 f.; also, P. Thrans, *ZPE*, 9, 1972, 139 ff.). Aseneth's change of name into Πόλυς Καταφυγῆς [Joseph et Aséneth, ed. Philonenko, 15, 6] has been doubted (I. Kajanto, *Supernomina*, Helsingfors, 1966; cf. H. Solin, *ZPE*, 10, 1973, 279; G. Freimuth's argumentation against explaining the poetical names of Tibullus's and Propertius's mistresses as sounding like names given to the initiates is rather superficial [*Mus. Helv.*, 21, 1964, 90 n. 25]). *Nemesius*: *CIL*, VI, 12323. *Memphius*: Vidman, *SIRIS* (see n. 15), 425 and 586; cf. Dessau, 5187, 5191, and 5192. For the religious interpretation of *SIRIS*, 586, it may be relevant that the dead woman, a cult musician, was presumably welcomed to the paradise by Venus (Isis), and it was this goddess by whom Tibullus hoped to be introduced into Elysium (I, 3, 58; cf. P. Grimal, *Homm. à Deonna*, Brussels, 1957, 258 ff.). *Vere Memfiana*: Vidman, *SIRIS*, 424. *Memphitis* is the second name of Anthia, the heroine in the novel of Xenophon from Ephesus (4, 3, 6; see Merkelbach, *loc. cit.* [n. 15], 107); and the worshippers of Isis are called by Petronius: "Memphitides puellae/ sacris deum paratae" (fr. XIX). For *Tarsia* see the *Hist. Apoll. Regis Tyri* (Merkelbach, *loc. cit.* [n. 15], 165). Also names such as *Isius* (Vidman, *SIRIS*, 578), *Meliteus* (P. Wuilleumier, *Inscr. lat. des trois Gaules*, Paris, 1963, 250), *Melite* (in Ach. Tat.; cf. Merkelbach, *loc. cit.* [n. 15], 139), *Semelius* (*CIL*, XIV, 4488), *Oresios* (Vidman, *SIRIS*, 620) identify persons with Isis, alias Semele and Artemis. Other signa allude to rites: *Eugamius* (Vidman, *SIRIS*, 586; cf. *IG*, XIX, 1682 = Kajanto, 13), *Heuresius* (Vidman, *SIRIS*, 501; cf. idem, *Isis*, 94), *Thiasus*, a name used by a nauarchos at the "navigium Isidis" (Vidman, *SIRIS*, 428), *Nabe* (Dessau, 4475) and *Navigium* (*IG*, IX, 1641 = Kajanto, 66), presumably also connected with the "navigium Isidis"; *Innocentius* may allude to the "negative confessions," and when *Innocentius*' wife is called *Encratius*, both names may denote the morals of the mysteries (*CIL*, V, 5869 = Kajanto, 68). Even names such as *Gregorius* (Kajanto, 59 ff.; L. Moretti, *Riv. fil.*, 93, 1965, 179 ff.) and *Felix* may have been representations of the vigilance and happiness of the initiates, at least at the time when these names came into use. I hope to show soon that names such as Petronius's *Polyaenos*, the alias of *Encolpius*, *Circe*, and *Oenothea* are signa too. Since prostitutes were often adherents of Isis and other mysteries, one should not be surprised that they were called by names like *Δελφίς*, *Παρθενίς* (Isis), *Νεβρίς*, *Ἀμπελίς*, *Βακχίς*, *Φοιβίς* (Apollo-Horus), *Πανωχίς*, and *Θαίς* (a name which could be understood as "belonging to Isis," but certainly not always had this association; see W. Swinnen, *Chron. d'Ég.*, 42, 1967, 158 ff.); cf. the names of courtesans in Lucian's *Dial. meret.* Certainly such names as *Μέμφις*, *Μεμφείτης*, *Εὐρέσιος*, *Θίασος*, *Ἴσις*, *Σεμέλη*, *Νέμεσις*, *Μελίτα* and *Μελίτιος* were used as normal personal names, but not always without religious significance. Sometimes the religious significance may have been forgotten, but it was inherent and could reappear as suited the intent of the name-givers. The fact that very worldly ladies are called *Mary* does not exclude the use of this name by nuns in its full religious meaning.

Nevertheless, it was not only the courtesans who paved the way to the mysteries and Egyptian beliefs and rites for poets like Tibullus, but also the attraction of this religion for the Romans and some of their politicians. The mysteries of Isis succeeded against the resistance of conservative circles which in the twelve years between 59 and 48 B.C. five times destroyed the altar of Isis erected on the Capitol.²⁰ In 28 B.C. it was forbidden by Augustus to erect chapels of Isis within the walls of Rome, and in 21 B.C. this prohibition was expanded by Agrippa up to the first milestone. Later under Tiberius in 19 B.C., the worshippers of Isis were prosecuted. By law it was not permitted to worship new and foreign gods, not even in a private cult.²¹ Nevertheless the Egyptian cults had been growing in Rome since the times of Sulla.²² At the end of the republic men wearing the mask of the jackel-shaped god Anubis were a common sight in the streets of Rome. After being proscribed in 43 B.C., M. Volusius escaped under the protection of such a mask. Later, so did the young Domitian dressed as a worshipper of Isis (*Tac. Hist.*, 3, 74, 1). In the time of Augustus, Fortuna's temple at Preneste became practically a temple of the Egyptian Isis, as is demonstrated by the mosaics depicting the river Nile and its miraculous land. It was already in 43 B.C. that the triumviri Octavian, Antonius, and Lepidus planned to erect a temple of Isis and Sarapis but were prevented from doing so because of the Egyptian war. The triumviri were no worshippers of Isis, but were motivated by political calculations, as can be seen in Augustus's later repressive action against the chapels of Isis. Nevertheless in 43 B.C. they gave the impression of favoring the Egyptian cult in order to please the common people. Some of the members of the Roman aristocracy were even fascinated by the new cult. Already under the reign of the last Cleopatra the Roman officer

²⁰ A certain T. Sulpicius was "sacerdos Isidis Capitolinae," probably before 58 B.C.; see Vidman, *SIRIS*, 377 = Dessau, 4405.

²¹ Cic., *De leg.*, 2, 19; cf. 21. For the ups and downs of the cult of Isis in Rome, see F. Cumont, *Die orientalischen Religionen im röm. Heidentum*, Darmstadt, 1959 (Paris⁴, 1928), 75 ff.; K. Latte, *Röm. Religionsgesch.*, Handb. d. Altertumsw., München, 1960, 282 ff.; E. Köberlein, *loc. cit.* (see n. 7), 11 ff.; P. F. Tschudin, *Isis in Rom*, Aarau, 1962; V. Tran Tam Tinh, *Essai sur le culte d'Isis à Pompéi*, Paris, 1964, 19 ff. W. Hornbostel, *Sarapis*, Leiden, 1973, 361 ff.

²² According to Apuleius the Roman college of pastofori was founded in the time of Sulla. In the sixties of the first century B.C., the curule aediles minted coins with signs of the cult of Isis, obviously because these signs were so popular that the aediles did not mind using them despite official politics directed against the cult at that time. See Vidman, *Isis* (n. 15), 101 ff., whose interpretation of the facts detected by A. Alföldi ("Isiskult und Umsturzbeziehung . . .," *Schweizer Münzblätter*, 5, 1954, 25 ff.; *Schweizer numism. Rundschau*, 36, 1954, 5 ff.; *Essays in Rom. Coinage pres. to H. Mattingly*, Oxford, 1956, 94; *Jb. Ant. Christ.*, 8-9, 1965-1966, 62 f.) is convincing for me.

C. Iulius Papius prayed together with his suite to the Lady Isis at Philae,²³ just as later, in the second century, stylish Roman gentlewomen used to make pilgrimages to this place (Juv. 6, 526 ff.). So did formerly the Greek kings of Egypt²⁴ and their high officers, especially the epistrategus, the governor of all Upper Egypt.²⁵ Cornelius Gallus, the first Roman governor of Egypt and the creator of the Roman elegy, offered and thanked the Roman gods and the Νεῖλος συνλήπτωρ in Philae for his victories over the insurgents. His inscription erected at Philae records that Gallus was installed by Augustus as the first governor of Egypt and won two battles and subdued the rebellious Thebaid, which—as is said—formerly did not submit itself to the kings of Egypt, and that he conquered five cities partly by the first assault and partly by a siege, captured the leaders of the revolt, led his army past the cataract, received embassies of the Ethiopians at Philae, put their kings under protection, and installed

²³ On March 28, 32 B.C.: *OGI*, 196 = *SB*, 8427 = A. Bernand, *Les inscr. grecques de Philae*, I nr. 63. In A.D. 5 a certain Aulus Novius Faustus prayed at Philae to Isis (*SB*, 8834 = E. Bernand, *Les inscr. gr. . . .*, II nr. 153).

²⁴ Euergetes I dedicated a chapel to Isis and Harpocrates at Philae (*OGI*, 61 = *SB*, 8859 = A. Bernand, 4); Epiphanes (*OGI*, 98 = *SB*, 8395 = A. Bern., 8) and Euergetes II (*OGI*, 142 = *SB*, 8882 = A. Bern., 17) also went to the island; one wonders whether it was not on the occasion of royal visits that the gods Isis and Horus dedicated statues to the king Philometor, after they had greeted and acknowledged him as legal king and god according to the ritual of royal visits to the temples (*OGI*, 122 = *SB*, 8879 = A. Bern., 10, Βασιλέα Πτολεμαῖον θεὸν Φιλομήτορα Ἴσις καὶ Ὡρος and *OGI*, 121 = *SB*, 8770 = A. Bern., 12 [king Philometor, his spouse and son]). Soter II went to Elephantine and performed the rites of the Nile flood: ἀποδοῦς τῷ Νεῖλῳ τὰ νομιζ[όμενα] (*OGI*, 168; see D. Bonneau, *La crue du Nil*, Paris, 1964, 391 n. 1). See also R. Merkelbach, *Isisfeste in griechisch-römischer Zeit*, Meisenheim, 1963, 67.

²⁵ For the epistrategus as governor of all Upper Egypt in the later Ptolemaic times see now the monograph of J. David Thomas (*Papyrologica Colonensia*, VI, Opladen, 1975). The epistrategus Demetrius visited Philae obviously on the occasion of a synode and dedicated an altar to the gods (*SEG*, 8, 788 = *SB*, 3448 = A. Bern., 20); the epistrategus Hephaestion (sic) prayed in Philae to Isis for his children (A. Bern., 44); so did the epistrategus Callimachus for the king Neos Philopator (Auletes; *OGI*, 186 = *SB*, 8398 = A. Bern., 52, and *SB*, 4084 = A. Bern., 53); and Callimachus's son, when in the same office, for Cleopatra Philopator (A. Bern., 58; cf. *SB*, 8652 = A. Bern., 57); for the epistrategus of Roman times see *SB*, 8428 = E. Bernand, 135. Also strategi were often seen praying to Isis at Philae: *SB*, 8397c = A. Bern., 38; *SB*, 8397b = A. Bern., 41; *SB*, 8668 = A. Bern., 51; *OGI*, 184 = *SB*, 8666 = A. Bern., 59; *SB*, 6116 = A. Bern., 64; *SB*, 8401 = E. Bern., 134; *SB*, 8669 = E. Bern., 149; in early Roman times: *SB*, 8410 = E. Bern., 136; *OGI*, 695 = *SB*, 8419 = E. Bern., 162. The visits of the higher officials and their suite became such a burden for the priests and the temple that they asked Euergetes II to relieve them of providing all needs for the visitors (*OGI*, 137-139 = *SB*, 8396 = Lenger, *C. Ord. Ptol.*, 51 f. = A. Bern., 19; cf. P. J. Sijpesteijn, *Historia*, 18, 1969, 110 n. 7).

a king in the North of Nubia.²⁶ It was the normal duty of an Egyptian king on his coronation to perform a ceremony in which he ritually subdued the rebels and, if necessary and possible, to subdue them militarily, further to visit all parts of the country including the South and, by that, to enact the unification of Upper and Lower Egypt, and to receive embassies. Before his coronation, Epiphanes conquered Lycopolis, captured the leaders of the revolt, and killed them at Memphis in the course of the ceremonies.²⁷ The siege of Lycopolis was enacted according to the rites: the city was encircled by dikes, and the water of the Nile flood was directed into the space between the walls and the dikes, thus washing out the walls and the foundations.²⁸ Obviously Gallus employed the same methods in his sieges,²⁹ and by this he performed the role of an Egyptian Pharaoh at his in-

²⁶ *OGI*, 654 = Dessau, 8995 = J.-P. Bucher, *Gaius Cornelius Gallus*, Paris, 1966, 38 ff. = E. Bern., 128. Later during the reign of Augustus a certain Iunius Sabinus came to Philae and took part in a festival of Isis together with the soldiers under his command, after they had won a battle probably against the Aethiopians (*SB*, 8671 = E. Bern., 159). Germanicus visited Syene too.

²⁷ As an allusion to this victory Epiphanes was represented as wrestler Horus defeating Seth (Baltimore Walters Art Gallery, inv. nr. 54. 1050; Athens, National Museum, inv. nr. ANE 2547); other Ptolemaic kings, among them presumably Euergetes I (Istanbul, Museum of Antiquities, inv. nr. 190) were represented in the same gesture, and it seems that it was Philadelphus who asked a Greek artist to adapt the Egyptian theme of Pharaoh overcoming the rebels and enemies to the language of Greek art and athletic contests, by that transforming the Egyptian ideology of kingship into Greek thinking (H. Kyrieleis, *Antike Plastik*, part 11, 1974, 133 ff. G. Grimm in a forthcoming article quoted by Kyrieleis, 136 n. 11). I daresay Theocritus wrote his Herakliskos for the basileia, the celebration of Philadelphus's birthday and installation as joint ruler, and the poet commemorates the education of young Herakles (that is, Philadelphus) in wrestling (110 f.; see L. Koenen, *Eine agonistische Inschrift aus Ägypten und frühptolemäische Königsfeste*, Meisenheim, in press).

²⁸ Ros. (*OGI*, 90 = *SB*, 8299 = W. Spiegelberg, *Der demot. Text der Priesterdekrete von Kanopus und Memphis mit den hieroglyphischen und griechischen Fassungen und deutscher Übersetzung*, Heidelberg, 1922, 77 ff.; cf. *SEG*, 8, 463) 21 ff. = 12 ff. = 48 ff.; King Pianchi conquered Memphis: "Memphis was taken (by) a flood of water" (J. H. Breasted, *Ancient Records*, IV, 435, §865, cf. 434, §862); and according to Heliodoros, Hydaspes employed the same methods for conquering Syene (9, 3); Schapur encircled Nisibis by the river Mygdonios which flooded the land around the walls "as the river Nile floods Egypt" (Jul. imp., *Or. ad Const.*, I, 27 B ff.; II, 62 CD). See also *Ach. Tat.*, 4, 14; *Zon.*, *Epit.*, 12, 30 p. 156, Dind. and R. Merkelbach (s. n. 15), 134 f. and 281 ff.; idem (s. n. 24), 23 ff. and 14 ff.; D. Bonneau (s. n. 24), 81 f.; M. H. A. L. H. van der Valk, *Mnemos.*, III, 9, 1941, 97; R. Keydell, *Polychronion, Festschrift F. Dölger*, Heidelberg, 1966, 345 (but it may be clear by the implications of this note that Julian's report cannot be used for dating Heliodoros).

²⁹ The Nile helped him to conquer the cities of the rebels as Apollon and Philadelphos fought a ξυνὸς ἄεθλος against the Celts (Call., *hym.* IV, 171; cf. *Chron. d'Ég.*, 34, 1959, 110 f.; for similar thoughts in ancient Greece see E. Fraenkel, *Horace*, 280 ff.).

stallation,³⁰ especially by recording his deeds not only in Latin and Greek, but also in the holy language of the hieroglyphs. With this symbolism involved, one understands Augustus's harsh reaction.

Also, the philosophical and religious speculations of the Romans were influenced by Greco-Egyptian thought rather early. Marcus Valerius Messalla Rufus, cos. 53 B.C., connected the Greek concept of the Aion with the Aion who had his cult at Alexandria, and he transferred these ideas to the Roman god Janus.³¹ But the worship of Aion in Alexandria was part of the cult of Osiris-Sarapis. Osiris, the dying and reviving god, who was closely connected with the idea of eternity, was identified with the Aion in the Greco-Roman period; he was pictured encircled by the snake which bites its own tail (Uroboros), and this was a well known symbol of eternity.³² But particularly the other Messalla, Marcus Valerius M., the friend and patron of Tibullus, was openminded to the cult of Isis and Osiris. He was in Egypt in 30/29 B.C. and perhaps also before that in the company of Antonius, to whom he surrendered himself after the battle of Philippi. When Tibullus sang the praises of the Egyptian religion and alluded to its rites and beliefs, he could be sure of being understood not only by his mistress, but also by his patron. This can be demonstrated by an interpretation of the elegy which Tibullus recited on the occasion of Messalla's birthday, shortly after Messalla had his triumph over Aquitania in 27 B.C. (I, 7). This date is politically significant. One year before, in 28 B.C., Augustus himself had turned against the cult of Isis changing, as it were, his former favorable attitude (see pp. 132 f.).

THE PROPORTIONS OF THEMES IN TIBULLUS'S BIRTHDAY ELEGY, I, 7

In the elegy I, 7, Tibullus praises Messalla's greatness in five themes:

- I. The victory Messalla had won as governor of Gaul against the Aquitanians, and the triumph which was granted to him for this (vv. 1-12; 6 distichs)
- II. his governorship in Syria (vv. 13-20; four distichs)

³⁰ By all his deeds the Pharaoh performed the role which had been played by the gods in the beginning of time; see E. Hornung, *Geschichte als Fest*, Darmstadt, 1966.

³¹ R. Reitzenstein, *Poimandres*, Leipzig, 1904, 38, 276 f., 362; Merkelbach, *loc. cit.* (n. 24), 47 n. 10.

³² Aion-Osiris: Damascius, *Vita Isid.* fr. 174, Zintzen; vgl. L. Kákosy *Oriens ant.*, 3, 1964, 15 ff.; idem, "Zu einer Etymology von Philae: 'Insel der Zeit,'" *Acta ant.*, 16, 1968, 39 ff.

- III. the Nile and a hymn to the god Nile-Osiris (vv. 21-54; 17 distichs)
 IV. Messalla's sons (vv. 55*f.*; one distich only)
 V. the task of repairing the via Latina assumed by Messalla (57-62;
 3 distichs)

There follows one final distich.

Seventeen distichs, that is, more than half of the whole poem, are devoted to the Nile and Osiris; the four other themes, including the final distich, cover altogether not more than 15 distichs. Obviously Tibullus thought that Messalla's trip to the river Nile was the most important event in the life of his patron, more important, for example, than his merits in the battle of Actium and even more important than his consulate on the side of Octavian himself in 31 B.C. Tibullus did not mention either of these two themes with a single word. For the triumph, the greatest event in the life of a Roman general, Tibullus reserved only a few lines. Therefore Augustin Cartault conjectured that Messalla was initiated in Egypt.³³ This could explain why Tibullus chose to praise Osiris so abundantly in his birthday poem for Messalla. The initiation into the cult of Osiris may have been regarded as the true birthday of Messalla. But this is a mere conjecture. Here it will be asked how far the detailed interpretation of the poem will guide us.

INTRODUCTION TO THE HYMN TO OSIRIS

After Tibullus has praised the triumph of Messalla, he gives short impressions of Messalla's stay in Syria, pretending to search for a theme, as Callimachus among others does.³⁴ Shall I sing praises of the Cydnus or the Taurus or of Palestinian Syria? Then Tibullus turns to the Nile:

17 quid referam . . .
 21 qualis et, arentes cum findit Syrius agros,
 fertilis aestiva Nilus abundet aqua?

[Or shall I sing, how the fertile Nile floods high in the summer, when the dog star causes the fields to dry and crack?]

³³ p. 49; see also M. Ponchont, *Tibulle*, 51; E. Burck, *Gymnasium*, 70, 1963, 90 (= *Vom Menschenbild in der röm. Literatur*, Heidelberg, 1966, 240).

³⁴ 13 ff.; for ex. cf. Call., *hym.* IV, 28 ff.; Pind. *Ol.* 2, 1 ff.; l. 14 echoes Call. fr. 43, 42; for other Callimachean reminiscences in these lines see A. W. Bulloch (*Proc. Camb. Phil. Soc.*, 199, 1973, 71 ff.), who reinforces the conclusions of G. Luck (*Latin Love Elegy*, London², 1969, 83 ff. = *Die röm. Liebesel.*, Heidelberg, 1961, 83 ff.) against critics not believing in much Alexandrian influence on Tibullus (e.g. F. Solmsen, *Entr. Fond. Hardt*, 7, 1960, 295; idem, *Hermes*, 90, 1962, 316). "in eodem carmine (I, 7) Tibullus passim Callimachum sequi videtur," R. Pfeiffer on fr. 383, 16.

Putting this question, Tibullus finds the theme for his poem: the miracle of the Nile flood. This introduction is a reminiscence of Callimachus. For Callimachus has praised the Nile flood thus: *θηλύτατον καὶ Νεῖλο[ς ἄ]γων ἐνιαύσιον ὕδωρ* (384, 27). According to the conventions of Roman literary circles, the Roman poet, now that he has paid tribute to a famous Greek model, is entitled to praise the Nile in his own way. Tibullus stresses the miraculous paradox: The inundation comes at the time of the greatest heat. It starts when the dog star Sirius can be seen shortly before sunrise for the first time, after its period of invisibility.³⁵ The days of the dog star are the days of the greatest heat, in which the fields threaten to dry up.

For our further thoughts it may be useful to recall the myth by which the Egyptians tried to understand the strange connection between the greatest summer heat and the Nile flood; this myth was known to the Greeks and Romans; and Callimachus among others dealt with it (fr. 811). According to this myth Seth, the god of heat, murdered Osiris. Then the vegetation dried up and the Nile had only low waters because the vegetation and the Nile were regarded as manifestations of Osiris. Isis searched for her dead husband Osiris and buried him in Biggeh, a small, inaccessible island in the area of the first cataract just opposite Philae. Isis, whose heavenly manifestation was the dog star, raised Osiris to new life. Out of his leg streamed water, that is, the Nile flood.³⁶ Osiris was the source of the Nile; and the Nile flood made the land fertile again. The power of the revived Osiris appeared in the inundation of the Nile.

Now Tibullus wants to deal with the miracle of the Nile flood. He does this in a long hymn to Nile-Osiris. In this hymn three themes can be distinguished:

1. The invocations by which Tibullus reveals the names of his god (vv. 23-28; 3 distichs)
2. the good deeds of the god, in which his power, his arete, comes to light (vv. 29-48; 10 distichs)
3. the final hymnos kletikos, the prayer for the appearance of the god (vv. 49-54; 3 distichs)

³⁵ This coincidence of Nile flood and the heliacal rising of Sirius has been dealt with rather often by Greek and Latin authors; see D. Bonneau, *loc. cit.* (n. 24), 43 n. 4.

³⁶ H. Junker, "Das Götterdekret über das Abaton," *Denkschr. Akad. Wien*, 56, 1913, 40; Th. Hopfner, *Plutarch, Über Isis und Osiris*, II, Prague, 1940 (Darmstadt, 1967), 152; R. Merkelbach, *Z.Ä.S.*, 99, 1973, 121. For the explanation of the Nile flood as the tears of Isis (Paus. X, 32, 10), see Ph. Derchain, *Chron. d' Eg.*, 45, 1970, 282 ff.

THE INVOCATIONS TO THE GOD

First we turn to the invocations to the god (vv. 23–28). Poetically pretending to search for a proper theme, Tibullus came across the miracle of the Nile flood. Therefore he opens his hymn with this miracle:

23 Nile pater, quamvis possim te dicere causa
aut quibus in terris occuluisse caput?

[Father Nile, how could I answer, for which reasons or in which countries you have hidden the head of your waters?]

The ancients could call a river "father," as we still do sometimes, and "caput" may be taken as a proper word designating the source of a river, just as we speak today of the headwaters of the Nile.³⁷ But in a hymn to a river god the word keeps its pregnant meaning. As we shall see soon, Tibullus identifies the Nile with Osiris in line 27. Osiris has been buried on the spot where the Nile flood comes forth. To this god the question is suitable quite literally: "Where did you hide your head?"

Tibullus feels unable to tell where and why Nile-Osiris hides his source. The ancient Greek and Latin authors discussed the questions connected with the Nile flood and its reasons very often.³⁸ Herodotus says: οὐδέ τις αὐτοῦ οἶδε τὰς πηγὰς (II, 32). In Callimachus it is the Nile who says about himself: ὄν οὐδ' ὄθεν οἶδεν ὄδεύω | θνητὸς ἀνὴρ (384, 31 f.). And Horace praises the Nile: "fontium qui celat origines" (Odes IV, 14, 45).

Actually the ancients did not know the source of the river Nile. But the Egyptian priests made a virtue of necessity and taught that the Nile flood was a divine miracle, which human beings were not permitted to understand; the god withholds himself from the questioning people. For the Egyptians, the question of the Nile flood belonged to a religious taboo. We read in an old Egyptian hymn to the Nile god that he is "hidden in his form of appearance, a darkness by day, to whom minstrels have sung." And further: "He cannot be seen . . . no one can read of the mystery; no one knows the place where he is; he cannot be found by the power of writing." He loves "to come forth as a mystery."³⁹ According to the

³⁷ E.g., Prop. II, 15, 33 (cf. P. J. Enk's note in his commentary, Leiden, 1962, p. 223). Ov., *Met.* II, 254 f. (Nilus . . . occulitque caput) imitates Tibullus; see also E. Norden on Verg., *Aen.* VI, 360 (p. 234) and D. R. Shackleton Bailey, *Propertiana*, Cambridge, 1956, 112 (reg. II, 24, 5–8).

³⁸ H. Diels, "Seneca und Lucan," *Abh. Berl. Akad.*, 1885, 5 ff. (for Lucan, see below); Bonneau, *loc. cit.* (n. 24), 135 ff.; H. Bonnet, *Reallexikon der ägyptischen Religionsgeschichte*, Berlin, 1952, 525 ff. (s.v. "Nil").

³⁹ J. A. Wilson in: J. B. Pritchard, *Ancient Near Eastern Texts*, Princeton, 1955, 372 ff.; G. Maspero, *Hymne au Nile*, *Bibl. d' Et.*, 5, Cairo, 1912; E. Bacchi, "L'inno al Nilo," *Publ. del R. Museo di Torino*, 4, 1950; G. Roeder, *Kulte, Orakel und Naturverehrung im alten Ägypten*, Zürich and Stuttgart, 1960, 332 ff.; A. Erman, *Die Literatur der Ägypter*, Leipzig,

Egyptian belief, the sources of the Nile were hidden and one was not permitted to search for them. Therefore Herodotus tried in vain to ask the Egyptian priests (II, 19). They did not know a straightforward answer but possessed secret teachings which they were not allowed to tell those who had not committed themselves to a special relationship to the deity. In Lucan's 10th book, the Egyptian priest Acoreus reveals to Caesar a secret teaching about the sources of the Nile. Others may regard it as pious to be silent; Acoreus thinks it better to speak out this teaching (194 f.). He appeals to the revelation of the Nile god (286 f.).⁴⁰ Similarly, in the novel of Heliodorus, the Egyptian Isis priest Kalasiris refers to the secret teachings in a discussion with so-called philosophers: "I said all I knew and what is written in the holy books about this river and what prophets only are permitted to know and to read"⁴¹ And according to Libanius, wise laws prohibit normal men from seeing the god Nile even when on the river, but a man like Maximus from Ephesus, who visited Egypt at that time, is permitted to open his eyes, and he may see the god and talk with him (ep. 1274, 1 ff.).

Already with his first invocation Tibullus pays attention to the mystery and the taboo connected with the god Nile. He continues in the style of a hymn with invocations which begin by anaphora:

25 te propter nullos tellus tua postulat imbres,
arida nec pluvio supplicat herba Iovi.
te canit atque suum pubes miratur Osirim
barbara Memphiten plangere docta bovem.

[It is because of you that your land requires no showers and that no withered vegetation makes supplication to Jupiter as bringer of rain. It is of you that the foreign race sings, you that they honor as Osiris, this race which is skilled in lamenting the bull of Memphis.]

That the Nile competes with the rain is often said in the ancient literature.⁴² With the Egyptians this topos can be traced back to the

1923 (photom. reprinted, Leipzig, 1970), 193 ff. I do not imply that Tibullus knew this special hymn, which was composed before the nineteenth dynasty, but he may have heard of such hymns, most likely by Greek mediators.

⁴⁰ Lucan's Caesar would dispense with the civil war, if he could see the sources of the Nile instead (X, 191 f.; cf. n. 38).

⁴¹ 2, 28,2, ἐμοῦ δὲ ἄπερ ἐγὶ γίνωσκον εἰπόντος καὶ ὅσα περὶ τοῦ ποταμοῦ τούτου βίβλοις ἱεραῖς ἀναγεγραμμένα μόνους τοῖς προφητικοῖς καὶ γινώσκειν καὶ ἀναγινώσκειν ἕξεισι . . .

⁴² Herod. II, 13; Eurip., *Hel.*, 1 ff.; Aristoph., *Thesm.*, 855 ff.; Apoll. Rhod. 4, 269 ff. For more instances see R. Keydell, *Hermes*, 69, 1934, 424; S. Sauneron, *BIFAO*, 51, 1952, 41 ff.; Bonneau, *loc. cit.* (n. 24), 129, n. 5; see also A. Hermann, *Jahrb. Antike u. Christent.*, 2, 1959, 54.

thirteenth century B.C.⁴³ Here I shall restrict myself to quoting one Greek poet for many. Eur., *Bacch.* 406 ff.: <χθόνα> θ' ἄν ἐκατόστομοι | βαρβάρου ποταμοῦ ῥοαὶ | καρπίζουσιν ἄνομβροι.⁴⁴

Similarly to this Tibullus points again to the miracle of the Nile flood: the vegetation need not supplicate Jupiter for rain as in the Erigone of the Alexandrian poet Eratosthenes Aristaeus, the king of Keos, prays to Zeus in order to be freed from the heat of the dog star.⁴⁵ With Tibullus it is then that the decisive distich follows: "te canit . . . atque miratur Osirim." Friedrich Klingner taught us how we should understand this: "It is to you that they sing, you that they honor as their Osiris."⁴⁶ The Nile is identified with Osiris.⁴⁷

The following pentameter commemorates the lamentations for the dead

⁴³ In a hymn to Aton: "All distant foreign countries, thou makest their life (also), for thou has set a Nile in heaven, that it may descend for them and make waves upon the mountains, like the great green sea, to water their fields in their towns. . . . The Nile in heaven, it is for the foreign peoples and for the beast of every desert that go upon (their) feet (while the true) Nile comes from the underworld of Egypt" (*ANET* [see n. 39], 371). A similar thought is expressed in the mentioned hymn to the Nile (see n. 39) and later in a Greek amulet (H. J. Milne, *Catal. of the Lit. Pap. in the Brit. Mus.*, London, 1929, 239; cf. Bonneau, *loc. cit.* [n. 24], 410 ff.).

⁴⁴ I follow Meineke; see also Westerbrink's edition (cf. the beginning of the corresponding line, 421 ἴσα δ'); C. W. Willink (*CQ*, 60, 1966, 222 f.) suggests ἦ χθόν' ἄν (and in the corresponding line ἴσα δ'); cf. also the commentary of J. Roux (II, 388). The manuscripts offer Πάφον θ' ἄν, and this weak modification of Euripides's wording belongs to the tradition followed by Manilius (*Astr.* IV, 635, "Aegyptique Cypros pulsatur fluctibus amnis"); see J. Jackson, *Marginalia Scaenica*, Oxford, 1955, 117). It seems very doubtful whether the idea of an underground or underwater Nile connecting Egypt with islands (for Delos see Call. *hym.* IV, 206 ff.; III, 170 f. and scholion; Lycophr. 576, and schol.; Paus. 2, 5, 3; see E. R. Dodds's note on Eurip., *Bacch.*) goes back to Euripides's time, even though a similar idea of underground connections of the river Alpheios is found in Pindar (*Nem.* 1, 1; cf. Strabo 6, 2, 4 p. 270; Paus., 5, 7, 2 f.). The river Alpheios became the model for imagined connections of the Acherusian Lake (Prop. I, 11, 1 f.; cf. F. H. Sandbach, *Cl. Rev.*, 1938, 213; D. R. Shackleton Bailey, *Propertiana*, 32). In any case, Euripides had no reason to connect Paphos and Egypt by the river Nile, and one would not expect him to allude to such a connection in order to show his learning or knowledge of folklore.

⁴⁵ This has been preserved by Hyginus, p. 37, 12 ff.; see R. Merkelbach, *Miscellanea di Studi Alessandrini in mem. di Aug. Rostagni*, Torino, 1963, 469 ff., especially 518 f. R. Pfeiffer warns against this reconstruction of Eratosthenes's Erigone, but on general grounds only (*History of Classical Scholarship*, Oxford, 1968, 169, n. 1).

⁴⁶ F. Klingner, *Eranos*, 49, 1951, 117 ff. (reprinted in: *Römische Geisteswelt*, 412 ff.).

⁴⁷ Already in Pyr. 589 (S. A. B. Mercer, *The Pyramid Texts*, New York, London, and Toronto, 1952); Plut., *De Is.* 32, Νεῖλον εἶναι τὸν Ὀσίριον. For more see H. Bonnet, *loc. cit.* (n. 38), 571, and Merkelbach, *loc. cit.* (n. 15), 39; cf. also H. Kees, *Totenglaube und Jenseitsvorstellung der alten Ägypter*, Berlin², 1956, 146 f.; H. Frankfort, *Kingship and the Gods*, Chicago, 1948, 190 ff.; D. Wortmann, *Bonner Jb.*, 166, 1966, 65 f. and 95.

bull of Apis. He was a popular god.⁴⁸ But why did Tibullus mention him? First, the poet imitates a pentameter of Callimachus who mentions the Nile and the Egyptian woman "skilled in lamenting the white bull,"⁴⁹ that is, the bull Apis with a blaze.

But the fact that Tibullus imitates a verse of Callimachus does not absolve us from asking what Tibullus intends in the context of his hymn when he points to the Apis-bull. It was again Friedrich Klingner who gave the right answer. The dead Apis-bull became Osiris when it was mummified. Apis as well as Osiris were embodiments of the powers of fertility and, as was Osiris, so was Apis connected with the Nile flood.⁵⁰ Therefore the lamentation for the bull Apis has the same ritual significance as the lamentation for Osiris. Apis and Osiris were two different aspects of the same deity; the miracle of the Nile flood represented yet a third aspect of the same divine being, at least in the beliefs of the late period. Tibullus understood this: after he calls his god Nile and Osiris, he unveils his third name—Apis.

We should go a step further. Osiris-Apis, that is, Osorapis of Memphis, was the Egyptian god who became Sarapis under the Ptolemies.⁵¹ Originally Sarapis was the god of the Ptolemaic dynasty, but later this god became the god of the Egyptian mysteries which conquered the ancient world. By the identification Osiris-Apis, Tibullus points to Sarapis as to the god of the mysteries.⁵² Tibullus does not mention the name Sarapis, and one may guess his reasons. The name Osiris has the full color of a strange country, whereas Sarapis was a name rather common among the Greeks. In Rome political reasons might have stood against the use of the name of Sarapis, after all the god of the Ptolemies, at least in the time of Tibullus. And this might have furthered the theological

⁴⁸ See the formula used in letters τὸ προσκύνημά σου ποιῶ καθ' ἐκάστην ἡμέραν παρὰ τῷ κυρίῳ Ἀπιδί (E. G. Turner, *Rech. de Pap.*, 2, 1962, 117 ff. = *SB*, 9903; idem, *Studien zur Papyrologie und antiken Wirtschaftsgeschichte, Festschr. Fr. Oertel*, Bonn, 1964, 32 ff. = *SB*, 9930). It is also a significant proof of the popularity of this cult that as late as in A.D. 362 a new Apis was installed, an event which was important enough to be reported as a good omen to the emperor Julian (Amm. Marc. XXII, 14, 6 ff.; cf. A. Hermann, *Jb. Ant. u. Christent.*, 3, 1960, 34 ff.).

⁴⁹ 383, 14 ff. Κολχίδες ἢ Νείλω [

λεπταλέους ἔξυσαν. [

εἰδύται φαλὸν ταῦρον ἠηλεμίσαι.

⁵⁰ See E. Otto, "Beiträge zur Geschichte der Stierkulte in Ägypten," *Unters. zur Gesch. u. Altertumsk.*, 13, Leipzig, 1938, 1 ff.; Bonnet, *loc. cit.* (n. 38), 46 ff. and 751 ff.

⁵¹ U. Wilcken, *UPZ*, I, 77 ff.; P. M. Fraser, *Opusc. Athen.*, 3, 1960, 1 f.; idem, *Ptol. Alex.* (see n. 15), I, 246 ff.; A. Henrichs, *Die Phoinikika des Lollianos*, Bonn, 1972, 60 f.

⁵² This was also suggested by P. Grimal (see n. 1). Cf. G. Luck, *Properz und Tibullus, Artemis*, 1964, 493.

development by which the name of Sarapis became the secret name of the god.⁵³ "Sarapis" is the sum of the other names: Nile, Osiris, and Apis, and soon Tibullus will add the name of Bacchus.⁵⁴ Often the ancients circumscribed the power of a deity by enumerating his many names.⁵⁵ But they did not dare to mention the true name of the god which embraced all his aspects and powers at once, especially not the true name of the highest god of the mysteries which had to be hidden from the people not or not yet initiated into the last secrets.⁵⁶

Tibullus mentions the main feast of Apis, his burial, as did Callimachus. The ritual of the burial is described by Plutarch (*De Is.*, 35). In this description, too, Apis is identified with Osiris, and the funeral procession looks like a celebration of Bacchus. As already said, soon Tibullus will identify his Osiris with Bacchus. It is this identification which is foreshadowed by the fact that Tibullus mentions the lamentations for Apis. As Horace identifies his Venus with the Isis of Memphis (see p. 129), so for Tibullus, Bacchus became the Osiris-Apis of Memphis.

THE ARETALOGY

There follows a relatively long passage of ten distichs, the aretalogy, in

⁵³ In Ps. Call. the god himself reveals his name to Alexander, but even then he hides it behind figures 200 + 1 + 100 + 1 + 80 + 10 + 200 (ΣΑΡΑΠΙΣ). In Apuleius, Lucius undergoes three initiations: (1) the initiation of Isis, (2) that of Osiris ("magni dei deumque summi parentis invicti Osiris sacra," 11, 27, 2), and (3) for the last initiation the name of the god is not mentioned, but Lucius has a vision of the "deus deum magnorum potior et maiorum summus et summorum maximus et maximorum regnator Osiris," who admits him for the initiation and calls him into the college of his pastofori (11, 30, 3 ff.). Surely this higher form of Osiris is Sarapis, whose true name remains in the dark. This seems to fit the dates: the second initiation took place probably in the night of December 24-25, a date very suitable for "Osiris invictus" (R. Merkelbach, *Aegyptus*, 49, 1969, 89 ff.). Shortly after this initiation ("post pauculum tempus"; 11, 29, 1) Lucius began with the fast of ten days in order to prepare himself for his third initiation (11, 30, 1), and after a few days, obviously during his fast (11, 30, 3), he had the vision of Osiris most high. So the third initiation may have taken place after a few more than ten days, that is, possibly in the night of January 5-6, the feast of Osiris-Sarapis (see p. 135). Before Lucius was called for his second and third initiation, he was not informed that there were separate initiations to each of the three gods. One may note that the name "Osiris" was used slightly more often in Roman times than before; see Vidman, *Isis* (n. 15), 13 f.

⁵⁴ In the verse we read in Macrobi., *Sat.* I, 18, 18, the deity of Sarapis is expressed by the sum of the gods who represent his different aspects: εἰς Ζεῦς, εἰς Ἀιδῆς, εἰς Ἥλιος ἐστὶ Διόνυσος. And that the true name of this Dionysos is Sarapis is shown by Iulian (*Or.* 4, 136 A), who substitutes Sarapis for Dionysos: ἐστὶ Σάραπισ.

⁵⁵ E. Norden, *Agnostos Theos*, Leipzig, 1923 (repr. Darmstadt, 1956), 143 ff.

⁵⁶ Merkelbach, *Roman* (see n. 15), 92.

which the deeds and miracles—the aretai—of Osiris are celebrated. First of all, Osiris-Nile is praised as a bringer of culture:

- 29 primus aratra manu sollerti fecit Osiris
 et teneram ferro sollicitavit humum,
 primus inexpertae commisit semina terrae
 pomaque non notis legit ab arboribus.
 33 hic docuit teneram palis adiungere vitem,
 hic viridem dura caedere falce comam;
 illi iucundos primum matura sapes
 expressa incultis uva dedit pedibus.

[Osiris was the first to construct a plow with skillful hand, to turn up the tender earth with iron; he was the first to sow the earth, which had not experienced that before; and he was the first to gather fruit from trees not known before. He it was who taught man to bind the tender vine to stakes and to cut the green foliage at the top with a cruel pruning hook. He was the first to whom the ripe grape yielded her flavorful drink, pressed out by feet not trained before.]

Tibullus's Osiris is the discoverer of agriculture, arboriculture, and viticulture: he is the "heures," as the Greeks expressed it,⁵⁷ or "the one, who did it for the first time," as Egyptian thought would phrase it.⁵⁸ Hecataeus of Abdera likewise stated that Osiris taught men how to plant grain and grapes; in this he was followed by Diodorus Siculus.⁵⁹ And indeed Tibullus's "non notis . . . ab arboribus" corresponds to Diodorus's ἀγροοῦμενον δ' ὑπὸ τῶν ἀνθρώπων, where the grain is meant.⁶⁰ For the

⁵⁷ A. Kleinguenther, πρῶτος εὐερέης, *Philologus*, Suppl., 26, 1, 1933; Cl. Préaux, *Chron. d'Eg.*, 42, 1967, 370.

⁵⁸ At Dendera Horus is called "the one who first made all things" (*LD*, IV, 53), an expression which comes surprisingly near to Tibullus's "primus . . . fecit." Osiris is called in his official title as king: "The Discoverer of Mankind in the Primeval Time" (The Contest of Horus and Seth, XIV; *ANET* [see n. 39], 16; G. Lefebvre, *Romans et contes égypt.*, Paris, 1949, 199; G. Roeder, *Mythen und Legenden um ägyptische Gottheiten und Pharaonen*, Zürich and Stuttgart, 1960, 67). In the same story Osiris addresses Ra: "you discoverer of the Ennead (sc. the nine gods)" (XV). For the Egyptians, every deed was a repetition of the deeds done by the gods in the beginning of time. The ploughing farmer did what the gods had done in the beginning; this beginning was called "the first time" (sp tpj). See D. Müller, "Ägypten und die griech. Isisaretalogien," *Abh. Leipzig*, Phil.-hist., Kl. 53, 1, Berlin, 1961, 23 ff.; S. Morenz, *Ägyptische Religion*, Stuttgart, 1960, 175 ff.; J. Bergman, *loc. cit.* (see n. 14), 289.

⁵⁹ Diod. I, 17, 1; cf. 14, 1 = Hecat. 264 F 25; Kore Kosmu (Stob. I, 49, 44, p. 406 W. = *Corp. Herm.*, fr. XXIII, 68 Fest.) οὔτοι μόνοι τὰς κρυπτὰς νομοθεσίας τοῦ θεοῦ παρὰ Ἑρμοῦ μαθόντες τεχνῶν καὶ ἐπιστημῶν καὶ ἐπιτηδευμάτων ἀπάντων εἰσηγηταὶ τοῖς ἀνθρώποις ἐγένοντο καὶ νομοθεταί, sc. Osiris and Isis. See also p. 146.

⁶⁰ 264, F 25 = Diod. I, 14, 1. As late as in Pinturicchio's ceiling-paintings of the Sala dei Santi in the Appartamento Borgia (Vatican) Osiris teaches agriculture and viticulture, and Isis the use of fruits (P. Ehrle-H. Stevenson, *Les fresques de Pinturicchio*, Rome, 1898, pl. 40a and b, 41a); see A. Hermann, *loc. cit.* (n. 48), 47 f.

Greeks it was of course Dionysos who had discovered viticulture, and it was Triptolemos who had invented the plow. But Dionysos had been identified with Osiris since the time of Herodotus, and no later than the early Roman period Osiris was in turn identified with Triptolemos. As a consequence, Osiris carried out the united functions of both Dionysos and Triptolemos.⁶¹

That corresponded to Egyptian conceptions, because the Egyptians also worshipped Osiris not only as the giver of wine but as the giver of grain as well. So in one hymn Osiris is said to boast of himself: "I am he that created barley . . . no other god or goddess could be found to do it."⁶² One also may recall the hymn to the Nile cited above (see p. 138), since Tibullus's Osiris is identified with the Nile. It is the god of the Nile "who makes barley and brings emmer into being." He is "the bringer of food, rich in provisions, creator of all good." It is he "who fills the magazines and makes the granaries wide," and it is he "who makes every beloved tree to grow."

Nevertheless Osiris gives not only the blessings of nature, but also the benefits of culture:

- 37 ille liquor docuit voces inflectere cantu,
 movit et ad certos nescia membra modos,
 Bacchus et agricolae magno confecta labore
 pectora tristitiae dissolvenda dedit.
- 41 Bacchus et adfictis requiem mortalibus adfert,
 crura licet dura compepe pulsa sonent.

[Taking the form of wine, he taught man to raise his voice in song, to move his limbs, untrained before, in the fixed measures of the dance. He, Bacchus, enabled even the peasant⁶³ to free his breast of cares, tired though he may be

⁶¹ Herod. II, 42 and 144. Osiris-Triptolemos: P. Antinoop. 18 = R. Merkelbach, *APF*, 16, 1956, nr. 1141 (confessions of the dead before Triptolemos); Serv. Auctus on Verg., *Georg.* I, 19 ("uncique puer monstrator aratri"): "alii Triptolemmum, alii Osirim volunt; quod magis verum est, ut dicit . . . Tibullus" (= Th. Hopfner, *Fontes hist. rel. Aeg.*, Bonn, 1924, 616); see also [Probus] *ad loc.* (Thilo-Hagen, 352 = Hopfner, 618): "quidam putant Triptolemmum Atticum dici . . . sed constat multis annis ante et fruges in Aegypto inventas esse et arasse primum Osirim duobus bubus, quorum nomina sunt sacra sub eis qui religionis causa eodem vocabulo appellati coluntur, Apis et Mnevis, quorum alterum Memphitae colunt Apim, alterum Heliopolitae Mnevim." Also *Anon. brevis expositio*, p. 206 Thilo-Hagen = Hopfner, 618; Serv. on *Georg.* I, 147 = Hopfner, 616; Isidorus, *Etym.* XVII, 1 = Hopfner, 726; *Myth. Vat.* III, 7, 1 = Hopfner, 746; cf. Diod. I, 18, 2. In Mart. Cap. viticulture is taught by Dionysos and Osiris, agriculture by Isis and Triptolemos (II, 158). For Triptolemos-Horus s. Merkelbach, *loc. cit.* (n. 36), 119, n. 12.

⁶² A. H. Gardiner, *The Library of A. Chester-Beatty*, Oxford-London, 1931, XIV, 12; A. M. Blackmann, "Osiris as the Maker of Corn . . .," *Studia Aeg.*, I, Rome, 1938, 1 ff.; D. Müller, *loc. cit.* (n. 58), 32; Lefebvre, *loc. cit.* (n. 58), 200; Grimal, *loc. cit.* (n. 1), 44.

⁶³ One looks for a dative connected with "dedit": (a) "tristitiae" could be corrected into "laetitiae" (A. E. Housman, *Cl. Rev.*, 17, 1903, 309): "He, Bacchus, consigned to

by his hard work. He, Bacchus, brings respite to suffering mortals, even when cruel chains clank about their feet.]

The beginning of this passage is usually translated differently: "That drink taught men to sing." Then in the following lines the Bacchus who frees the peasant from his cares and gives mortals respite from their sufferings is said to be used metonymously for wine.⁶⁴ Osiris creates wine, and wine teaches men to sing and dance and enables them to forget their exhaustion and their cares. If this interpretation is right, lines 37-42 form a digression directly praising the wine, not Osiris.

In our translation we have chosen a rather different interpretation. In line 37 "ille" resumes the "illi" of line 35, and in this line 35 "illi" is Osiris. Accordingly, the "ille" of line 37 also stands for Osiris; in this case "liquor" should be taken as apposition: "he, the wine," "he in the form of wine," not simply "that wine." By means of the apposition "liquor," Osiris is identified with the wine. The liquor is Osiris himself. Bacchus in lines 39 and 41 is then likewise a name for the god. Osiris-Bacchus, manifested as wine, gives song, dance, freedom from care, and inner contentment.

The two interpretations are not contradictory: they are complementary. But one may remark that the hymnic style here rather suggests that one should think of Bacchus as the deity and not the metonym. Moreover, it is part and parcel of the Osiris faith that one regarded the drink as a manifestation of the god, as is barley, trees, and the Nile.⁶⁵ According to Plutarch, not only the Nile, but generally the entire principle producing moisture is called Osiris.⁶⁶ The old Egyptians thought of the Nile as of being beer and later also wine. For example, in a text at Edfu it is the sun

pleasure the farmer's breast . . . , that it might be freed"; (b) "agricolae" may be dative: "He, Bacchus, granted the farmer . . . a breast to be freed from his depression." If so, "Bacchus et agricolae" corresponds exactly to "Bacchus et adflictis" (mortalibus), and "pectora tristitiae dissolvenda dedit" echoes Euripides's *Bacch.* 378 ff. (Διόνυσος τὰδ' ἔχει) . . . ἀποπαῦσαι τε μερῖμνας (see n. 81). See also the translations, e.g., of M. Ponchont, W. F. Lenz (Reclam), R. Helm, and P. Grimal (see n. 1), p. 42: "Bacchus, il a donné au laboureur le moyen de dissiper l'accablement de son coeur épuisé par un long travail." For the genitive of separation see the commentaries, which try to construct "dedit" without a dative: "Bacchus hat auch des Bauern Herz . . . von Trauer und Kummer befreien lassen" (Klingner, *loc. cit.* [n. 46]).

⁶⁴ For this interpretation see, e.g., K. Fl. Smith in his commentary (*ad loc.*) and F. Levy (alias Lenz), *St. It. Fil. Class.*, N.S., 7, 1929, 108, who states that Bacchus here means the wine but that the listener is supposed to associate it with the god as well. Grimal thinks rightly of Bacchus the god (*loc. cit.* [n. 1]).

⁶⁵ Bonnet, *loc. cit.* (n. 38), 571.

⁶⁶ Plut., *De Is.*, 33, p. 364 A; Sallust., *De diis et mundo* 4.

god who refers to the Nile flood and says to victorious Horus: "You poured grapes into the liquid,"⁶⁷ that is, you changed the water into wine; for the Greeks, Dionysos caused springs of wine.⁶⁸ It refers to such beliefs when in a Greek hymn the river Nile is asked to make drunk the fruit-bearing land by its floods.⁶⁹ There was a ritual in the mysteries of Isis in which people took water from the Nile and drank it in the faith that it was wine, thus re-enacting the discovery of Osiris.⁷⁰ Similar ideas also were current among the Greeks: Timotheos, for example, called wine "the blood of Bacchus."⁷¹

In addition, the formal structure of Tibullus's wording imitates liturgical language. There is the series: 29 primus . . . Osiris . . . , 31 primus . . . , 33 hic . . . , 34 hic . . . , 35 illi . . . , 37 ille . . . , 39 Bacchus . . . , 41 Bacchus. At the beginning stands the name of Osiris; at the end, the name of Bacchus. Between these names one finds "hic" and "illi" as well as "ille"; all the pronouns apply to the god Osiris-Bacchus, who is mentioned by his name at the beginning and the end of the passage. I called this passage an aretalogy, a praise of the deeds of the god. In the aretalogies of Isis, the goddess herself tells her believers: *ἐγὼ εἰμι ἡ καρπὸν ἀνθρώποις εὐρούσα* (M 7), *ἐγὼ εἰμι ἡ ἐν τῷ τοῦ κυνὸς ἄστρωι ἐπιτέλλουσα* (the bringer of the Nile flood; 9), *ἐγὼ εἰμι ἡ παρὰ γυναιξὶ θεὸς καλουμένη* (10), *ἐγὼ ἐν ταῖς τοῦ ἡλίου ἀυγαῖς εἰμί* (44), *ἐγὼ τοὺς ἐν δεσμοῖς λύω* (48), *ἐγὼ εἰμι ἡ θεομοφόρος καλουμένη* (52).⁷² All sentences start with *ἐγὼ εἰμι* or *ἐγώ*; but we find such aretalogies also in the third person: *οὗτός ἐστιν* or simply *οὗτος*. For example, in one of the Hermetic writings called *Κόρη κόσμου* Isis and Osiris are praised as follows: *οὗτοι βίου τὸν βίον ἐπλήρωσαν, οὗτοι τὸ τῆς ἀλλοφονίας ἔπαυσον ἄγριον. τεμένη προγόνοις θεοῖς οὗτοι καὶ θυσίας καθιέρωσαν. νόμους οὗτοι καὶ τροφὰς θνητοῖς καὶ σκέπην ἐχαρίσαντο* (65) . . . *οὗτοι πρῶτοι δείξαντες δικαστήρια εὐνομίας τὰ σύμπαντα καὶ δικαιοσύνης ἐπλήρωσαν* (67), and so on.⁷³ There are long series of *οὗτοι . . . οὗτοι . . . οὗτοι πρῶτοι*. Isis and

⁶⁷ M. Alliot, *Le culte d'Horus à Edfou au temps des Ptolémées*, II, Cairo, 1954, 722.

⁶⁸ E. R. Dodds in his commentary on Euripides's *Bacchae* (ll. 704-711); Merkelbach, *Roman* (see n. 15), 221 n. 2.

⁶⁹ Milne, *loc. cit.* (n. 43), 239, 27: *καὶ γῆν καρποφόρον μέθυσον τοῖς σοῖσι ῥέεθροις* (as the verse has been reconstructed; cf. Merkelbach, *loc. cit.* [n. 24], 16).

⁷⁰ Epiph., *Pan. haer.* 51, 29, 7 ff. (II, 301, Holl); cf. *Chron. d'Ég.*, 73, 1962, 170, n. 3; Merkelbach, *loc. cit.* (n. 24), 55 ff.; D. Wortmann, "Das Blut des Seth," *ZPE*, 2, 1968, 229.

⁷¹ Fr. 7; for more references see A. Henrichs, *loc. cit.* (n. 51), 74 ff., under the heading "Blut und Wein."

⁷² R. Harder, "Karpokrates v. Chalkis und die memphitische Isispropaganda," *Abh. Berl., Phil.-hist. Kl.*, 14, 1943, 20 f.; D. Müller, *loc. cit.* (n. 58) and now *OLZ*, 67, 1972, 117 ff.; J. Bergman, *loc. cit.* (n. 14) with a reprint of the text on p. 301 ff.

⁷³ For the Kore Kosmu cf. n. 59.

Osiris are praised just as the Osiris-Bacchus of Tibullus; the Roman poet copies a form of religious praise which was used in the worship of Isis and Osiris.

To sum up, there can be little doubt that "ille liquor" is meant as the god Nile-Osiris. With these words Tibullus does not embark on a digression but continues the praise of his god. Osiris, then, alias Sarapis, was the teacher of song and dance. In the cult of Sarapis at Tanagra, literary and musical ἀγῶνες were performed.⁷⁴ According to Diodoros, Osiris was a friend of laughter and delighted in music and dancing. In his train came the nine muses together with their leader Apollo; and satyrs too were there, these beings who, as Diodoros tells us, particularly rejoiced in dancing, singing, refreshment, and amusement of every sort.⁷⁵ Osiris's son Harpocrates, who was identified with Apollo, claims in his own aretology that he invented the sistrum of Isis, the flute, and reed pipes, and that together with the muses he invented hymns and dances.⁷⁶ Osiris himself was reputed to be the inventor of the flute and the trumpet.⁷⁷ Flute-players of "Great Sarapis" took part in the Isis procession recounted by Apuleius (11, 9, 6). According to Propertius, the playing of flutes was particularly appropriate for the Nile god.⁷⁸ A well-known mosaic at Leptis Magna shows how the Nile flood is welcomed by trumpets and cymbals. For the celebrations people hired dancers.⁷⁹

In the festivals of Osiris music and dancing played prominent roles. This is an ancient concept in Egypt where dances and music, especially the playing of harps, took place at all festivals, even at the banquets in the

⁷⁴ Vidman, *SIRIS* (n. 15), 48 (97-95 B.C.). For athletic contests in the cult of Isis and Sarapis at Lycia, see Vidman, *SIRIS*, 343 and 344.

⁷⁵ Diod. I, 18, 4 f. According to P. Oxy. 1380, 62, Isis is called *μουσαναγωγός* (see also line 128).

⁷⁶ Vidman, *SIRIS* (see n. 15), 88; for this aretology cf. also n. 72. According to S. Schott (*Mél. Maspero*, I, Cairo, 1935-1938, 475 ff.) it was Harueris, the elder Horus, who was worshiped as god of harping; but the elder Horus, the falcon-god, and the younger Horus, the son of Isis and Osiris (Harsiesis), are different aspects of the same deity (see Morenz, *loc. cit.* [n. 58], 278). It fits to these two aspects, when in his aretology Carpocrates is called son of Sarapis and Isis (Harsiesis) as well as brother of Dionysos (Harueris).

⁷⁷ Iuba Mauritanus ap. Athen. IV, 175 E = Hopfner, *Fontes* (see n. 61), 167; Iul. Pollux, *Onom.* IV, 77 = Hopfner, 355; Eustathius, *Comm. ad Il.* XVIII, 219 = Hopfner, 754.

⁷⁸ Prop. IV, 8, 39; cf. Claudian, *Paneg. de IV cons. Honorii Aug.* (c. 8), 576 f.

⁷⁹ For example Bonneau, *loc. cit.* (n. 24), pl. VI, gives a picture of the mosaic of the Villa del Nilo. For hiring dancers see P. Oxy. 519, 10 = M. Vandoni, *Feste pubbl. e priv. nei documenti Greci*, Milano-Varese, 1964, nr. 36.

necropolises and, of course, at the feasts of the Nile.⁸⁰ In the Nile hymn mentioned above one reads: "Men began to sing to thee with the harp, and men sing to thee with the hand," that is, they clapped rhythmically. But at the same time the verses are suitable for Bacchus, the god who according to a chorus in Euripides rejoices at the banquets and causes his followers to dance, to laugh to the music of flutes, and to rest from their cares.⁸¹ They are suitable also for Dionysos in whose cult for the first time the friends of Ikarios drunk and danced round a slaughtered goat. And this is how Eratosthenes explained the origin of Greek tragedy.⁸² In the Osiris-Bacchus (Sarapis) of Tibullus, Egyptian and Greek concepts are united.

Tibullus's Osiris-Bacchus is further a releaser of cares through wine. "Bacchus shall be here the giver of joy," as Vergil puts it (Aen. 1, 734). The ancients valued wine as an escape from troubles.

In the choral song of Euripides mentioned already, Bacchus exercises his role as liberator from cares when the cheering wine is served at the banquets of the gods and the wine vessel causes the ivy-crowned men to sink into sleep.⁸³ And earlier in the play, Teiresias had said that Dionysos discovered wine, which frees tired mortals from their sorrows and brings sleep and forgetfulness of suffering (280 ff.). As late as the fifth century A.D. we hear practically identical statements from Nonnos, who came from Panopolis in Egypt, and from Rutilius Namatianus born in Gaul.⁸⁴ For the Roman poets wine was above all a means of relief from the pangs of love and worry about the future.⁸⁵ The so-called "Vatican mythographer" explains the epithet of the Roman wine god Liber: "servi ebrii

⁸⁰ For the banquets in the necropolises see S. Schott, "Das schöne Fest im Wüstensande," *Abh. Mainz*, 1952, 11, esp. 64 ff.; Bonnet, *loc. cit.* (n. 38), 490 f.; below, p. 149; for the joyful feast of the Nile see Bonneau, *loc. cit.* (n. 24), 361 ff., esp. 413 ff.

⁸¹ Eurip., *Bacch.* 378 ff. (cf. n. 63): ὄς τὰδ' ἔχει, | θιασεύεν τε χοροῖς | μετὰ τ' αὐλοῦ γέλασαι | ἀποπαῖσαι τε μερίμνας (to be continued in n. 83), 416 f., ὁ δαίμων ὁ Διὸς παῖς | χαίρει μὲν θαλάσιν . . .

⁸² Fr. 22 Powell; cf. K. Meuli, *Mus. Helv.*, 12, 1955, 226 f.; W. Burkert, "Greek Tragedy and Sacrificial Ritual," *Greek Roman and Byzantine Studies*, 7, 1966, 93; Merkelbach, *loc. cit.* (n. 45), 471 f. and 494 ff.

⁸³ Eurip., *Bacch.* 382 ff. (continuation of the passage quoted in n. 81): ὅπῳταν βότρυνος ἔλθῃ | γάνος ἐν δαυτὶ θεῶν, κισσοφόροις δ' ἐν θαλάσιν ἀνδράσι κρατῆρ ὕπνον ἀμφιβάλλῃ.

⁸⁴ Nonnus, *Dion.* VII, 78 f.: ἀρχέγονος δὲ | ἄχρυται εἰσέτι κόσμος, ἕως ἕνα παῖδα λοχεύσω. 87 νηπειθῆς Διόνυσος, ἀπενθέα βότρυν ἀέξων. 96 Διόνυσον ἀλεξητῆρα γενέθλης. 367 f. (Σεμέλη) ὀλβίη, ὅττι θεοῖσι καὶ ἀνδράσι χάρμα λοχεύσεις, | νιέα κυσσαμένη βροτῆς ἐπίληθον ἀνίης. Rut. Nam. I, 373 (reg. Osiris).

⁸⁵ Prop. III, 17, 3 f.; Hor., *Ep.* 9, 37 f.; cf. Tib. I, 2, 1; Sen., *De tranq. an.*, *Dial.* IX, 17, 8; A. Otto, *Die Sprichwörter der Römer*, Leipzig, 1890, 1899; K. Fl. Smith, in his notes on Tib. I, 7, 39 ff., also J. André.

liberi sibi videntur" (III, 12, 1). And such a liberator is Tibullus's Bacchus, even for the men whose chains rattle about their feet. This god ignores social differences; as Euripides puts it: ἴσα δ' ἔς τε τὸν ὄλβιον | τὸν τε χεῖρονα δῶκ' ἔχειν | οἴνου τέρψιν ἄλυπον.⁸⁶

Wine and the companionship of the bottle free man of his cares. It is therefore only natural that Dionysos himself, the god of wine, should be considered as Lyaïos or Lysios, the "releaser." In mythology, and in Euripides, the god releases not only himself but also the maenads from chains and imprisonment.⁸⁷ He releases the imprisoned (Paus. 9, 16, 6). But one thinks of Sarapis too in just this way. In many a community, from the end of the third century B.C. on, it was to Sarapis that freedmen were dedicated upon their emancipation from slavery.⁸⁸ Plutarch recites an aetiological tale to the effect that even in the last days of Alexander the Great Sarapis released a young man named Dionysios from his chains.⁸⁹ But in Tibullus we find not this physical release, but rather a spiritual one, as is appropriate for the god of the mysteries. One observes that Servius, in a note to Vergil's Georgics, says that Father Liber, identified with Osiris, frees and purifies the soul of man in mysteries.⁹⁰ Just as a dead man was—according to the Egyptian concept of the after-life⁹¹—freed from the chains which shackled him hand and foot, so did the god of mysteries endow the soul of his follower with inner freedom, in this world—even if, externally, he lived as a slave in chains. One thinks of the philosophical trends of the time: for the Stoics human freedom was independent of earthly position; they thought exclusively of spiritual freedom. But in

⁸⁶ Eurip., *Bacch.* 421 ff.; for ἴσα see no. 44.

⁸⁷ Cf. E. R. Dodds's remarks on Eurip., *Bacch.* 498; idem, *The Greeks and the Irrational* (paperback), 273 and 279; O. Weinreich, "Gebet und Wunder," *Genethliakon W. Schmid* (Tüb. Beitr. z. Altertumsw. 5), Stuttgart, 1929, 285 (repr. in *Religionsgesch. Studien*, Darmstadt, 1968, 123).

⁸⁸ Boeotia: Vidman, *SIRIS* (see n. 15), 55, 56, 60. Phocis: *SIRIS*, 64, 67, 69. Locris: *SIRIS*, 70, 71. Hyrcania: *SIRIS*, 369; see P. M. Fraser, *Opusc.* (see n. 15), 43 f.; also Isis confesses that she frees the bound ones.

⁸⁹ Vita Alexandri 73; see Grimal, *loc. cit.* (n. 1), 46.

⁹⁰ Serv. on Verg., *Georg.* I, 166 (p. 171 Thilo; Hopfner, *Fontes* [see n. 61], 617): "animas purgat"; cf. J. Harrison, *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion*, London⁴, 1961, 526 ff.

⁹¹ J. Zandee, *Death as an Enemy*, Suppl. to *Numen*, 5, Leiden, 1960, 78 f. Damned men are bound; see E. Hornung, "Altägyptische Höllenvorstellungen," *Abh. Leipzig*, Phil.-hist. Kl., 59, 3, Berlin, 1968, esp. 17 ff. The liberation of the bound ones in Hades is still mentioned as late as in the "Teachings of Cleopatra," a book connected with the mysteries (M. Berthelot, *Coll. des anc. alchim. grecs*, Paris, 1888 [repr. Osnabrück, 1967], II, 292, 18); and the early Christians thought that Christ liberates from the chains of Hades (see *APF*, 17, 1960, 71).

Tibullus it is, for example, not human nature which enables man to live in spiritual freedom but a gift from the god of the mysteries.

Tibullus's Nile-Osiris-Apis-Bacchus is the god of the Egyptian mysteries. Tibullus continues:

- 43 non tibi sunt tristes curae nec luctus, Osiri,
 sed chorus et cantus et levis aptus amor,
 sed varii flores et frons redimita corymbis,
 fusa sed ad teneros lutea palla pedes
 47 et Tyriae vestes et dulcis tibia cantu
 et levis occultis conscia cista sacris.

[Not for you, Osiris, are sad cares and sorrows, but dances and songs and easy love, various blossoms and a garland of flowering ivy worn around the forehead, further the flowing garment of saffran that hangs to your tender feet, robes of Tyrian purple, the sweet sound of flutes, and the easy burden of the box that knows the secret instruments of the mysteries.]

As in Tibullus, cares and sorrows are not appropriate to Osiris, so Diodorus's Osiris is a god of pleasures and entertainment; not a god of war plunging people into dangers but one offering them his benefits (see note 75). When Osiris died the vegetation dried up and the Nile carried but little water. Then it was time for lamentations. Again, when Osiris was found and revived together with the vegetation and when the Nile brought his flooding waters, then it was time to forget all sorrows, to rejoice, and to dance. In an Egyptian hymn Osiris is called "Lord of the Jubilations" at which people danced; a few lines later they are reminded of the joyful feast called "wag" on which the god was worshiped as "Lord of the Wine-Cellar" (Pyr. 820a). At the "haker" feast which at Abydos was celebrated for the dead presumably in connection with Osiris, people danced during the night.⁹² Especially the Nile feast mentioned above was a joyful festival (p. 147). In the hymn to the Nile god we hear of joy (see p. 138): "He who was sorrowful is come forth gay. Every heart is gay." Dionysos had the same jolly character. In Smyrna it was nefast to approach the altars while wearing black garment during the mysteries of Dionysos; black was the color of sorrow, and the mysteries must be a celebration of joy.⁹³

⁹² For the hymn to Osiris see M. A. Moret (*BIFAO*, 30, 1931, 725 ff., l. 2, cf. ll. 5 and 8), who already compares the pleasures of the mysteries of Isis (p. 737). For the "wag" feast and similar frolicsome celebrations see Kees, *loc. cit.* (n. 47), 121; Grimal, *loc. cit.* (n. 1), 47; and for the "haker" feast see Bonnet, *loc. cit.* (n. 38), 574; cf. the Pamyia at which women accompanied by flute players and singers carried Dionysos (Osiris) through the villages; this Dionysos had a large, erectable phallus (Herod. II, 48; cf. Bonnet, *loc. cit.*, 580).

⁹³ Sokolowsky, *LSAM*, nr. 84, l. 10; cf. M. P. Nilsson, *Dion. Myst.*, Lund, 1957, 133 ff.; A. D. Nock, *Harv. St. Class. Phil.*, 63, 1958, 415 ff. (= *Essays on Relig.*, II, Oxford, 1972, 847 ff.).

Tibullus thinks of this joyful Dionysos, this joyful Nile-Osiris and Sarapis, who in a hymn is called *χρυσοστέφανος* and for whom a Roman inscription makes the wish: [- -] ἐπ' ἀγαθῶ σοι γένοιτο, Νειλάγωγε | [- -] καλή σου πᾶσα ὄρα, εὐεργέτα Σάραπι.⁹⁴ The darker sides of this god are naturally forgotten at Messalla's birthday party.

Tibullus further connects this joyful god with a kind of light-hearted love which causes no one suffering or worry. Without Dionysos, without wine, there would be no love. That sentiment we can read as early as the Nestor cup, from about 700 B.C.: ὁς δ' ἀπόδο' τοῦδε π[ίη]σι ποτηρί[ου], αὐτίκα κείνον | ἱμερ[ος αἶρ]ήσει καλλιστε[φάν]ου Ἀφροδίτης.⁹⁵ And we find something similar for example in Euripides's *Bacchae*; for these bacchantes yearn for Cyprus, the land of Aphrodite and her miracles (403 ff.). Later in Apuleius a wine jar is greeted: "ecce, Veneris hortator at armiger Liber advenit ultro."⁹⁶

Love fits in with wine, and it fitted in with the mysteries, which were often not so much "mysterious" as festive and pleasurable, as is shown, for example, by the easy living in the gardens of Canopus⁹⁷; and even the afterlife of the mysteries was a place of joy and love, pictured by Tibullus in I, 3.⁹⁸ That love had a place in the afterlife was a thing the Egyptians

⁹⁴ Vidman, *SIRIS* (see n. 15), 458; cf. 363. The hymn is *SIRIS*, 325.

⁹⁵ For the reconstruction of this text see A. Dihle, *Hermes*, 97, 1969, 257 ff.

⁹⁶ Apul. 2, 11, 2; that wine is the helper of Aphrodite and her desires is a commonplace (see, e.g., Achill. Tat. 2, 3, 3; Lollian fr. B, 1, v. 20 ff. Henrichs [see n. 51]; Diod. 4, 6, 1; cf. Henrichs, *loc. cit.*, 46 n. 9); but, of course, people had the opposite experience in antiquity too.

⁹⁷ The gardens of Canopus were love-gardens connected, I think, with the cult of Isis and Sarapis (see Strabo 17, 1, 16 f.). According to Amm. Marc. 22, 16, 14 the place is so charming and the air so healthy, especially when the summer wind blows, that one believes oneself outside of this world, that is, in the elysium which was famous for the soft blowings of the wind. One is not surprised that the joyful landscape of the Nile with erotes and psychai, and a temple of Isis were depicted on a sarcophagus of an initiate of Isis (Vidman, *SIRIS* [see n. 15], 542). The ἀπόψεις mentioned by Strabo represented an Egyptian "m3rw", that is literally translated "viewing place," "place of being viewed" (Brugsch, *Wb.*, V, 525, and Levi, *Vocab.*, III, 35); Amenophis III called the m3rw he dedicated to Amon "a place of recreation at his beautiful feast"; it designates a small building in a garden connected with a lake in which the sun-god made his appearances (cf. A. Badawy, *JEA*, 42, 1956, 59 ff.), and Sarapis, who had a famous temple in Canopus, was a sun-god, who was addressed as Ζεὺς Ἥλιος μέγας Σάραπισ ἐν Κανώβω (A. Bernard, *Le Delta égypt. d'après les textes grecs*, Cairo, 1970, 242 ff., nr. 13 = *SB*, 8281 = *SEG*, 24, 1192; Bernard, 14 = *SB*, 8452; Bernard, 25 = *SB*, 8094 = *SEG*, 8, 435; cf. Bernard, 24 = *SB*, 431). For the religious character of these gardens cf. also Dio Cass. 50, 27. A. Bernard (*Alexandrie la Grande*, Paris, 1966, 298 ff.) gives a detailed description of entertainments at Canopus; P. Roussel compares it with modern Lourdes (*loc. cit.* [n. 15], 168); cf. also Fraser, *Alex.* (see n. 15), I, 200 f., and Merkelbach, *loc. cit.* (n. 15), 118 n. 3.

⁹⁸ I, 3, 57 ff.; cf. Prop. I, 19, 13 f. (cf. the commentary of P. J. Enk) and such ideas of

had believed for time immemorial.⁹⁹ And, of course, love suits the theme and tone of Tibullan amorous verse.

The god wears a robe that reaches his feet, a robe that was worn by women in the cult of Dionysos.¹⁰⁰ Its color is saffron: in Aristophanes, too, Dionysos wears a saffron robe, and, according to Plutarch, statues of Osiris were draped in a robe "the color of fire." As a matter of fact, the initiates of Isis and Osiris, even the male ones like Lucius in the novel of Apuleius, wore such robes at their initiation ceremony.¹⁰¹

But the most unmistakable characteristic of the god is the "cista," because this light "cista" is the basketwork container in which the sacred instruments and symbols were kept, both in the mysteries of Dionysos and those of Isis and Osiris. Such a cista, "secretorum capax penitus celans operata magnificae religionis," was carried in the Isis procession portrayed by Apuleius.¹⁰² The god to whom Tibullus turns is really the god of the mysteries in whose person Dionysos and Osiris are united; his true name, it turned out before, is Sarapis.

Tibullus opened his hymn to Nile-Osiris-Apis by questions about the Nile and its flood, which were much discussed in antiquity, but at the

the afterlife and its amusements as found in an epigram added to a representation of the banquet of the dead: *εὐφρανθεῖς, παίξας, γελάσας, ῥοδίνους στεφανωθείς, | νήδυμον ἕπνον ἔχων ἰς Ἀΐδην ἐδόθην* (2029, 8 f. Peek; third century A.D.). It is at such ideas that Lucian scoffs (*v. hist.* II, 19); the Greeks believed in banquets and garlands of the afterlife since the sixth century B.C. (K. Kircher, *Die sakrale Bedeutung des Weines im Altertum*, Rel. Vers. u. Vorarb., IX, 2, Giessen, 1910, 58 f.). The hope for love in the afterlife does not exclude doubts and admonitions to enjoy life so long as one is on earth. In a Roman inscription of the third century A.D. dedicated to the dead husband of an initiate of Isis and allegedly spoken by him we are told: "amici, qui legitis, monco, miscite Lyaeum/ et potate procul redimiti tempora flore/ et Venereos coitus formosis ne denegatis puellis" (Bücheler, *CLE*, 856 = Vidman, *SIRIS*, 451).

⁹⁹ The Egyptian dead had statuettes of women at their disposal; cf. S. Morenz, "Die Wöchnerin mit dem Siegelring," *ZAS*, 83, 1958, 138 ff.; H. Kees, *loc. cit.* (n. 47), 95, 130, 262, 264, 286.

¹⁰⁰ Aesch. fr. 59 N.; Prop. III, 17, 32; the god wears the smyrna (Sen., *Oed.* 423; *Herc. fur.* 475). For the following cf. the commentaries of K. Fl. Smith and J. André.

¹⁰¹ Saffron: Aristoph. *Frogs* 46; cf. the saffron-colored girdle in Sen., *Oed.* 421. Osiris: Plut., *De Is.* 51: ἀμπεχόνη δὲ φλογοειδεῖ στέλλουσαν αὐτοῦ τὰς εἰκόνας. For Lucius's long robe see Apul., *Metam.* 11, 24, 2. See also Henrichs, *loc. cit.* (n. 51), 115. According to Grimal (*loc. cit.* [n. 1], 45), the robe described by Tibullus does not fit the representations of Osiris, but Sarapis, whose iconography has been influenced by Dionysos. This statement cannot be applied to Osiris, the god of the mysteries, whose alias is Sarapis. And that in Tibullus Sarapis hides behind the name of Osiris is exactly what Grimal wants to demonstrate.

¹⁰² Apul., *Metam.* 11, 11, 3; for the cista see O. Jahn, *Hermes*, 3, 1869, 317 ff.; M. P. Nilsson, *loc. cit.* (n. 93), 96; W. Burkert, *Technikgeschichte*, 34, 1967, 293; for representations see V. Tran Tinh, *loc. cit.* (n. 21), 107, 130, 144, 153.

same time concerned secret teachings of the Egyptian priests, since the answer was given by the death and the resurrection of Osiris. The implications of this statement are clearer now, after it turned out that Tibullus's Osiris is the god of the mysteries. In the initiations the mystai were asked questions to which the answer revealed a secret of the mysteries.¹⁰³ This may be true of Tibullus's opening questions. His audience, being intimate with the mysteries, their teachings, rites, and customs, and not forced to pick up dispersed pieces of information as we do, may have immediately understood these questions not as trivial allusions to a very common unsolved scientific problem but as questions concerning the central secret of the mysteries.

THE HYMNOS KLETIKOS

The section concerning the deeds and greatness of the god is followed by a prayer for his appearance.

- 49 huc ades et Genium ludis Geniumque choreis
 concelebra et multo tempora funde mero;
 illius et nitido stillent unguenta capillo,
 et capite et collo mollia sarta gerat.
- 53 sic venias hodie, tibi dem turis honores
 liba et Mopsopio dulcia melle feram.

[Come and celebrate the Genius with us, celebrate the Genius in games and dances; pour streams of wine about his brows. His glistening hair must drip with ointment, he must wear soft garlands around forehead and neck. Come to me today in order that I may honor you with the smoke of incense¹⁰⁴ and bring you sacrificial cakes sweet with the honey of Attica.]

Osiris is asked to appear at the birthday party of Messalla, as in the Aeneid Dido asked Dionysos and Iuno to appear at her banquet: "adsit laetitiae Bacchus dator et bona Iuno" (I, 734). Sarapis was *συμποσιάρχης* as well as Dionysos. It became clear that Tibullus in this poem honors

¹⁰³ Merkelbach, *Roman* (see n. 15), 334, 162, 168. Cf. the questions which had to be answered by the Egyptian dead (*The Book of the Dead*, at the end of Chapter 125) and which were inherited by Egyptian gnostics (Epiph., *Pan. haer.* 26, 13, 2 = I, 292, 13 ff. Holl); but also Greek women asked and answered riddles in the cult of Dionysos (Plut., *Quaest. conv.* 8, 1, 717 A; M. P. Nilsson, *Griech. Feste*, 274 n. 1).

¹⁰⁴ For the construction "sic . . . , tibi dem . . ." cf. Hor., *Ode* I, 3, 1 ff., Cat. 17, 5 f., Tib. 2, 5, 121 and the parallels collected by Kiesling-Heinze and C. J. Fordyce; normally this "sic" prepares for a condition expressed by an imperative or adhortative subjunctive ("under this condition"), but in Tib. I, 7, 53, it announces a subjunctive wish ("to this intention come: I shall give you"). For "hodie" see the literature collected by Lenz (third edition by G. C. Galinsky, 1971).

Sarapis under the name of Osiris, and Sarapis did participate at private banquets in Egypt, as we know mainly from invitations written on papyrus, and in other places as well where communities of mystics were living, as in Augsburg and Cologne. The god was at once guest and host at these banquets, including that which was given to celebrate the birth of a child or a young man's coming of age.¹⁰⁵ This was the most important "birthday party" of one's life. Also, Messalla was celebrating a birthday, which, because of his triumph, had special significance. Tibullus summoned this god to appear at the party as guest, but as host he is to grant his gifts to the genius of Messalla. This is the same situation as at the Sarapis banquets in Egypt.

But Tibullus unites Egyptian ritual with the Roman practice of honoring a man's genius on his birthday. For the Romans this genius was the essence of the person of the individual man; it existed apart from one's corporeal being but resembled it exactly in appearance. It was born with one, and originally died with one as well. Only when the belief in an afterlife developed in philosophy and in the mysteries did the genius come to play a central role in the concept of human immortality—it became man, surviving in the afterlife.¹⁰⁶

Osiris is to pour wine over the forehead of Messalla's genius and give him ointment and garlands. Garlands, ointment, and wine are likewise gifts for the genius in Tibullus II, 2.¹⁰⁷ In I, 7 it is Nile-Osiris who gives these gifts. Already in the ancient Egyptian Nile hymn the Nile looks after

¹⁰⁵ Birth of a child: P. Oxy., 2791; coming to age: P. Oxy., 1484 = Vandoni (see n. 79), nr. 138. The *clinae* were celebrated at private and religious festivals; they took place in temples (e.g. P. Oxy., 2592, 2791), but also in private houses (P. Oslo, 157 = Vand., 143; P. Oxy., 523 = Vand., 142; P. Oxy., 1755 = Vand., 145; P. Yale, 85; cf. P. Fouad, 76 = Vand., 141; cf. L. Robert, "Inscript. d'Athènes et de la Grèce Centrale," *Arch. Ephém.*, 1969, 7 ff.). For the *clinae* of Sarapis at Cologne see Vidman, *SIRIS* (n. 15), 720 (cf. G. Grimm, *Die Zeugnisse ägyptischer Religion und Kunstelemente im römischen Deutschland*, Leiden, 1969, 83 f.), at Augsburg see Grimm, *loc. cit.*, 81 and pl. 44, 39 f. (G. J. F. Kater-Sibbes, *Preliminary Catalogue of Sarapis Monuments*, Leiden, 1973, nr. 857). Sarapis as guest and host: Ael. Arist., *Hymn to Sarapis* 27; as host the god himself invites the guests (*ZPE*, 1, 1967, 121 ff. = *SB*, 10496). See H. C. Youtie, *HTR*, 41, 1948, 9 ff. = *Scriptunculae*, I, Amsterdam, 1973, 487 ff.; L. Castiglioni, *Acta Ant.*, 9, 1961, 287 ff.; Vidman, *Isis* (see n. 15), 116, 121, and 170; F. Dunand, *Le culte d'Isis*, Leiden, 1973, III, ind. V. s.v. Banquets; P. Köln I (in press).

¹⁰⁶ K. Latte, *loc. cit.* (n. 21), 103 f.; W. F. Otto, *RE*, VII, 1155 ff.; F. Cumont, *After Life in Roman Paganism*, New York², 1959, 142; idem, *Recherches sur le symbolisme funéraire des Romains*, Paris, 1942, 115 n. 1; G. Dumezil, *La religion romaine archaïque*, Paris, 1966, 351 f.; E. Rohde, *Psyche*, Tübingen⁶, 1910, 320, II, n. 1; see also K. Fl. Smith and André.

¹⁰⁷ See also the gift of wine for the genius in Hor., *Ode* III, 17, 14; *Epist.* II, 1, 144; *ad Pis.* 209 f.

ointment. Osiris is a god of wine and wears garlands himself. So he makes the genius of Messalla a drinking companion.

In return for his appearance, Tibullus promises Osiris the smoke of incense and ritual-cakes sweetened with Attic honey.¹⁰⁸ For it is this god to whom l. 53 is directed; "sic venias" repeats the request of l. 49, "huc ades," and there it is addressed to Osiris.¹⁰⁹ Incense and sweet cake are suitable gifts for Osiris-Dionysos; according to Ovid's *Fasti*, Dionysos was regarded as the discoverer of incense and of honey (III, 731 ff.). The maenads of Greece caused honey to drip miraculously from their thyrsos (Eurip. *Bacch.*, 710 f.). And cake was given to Dionysos in Attica.¹¹⁰

Dionysos was offered cakes, because he liked sweet food to eat (Ov. *Fasti*, III, 731 ff.). But on the other hand, incense and cakes were characteristic gifts for household gods. They are offered to the genius also in Tibullus's other birthday poem¹¹¹: there the wish "ipse . . . genius adsit" (5) corresponds to the request to Osiris in our elegy, "huc ades" (49) and "sic venias" (53). Osiris therefore is treated as a genius. He is called upon as "hodie" (53), that is, as the god who appears at today's birthday celebration as a second genius. The two beings, Osiris-Dionysos alias Sarapis and the genius, have become very similar here. They belong together.

And just this is known from Pompeii and Herculaneum. There in the shrines of the lares we find the gods of the Isis mysteries in company with the traditional gods of the household. Sarapis, Harpokrates, and Anubis can even replace the traditional gods.¹¹² Nile, Osiris, Sarapis, and Agathos Daimon, the Greek equivalent of the Genius, were in fact related. They all adopted the shape of a serpent, as did Amon, one of the gods amalgamated in the deity of Sarapis. A canal in Alexandria called Agathodaimon was represented as a snake, also Sarapis, whose human head sometimes was combined with the body of a snake. Isis was depicted similarly. As the snake Isis-Thermuthis corresponds to the Greek Ἀγαθή Τύχη and the Roman Fortuna, so does the snake Sarapis to the Greek

¹⁰⁸ "Mopsopio" echoes again Callimachus (fr. 709) as does l. 51 f. (fr. 7, 12; *hymn* II, 38 f.; cf. Bulloch, *loc. cit.* [see n. 34], 77).

¹⁰⁹ It is significant that J. P. Postgate proposed his conjecture "hodie Geni, tibi . . . feram" in order to avoid the conclusion drawn above.

¹¹⁰ A. Pickard-Cambridge, *The Dram. Fest. at Athens*, Oxford, 1953, 27; M. P. Nilsson, *Arch. Jb.*, 31, 1916, 331 (= *Op. sel.*, Lund, 1951, I, 201); A. S. F. Gow in his commentary on Theocr. 26, 7; A. Henrichs, *ZPE*, 4, 1969, 231.

¹¹¹ II, 2, 3 ff.; see also *Corp. Tib.* III, 11, 9 (incense).

¹¹² V. Tran Tinh, *loc. cit.* (n. 21), 106 ff., cf. 23 n. 2; Merkelbach, *Latomus*, 26, 1965, 145; see also Vidman, *SIRIS* (n. 15), 535 (Rome).

Ἄγαθος Δαίμων and the Roman Genius.¹¹³ The similarity in the appearance as snakes reflects similar theological ideas. Osiris-Sarapis of the mysteries was not only a tutelary god of the initiates as long as they lived, but in addition he guaranteed an afterlife for them; just the same functions were fulfilled by the genius of the Romans who believed in life after death. Osiris, from an Egyptian standpoint, can be regarded as the "ka" of a man, as they called one of their concepts of the soul. And this Egyptian "ka" corresponds to the Roman concept of the genius. The Egyptians translated Agathos Damon-Genius by the word "schai," which denotes the concept of man's fate; but "fate" could be expressed also by "ka," and in this sense the term "schai" could be replaced by "ka." Further, they used a word "ka" for "bull," and it is most likely that the term "ka" denoting a concept of human soul is derived from "ka" meaning "bull." If so, "ka" literally denotes the generative power of man; and the term "genius" is derived from the stem "gen" (gignere).¹¹⁴

Genius and Osiris-Sarapis, alias Nile, alias Apis, personify the same concept. But in Tibullus, Osiris and the Genius remain distinct beings, at least in lines 49-51. The assimilation is carried out only insofar as Osiris

¹¹³ For Osiris as snake see Kákosy, *loc. cit.* (n. 32), cf. here p. 135; Wortmann, *loc. cit.* (n. 47), 89 on Juv., *Sat.* VI, 538 ff. (also on the Nile as snake); Kater-Sibbes, *loc. cit.* (n. 105), nr. 418. For Sarapis see W. Kaiser, *Ägyptisches Museum Berlin* (Stiftung preußischer Kulturbesitz), Berlin, 1967, nr. 997 and plate = Kater-Sibbes 425 (together with Isis depicted also as snake with human head; tails enlaced; in bronze, from Cyzicus); a marble relief found at Rome shows also a Sarapis head on the body of a snake (Kater-Sibbes, 686 and pl. XIX); three similar terracotta representations though with variations in details are in the Coll. Fouquet (found at Kasr Daoud, Kater-Sibbes, 100), in the Museum of Alexandria (nr. 22971, Kater-Sibbes, 174), and in my private collection (from Egypt, unpublished); a fourth one was found at Heracleopolis Magna (Kater-Sibbes, 97). Also on coins the snake Agathos Daimon had the head of Sarapis (R. S. Pole, *Cat. Greek Coins Brit. Mus.*, Alexandria, p. 88 (Hadrian), 130 (Antoninus Pius), and cf. 56 (Trajan, see A. Bernand, *Le Delta* [see n. 97], 87). Cf. also the marble figure of Sarapis wrapped by a snake which was discovered at Arles (Kater-Sibbes, 802 and pl. XXVII). For Isis-Thermuthis as snake with a human head see Fr. Dunand, *BIFAO*, 67 1969, 9 ff.; for the serpent *Agathos Daimon* representing the Nile see A. Bernand, *Alexandrie* (see n. 97), pl. 24, opposite p. 296, and idem, *Le Delta* (see n. 97), 89.

¹¹⁴ For the term "schai" replacing the "ka" see W. Spiegelberg, *ZÄS*, 49. 1911, 360; for "schai" as translation of *Agathos Daimon* see S. Morenz, "Untersuchungen zur Rolle des Schicksals . . .," *Abh. Leipzig*, Berlin, 1960, 26; the "schai" was especially the *Agathos Daimon* of Ptolemaios I., who founded Ptolemais: its Egyptian name was *Psoi* = *Schai*. See also Grimal, *loc. cit.* (n. 1), 47; H. Frankfort, *loc. cit.* (n. 47), 65: "The best equivalent for the Ka is the genius of the Romans, though the Ka is much more impersonal. But in the case of the genius, as well as in that of the Ka, there is the recognition of a power which transcends the human person even though it works within him." As the Roman gods had a genius, so the Egyptian gods had one or more kas. Similar ideas are found elsewhere too.

gives his gifts of wine, ointment, and garlands, thus making the genius his drinking companion. In wine, the god gives himself; and ointment and garlands are symbols of immortality.¹¹⁵ In giving these things to the genius, Osiris makes it immortal and shares with it his own divinity. Just in this way the Osiris of ancient Egypt animated the "ka" of a departed man and resurrected it as Osiris himself. The Egyptian dead was absorbed by Osiris and lived on as Osiris. Such an absorption may be indicated in lines 53 f., which direct the request for appearing to Osiris and treat him at the same time as if he were the genius; at this point the genius disappears. One may conclude that after Osiris offered his gifts of immortality to the genius, he and the genius are amalgamated. But there remains a fundamental difference from the Egyptian concept of the dead becoming Osiris. Tibullus does not think of the god of the underworld, but of Sarapis, the god of the mysteries, who gives man a claim to immortality even during his earthly life.

In his prayer that the god appear at the birthday celebration, Tibullus attempts to harmonize Egyptian thought with Roman. Osiris makes not the man himself immortal, but rather his genius. The strength and power of the god increase the strength and power of the man who stands under his protection. Thus in praising the might of Osiris, Tibullus praises the might of Messalla, who is devoted to the god.

A FINAL REMARK ON THE STRUCTURE OF THE WHOLE POEM

If the hymn to Osiris honors Messalla, too, as I argued, then it is an appropriate theme for his birthday elegy; it stands in the middle of the elegy and is consequently no unbalanced excursion, as Wilamowitz expressed the opinion of his time,¹¹⁶ but rather the center of the whole poem, as F. W. Levy alias Lenz recognized.¹¹⁷

This becomes still clearer when one considers the structure of the elegy as a whole. At the beginning of the poem stands Messalla's triumphal

¹¹⁵ For the ointment see Merkelbach, *Roman* (see n. 15), 47 f. There was a consecrated oil called *μυστήριον* also used by the magicians in the ceremony of making immortal (*PGM*, IV, 741 ff. and 770 f. = A. Dieterich, *Eine Mithrasliturgie*, Leipzig and Berlin, 1923, 17 f.; cf. Th. Hopfner, *Griech-ägypt. Offenbarungszauber*, II, Leipzig, 1924, 62, §121); see also Firm. Mat., *De err. prof. rel.* 22 f. (cf. R. Reitzenstein, *Hellen. Mysterienreligionen*, 400 f.) and the novel *Joseph and Asenoth* (8, 5, and 15, 4, *χρίσματι τῆς ἀθανασίας*; ed. M. Philonenko). The garland is a sign of the mystai (Apul., *Metam.* 11, 24, 4; Merkelbach, *Roman*, 35; cf. his index, s.v. "Kranz").

¹¹⁶ *Hellenistische Dichtung*, II, 301 n. 1: "anorganische Einlage"; cf. I, 238: "Abschweifung"; see also M. Schuster, *Tibull-Studien*, Wien, 1930, 20 ff.

¹¹⁷ *Loc. cit.* (n. 64), 439 f.; cf. L. Dissen in his edition of 1835, XCII f.

procession in Rome, in which the triumphator comes on stage as Jupiter and in which, according to the Roman concept, his superhuman might became manifest. The Osiris hymn is the Egyptian counterpart to this picture: the true strength and hope of Messalla is the god Osiris. At the same time, of course, the world of Osiris, with its joyful festivities, is more comfortable and familiar to Tibullus than is the ceremonial glitter of the triumphal procession. At the end of the poem we have again very Roman ideas: may Messalla survive after death in the person of his sons and in the benefaction he gave to his countrymen by repairing the *via Latina*. These concluding scenes correspond to the opening picture of the triumph. The Osiris hymn is, as it were, the focal point around which the Roman themes, the triumphal procession, and the closing scenes are centered.

This central position of the hymn to Nile-Osiris is reflected also in details of composition. Even in the portrayal of the triumph, Tibullus concentrates on the rivers; and when he mentions Cilicia and Syria, he concentrates on the miraculous. Thus he foreshadows the miracle of the river Nile. Tyre invented ships; in the hymn Osiris is celebrated as the great inventor. Tibullus remains steadfast to his associations, and from the very start of the poem he directs us straight toward his hymn to the Nile. There is similarly a direct transition from the celebration of the genius to the conclusion of the poem. The genius is a symbol of human reproduction, and its mention is immediately followed by a wish for progeny. The last distich celebrates the *dies natalis*, as did the first distich, and so Tibullus returns at the end to the opening theme.¹¹⁸

MESSALLA AND OSIRIS

Let us likewise return to the opening theme of our interpretation. It was made clear, I hope, what a central position has the hymn to Nile-Osiris in I, 7 and how the song of praise to Osiris was at the same time a song of praise to Messalla. Messalla had been in Egypt. Tibullus was clearly aware of how deeply the Egyptian cult had impressed him. Perhaps Messalla had even become an initiate. But the biographical question is unimportant for our understanding of the poem. In any case,

¹¹⁸ "Natalis" may be understood as a genius who is invited to come still brighter in the years ahead (cf. II, 2); but even so the birthday celebration is meant. In the first line "dies" seems to designate the day of Messalla's triumph, which was announced by the *Parcae*. Only in l. 49 it becomes clear that in reality the birthday was meant. The birth of Messalla, on which occasion the *Parcae* fixed his fate, comprehends already his victory over the Aquitanians. There is no need to conclude that Messalla won his victory or had his triumph on his birthday. See also André.

Tibullus was able to speak as if Messalla included Osiris among his household deities and regarded him as his special protective god.

The pro-Egyptian mentality of Messalla may have induced Tibullus to write a poem full of allusions to the Egyptian world and to give his poetic picture of this strange world. At the same time Delia, his beloved mistress, was initiated into the mysteries of the Egyptian gods. Tibullus could be sure of pleasing her exactly with this kind of poetry. Therefore he follows Egyptian religious thoughts also in the second and third elegy of his first book. Propertius was in a quite similar position with regard to his mistress; Egyptian influence can be traced with him too.¹¹⁹

One is inclined to ask whether this special situation of Greek-educated Roman poets being in love with the initiates of the Egyptian gods was not one of the factors which changed Greek elegy and gave birth to the Roman love elegy. The answer to this question cannot be given here. We are satisfied with having seen how the Roman poets interwove Egyptian and Greco-Roman religious thoughts. People may find fault with this syncretism. But on the other hand one may admire the power of poetic imagination which in the new cosmopolitan time of Augustus combined Greco-Roman thought with the religious world of the Egyptians.

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¹¹⁹ For the time being see p. 129.