Religion in the Latin Elegists

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Religious imagery forms a leitmotif in Propertius' elegies. The whole mood and ethos of Tibullan elegy is religious. And Ovid devoted an entire work to the yearly festivals. The elegists are an important source of our knowledge of Roman

Abbreviations:

AJA	American Journal of Archaeology
AJP	American Journal of Philology
ANRW	Aufstieg und Niedergang der Römischen Welt
AUMLA	Journal of the Australian Universities Language and Literature Association
CJ	Classical Journal
CP	Classical Philology
CQ	Classical Quarterly
CR	Classical Review
HSCIP	Harvard Studies in Classical Philology

religion in the Augustan age. WOLFGANG FAUTH has given us a most valuable study of the religion of this period as it is reflected in the 'Fasti' of Ovid.[1]

In a recent and very perceptive study, however, GORDON WILLIAMS questions whether Ovid is any more interested in the facts of Roman religion per se in the 'Fasti' than he is in those of Greek myth in the 'Metamorphoses'.[2] In a similar vein, HAROLD C. GOTOFF insists that Tibullus' interest in the countryside and its religious festivals is subordinate to his amorous concerns.[3] And JEAN-PAUL BOUCHER has considered the religious and mythic elements of Propertius as more the reflection of artistry than of real belief.[4]

On the other hand, GEORG LUCK has said that "Propertius is a religious poet; his idea of the poet is a sacerdotal one (4.6.1 ff.), and he wants his elegies (or at least most of them) to be read not only with absorption but with a kind of piety"; PIERRE BOYANCÉ and VIKTOR PÖSCHL have spoken about a "religion of love" in Propertius; and ROBERT B. PALMER has discussed a similar theme in Tibullus' poetry.[5] In this article I shall analyze these conflicting points of view and reconsider the elegies of Propertius and Tibullus, and to a lesser extent Ovid's elegiac works other than the 'Fasti', as *testimonia* of religious conceptions and practices at the time of Augustus.

I. Introduction

JEAN-PAUL BOUCHER observes that in Propertius many conventional religious terms and notions (e.g., the words *sacerdos, vates, sacra, deus*) have taken

HThR	Harvard Theological Review
JHS	Journal of Hellenic Studies
JRS	Journal of Roman Studies
RhM	Rheinisches Museum
TAPA	Transactions of the American Philological Association
WS	Wiener Studien
YCIS	Yale Classical Studies

[1] WOLFGANG FAUTH, Römische Religion im Spiegel der 'Fasti' des Ovid, in: ANRW II 16.1, ed. WOLFGANG HAASE (Berlin–New York 1978) 104–186.

[2] GORDON WILLIAMS, Change and Decline: Roman Literature in the Early Empire (Berkeley–Los Angeles 1978) 95. But on this subject see especially R. SCHILLING, Ovide, poète des 'Fastes', in: Mélanges d'archéologie, d'épigraphie et d'histoire offerts à Jérôme Carcopino (Paris 1966) 863–875; FAUTH (above, note 1) 167–173.

[3] HAROLD C. GOTOFF, Tibullus: Nunc Levis est Tractanda Venus, HSCIP 78 (1974) 233.

[4] JEAN-PAUL BOUCHER, Place et rôle de la religion dans les Élégies de Properce, in: Mélanges de Philosophie, de littérature et d'histoire ancienne offerts à Pierre Boyancé, Collection de l'école française de Rome 22 (Rome 1974) 79–102.

[5] GEORG LUCK, The Latin Love Elegy[2] (London 1969) 122. See the discussions of VIKTOR PÖSCHL and PIERRE BOYANCÉ in Fondation Hardt pour l'étude de l'antiquité classique, Entretiens 2 (Geneva 1956) 217–218; ROBERT B. PALMER, Is There a Religion of Love in Tibullus, CJ 73 (1977) 1–10.

on a new life which has more to do with poetic creation than with religion as such.[6] BOUCHER speaks of *« l'ambiguïté des sentiments religieux »* in Propertius and describes *« la désacralisation de nombreux éléments d'origine religieuse »* as a characteristic of the poems.[7] The dramatic content of many of Propertius' elegies leads BOUCHER to expect that the poet will turn to prayer and religious offerings (*preces* and *vota*) for help; but since, according to BOUCHER, this legitimate expectation is often left unfulfilled, we have reason to doubt that Propertius was of a genuinely religious nature.[8] Mythic and religious conceptions are, then, mostly symbolic, in the opinion of BOUCHER: they are, from this point of view, literary figures with only a residue of religious meaning.[9]

From poem 3.5 BOUCHER concludes that Propertius was, in fact, largely skeptical about traditional religious beliefs. In elegy 4.7, Cynthia appears to the elegist in a dream and the poet exclaims: *sunt aliquid Manes!* (1) BOUCHER contrasts this elegy, in which Propertius seems to believe in an afterlife, with the expression of skepticism in 3.5: Propertius there, in the view of BOUCHER, sums up his personal beliefs in the phrase *haut ultra quam rogus* (46).[10]

BOUCHER distinguishes between the traditional forms of thought for which the elegies are a vehicle, and the poet's personal beliefs, which tend toward the philosophic and skeptical. BOUCHER gives considerable weight to the evidence which he draws from elegy 3.5; but perhaps not all readers will agree that 3.5, which has its own dramatic purpose and context, reveals the writer's personal philosophy, anymore than we can know from 4.7 that he believes in an afterlife. BOUCHER does observe, nonetheless, that Propertius (whatever his own beliefs) gives us valuable information about the religious practices of the epoch.[11] Other scholars, however, would caution that even here we confront difficulties since the Roman elegists often draw upon Greek and especially Hellenistic Greek literary motifs in portraying the customs of their own times. However, in an important recent article JASPER GRIFFIN advises that the identification of such motifs in the literature of the Augustan age has too frequently led to mistaken conclusions.[12] The search for motifs and conventional *topoi* often prompts scholars to suppose that (as GRIFFIN puts it) "'Greek' is tantamount to 'literary', and 'literary' to 'unreal'."[13]

GRIFFIN gives much evidence in support of the view that Roman life, and especially the life which the poets depict, was so permeated with Hellenistic culture that no simple division into 'Greek' and 'Roman' elements is possible.[14]

[6] BOUCHER (above, note 4) 79–81: *« Properce n'est prêtre au sens propre . . . mais toujours en un sens symbolique. Pour Properce être prêtre des Muses, ce n'est pas autre chose qu'être poète . . . »* (p. 81).

[7] BOUCHER (above, note 4) 87.

[8] Ibid. Cf. elegies 1.15, 1.19, 1.21, 1.22, 2.1, 2.8, 2.13, 2.34.

[9] BOUCHER (above, note 4) 89–90, 102.

[10] BOUCHER, 92–93.

[11] BOUCHER, 101.

[12] JASPER GRIFFIN, Augustan Poetry and the Life of Luxury, JRS 66 (1976) 87–104.

[13] GRIFFIN (above, note 12) 88.

[14] GRIFFIN, 88.

The baths and basilicas, the design of country villas with their exotic fishponds and gardens; imported silks, cosmetics, perfumes and jewelry; exquisite wines, expensive silverware, delicacies of the table and even the table-music itself: these are but a few of the benefits of Hellenistic and Eastern culture to which the Romans of the Augustan age had become accustomed.[15] GRIFFIN reminds us that the Romans of the highest station were known to seek out the company of actors, mimes and lovers with Greek names.[16] The love affairs and life-styles of which the poets wrote in all probability resemble those of real life in their times.[17] If the poets describe life in conventional forms, which are grounded in the expressions of earlier (Greek) literature, we should not dismiss all such descriptions as mere *topoi* with no foundation in reality. GRIFFIN's excellent study focuses upon the more expansive sides of life but, as he observes, his conclusions have consequences for the interpretation of other subjects of Augustan poetry, as well.

One of these subjects is religion. We cannot (as scholars continually remind us) read the poems as strict autobiography. And we must be judicious, when a religious custom which an elegist describes evokes a traditional Greek literary motif, in deciding whether or not that custom is genuinely Roman. But we have good reason to agree with BOYANCÉ, PÖSCHL and LUCK that Propertius is a "religious poet," at least in a qualified sense. The worlds of both Propertius and Tibullus are heavily suffused with religious values and customs, and this is evident from the opening (programmatic) elegies of their first books. The very name Cynthia, the first word of Propertius 1.1, evokes the realm of cult; it is the feminine of the epithet *Cynthius-a-um*, 'belonging to *Cynthus* (the sacred mountain on Delos)' and thus – like Delia, the name of Tibullus' mistress – would seem to imply that the poet's beloved is in some way sacred to the gods. Propertius describes the experience of falling in love with Cynthia as a form of initiation:

> *Cynthia prima suis miserum me cepit ocellis,*
> *contactum nullis ante cupidinibus.*[18]
>
> (1.1.1–2)

JOSEPH FONTENROSE stresses that the experience radically changes Propertius, who can no longer follow a way of life in service to the state, though convention imposed such a life of service upon a young man of his age and class.[19] From the outset, Propertius steps forth as a worshiper, a devotee, of Venus. There is considerable self-deprecation in the poem: the lover is reduced to such a state of ἀπορία that he would resort even to magic (if he could believe that it would be effective) to find a way out of his desperate state.[20] The poem closes, however,

[15] GRIFFIN, 89–95.

[16] GRIFFIN, 94–100.

[17] GRIFFIN, 89–90.

[18] Propertius is cited from E. A. BARBER, Sexti Properti Carmina ²(Oxford 1960) throughout this article.

[19] JOSEPH FONTENROSE, Propertius and the Roman Career, University of California Publications in Classical Philology 13 (1949) 371–388.

[20] On Prop. 1.1, see L. ALFONSI, La prima elegia del libro 1 di Properzio, in: Miscellanea Properziana. Atti dell'Accademia Properziana del Subasio–Assisi, ser. 5, no. 5 (Assisi–

with brief reference to a theme upon which Propertius enlarges in subsequent elegies: the poet, who can warn others, is a *praeceptor* and fulfills a social or public rôle:

> *hoc, moneo, vitate malum: sua quemque moretur*
> *cura, neque assueto mutet amore locum.*
> (1.1.35–36)

In various elegies Propertius assumes the office of prophet or priest.

Tibullus is a religious poet in a very different sense. Whereas love alienates Propertius from the norm, Tibullus exemplifies a Roman ideal in his first elegy. Others may amass great treasures and pursue wealth and fame through war. Tibullus is content to live with just enough (1.1.5, 25): he has that *sancta paupertas* which Vergil sets forth as the indispensable Roman virtue in Aeneid 8.[21] Propertius is a tormented figure, pulled in different directions at the same time in his opening elegy. The key word in Tibullus 1.1 is *securus* (48, 77): he is at peace in his world, in which everything is well-integrated: his security is rooted in and sustained by traditional religious observance:

> *Nec Spes destituat, sed frugum semper acervos*
> *Praebeat et pleno pinguia musta lacu.*
> *Nam veneror, seu stipes habet desertus in agris*
> *Seu vetus in trivio florida serta lapis,*
> *Et quodcumque mihi pomum novos educat annus,*
> *Libatum agricolae ponitur ante deo.*[22]
> (1.1.9–14)

Our very first sight of Tibullus places him at the hearth, which is the center of domestic worship:

> *Me mea paupertas vita traducat inerti,*
> *Dum meus adsiduo luceat igne focus.*[23]
> (1.1.5–6)

He calls upon the *Custodes Lares* (20) to bestow blessings upon the place. There is a sense of the presence of the gods of the countryside, Ceres, Pales and Priapus (15–18, 35–36). Delia does not disturb this peace but enjoys a life of security with him:

Pasqua 1957) 7–20; J. SULLIVAN, Castas odisse puellas, WS 74 (1961) 96–112; F. M. AHL, Prop. 1.1, WS n.F. 8 (1974) 80–98.

[21] Verg. Aen. 8.102f., 359f.

[22] Tibullus is cited from F. W. LENZ and G. C. GALINSKY, Albii Tibulli Aliorumque Carminum Libri Tres (Leiden 1971) throughout. I depart from this text in understanding *Spes* rather than *spes*. G. LUCK, Properz und Tibull: Liebeselegien, Bibliothek der Alten Welt, Röm. Reihe (Zürich–Stuttgart 1964) is probably correct in assuming that *Spes* refers to the goddess. But cf. J. M. FISHER, Three Notes on Tibullus 1.1, Hermes 97 (1969) 378.

[23] See DAVID G. ORR, Roman Domestic Religion: The Evidence of the Household Shrines, in: ANRW II 16.2, ed. WOLFGANG HAASE (Berlin–New York 1978) 1560f. on the hearth as the center of Roman family religion.

Quam iuvat inmites ventos audire cubantem
Et dominam tenero continuisse sinu
Aut, gelidas hibernus aquas cum fuderit Auster,
Securum somnos igne iuvante sequi.[24]
(1.1.45–48)

By association of ideas Tibullus' thoughts move quickly from the lovers' bed to the *arsuro . . . lecto* (61), his funeral pyre. Even that vision is endowed with a sense of peace, because Delia loves him and, with the other mourners, will give him the comfort of traditional expressions of grief (61–64). Throughout the elegy, the observance of old-fashioned piety begets a confidence that all is right with the poet's rustic world. Tibullus, it is true, relieves this peaceful attitude with mention of the nights he has passed as a shut-out lover on his mistress' doorstep (55–56). We even read of lovers' brawls (73–74). In Propertius, the torment of the *exclusus amator* and the lovers' quarrel, though comic motifs,[25] have a touch of reality about them; we are supposed to imagine that Propertius feels the agony and pain. In Tibullus the same motifs offer diversion from but hardly threaten the security of his country life:

Nunc levis est tractanda Venus, dum frangere postes
Non pudet et rixas inseruisse iuvat.
(1.1.73–74)

There is often, then, a sacral atmosphere in Roman elegy. This atmosphere is, in a sense, the counterpoint to the more 'worldly' themes of love and passion. A number of scholars, however, have seen a more pervasively religious dimension in Propertius and Tibullus.

II. The Religion of Love

1. Myth in Propertius

In the 1956 *Entretiens* of the Fondation Hardt, VIKTOR PÖSCHL and PIERRE BOYANCÉ spoke at some length about 'the Religion of Love' in Propertius. PÖSCHL concluded that the mythic elements of Propertius are not merely decorative but that they create a basic atmosphere:

[24] For general interpretations of Tibullus' first poem, see R. HANSLIK, Tibull I 1, WS 69 (1956) 297–303 and WALTER WIMMEL, Tibull und Delia, Hermes Einzelschriften 37 (Wiesbaden 1976).

[25] On this theme see L. A. MAC KAY, The Well-Disposed and Ill-Used Door, Phoenix 10 (1956) 13–19 and F. O. COPLEY, Exclusus Amator: A Study in Latin Love Poetry, Monographs of the American Philological Association 17 (Madison 1956).

> *„es ist eine Atmosphäre, die in manchen Gedichten fast etwas Religiöses haben kann. Das Mythologische wird hier zur Chiffre einer neuen echten Religiosität. Denn obwohl dem Dichter die offizielle Religion und auch die Mysterienreligionen nichts bedeuten, hat er doch einen neuen Bereich des Religiösen erschlossen: die Religion der Liebe. Und die Mythologie der Liebe . . . ist in ihrem Kern ein Ausdruck dieser Religion".*[26]

BOYANCÉ observes:

> *« Naturellement, quand le poète divinise Cynthie, ce n'est pas à prendre à la lettre, au sens d'une apothéose. Mais il y a dans ce jeu même le reflet des honneurs donnés par l'héroïsation solennelle dans leur bois sacré des Manes de Callimaque, de l'Ombre sacrée de Philitas de Cos, qui s'inspire certainement de l'héroïsation cultuelle pratiquée dans les milieux alexandrins. Properce emprunte à la religion l'atmosphère sacrée dont il entoure ceux qu'il glorifie. »*[27]

The poet often compares Cynthia with the heroines of old, frequently to celebrate her exquisite beauty:

> *tu licet Antiopae formam Nycteidos et tu*
> *Spartanae referas laudibus Hermionae,*
> *et quascumque tulit formosi temporis aetas:*
> *Cynthia non illas nomen habere sinat.*
>
> (1.4.5–8)

Cynthia is more alluring than the *formosae heroinae* of Troy (1.19.13–14). The goddesses whom Paris saw on the heights of Mt. Ida must now yield to Cynthia's surpassing claims (2.2.13–14). She is as tall and as stately in her walk as Juno or Minerva (2.2.5–8). It would have been better for Troy to have perished for Cynthia's sake than for Helen's (2.3.34–44). It will not be for long that Cynthia will confine her visits to mortal couches but she will soon lie with Jupiter himself (2.3.30–31). She is the beauty of Helen returned to earth once more (2.3.32)![28] In elegy 1.3, Cynthia's attitude in sleep inspires the poet's most famous comparison of Cynthia with the fabled heroines:

> *Qualis Thesea iacuit cedente carina*
> *languida desertis Cnosia litoribus;*
> *qualis et accubuit primo Cepheia somno*
> *libera iam duris cotibus Andromede;*
> *nec minus assiduis Edonis fessa choreis*
> *qualis in herboso concidit Apidano . . .*
>
> (1.3.1–6)

[26] PÖSCHL (above, note 5) 217.

[27] BOYANCÉ (above, note 5) 217–218.

[28] *nec semper nobiscum humana cubilia vises;*
post Helenam haec terris forma secunda redit.
(2.3.31–32)

In the poet's almost mystic vision of Cynthia, she hovers between the world of mortals and the divine. As LEO CURRAN has shown, Propertius imagines himself as the corresponding god or hero in each of his mythic comparisons of Cynthia with the sleeping heroines.[29] In another poem, in which Propertius had compared his beloved with Helen, he exclaims that after one more night with Cynthia like the last, he will surely become a god (2.15.37–40)! In the mythic elements of Propertius, then, a number of writers have seen something analogous to a religious experience; these scholars speak of a "religion of love" in Propertius.[30]

2. Venus and Delia in Tibullus

ROBERT B. PALMER considers this subject (as it relates to Tibullus) from a very different point of view.[31] In the title of his essay he asks, "Is there a Religion of Love in Tibullus?" PALMER observes:

> "Of the dominant moods in Tibullus, two stand out well above all the others: the deep religious commitment Tibullus has to the little gods of the countryside or the home who often appear on the scene whenever that countryside is discussed in any detail . . . and the intrinsic ecstatic sensibility, also religious in nature, which permeates the poetry whenever the love experience is discussed."[32]

There has, in the past, been much disagreement among scholars as to whether the idealization of love or the idealization of the countryside is the more basic motif in Tibullus' poetry. ROTHSTEIN and SCHUSTER felt that the "bucolic" element was the more important.[33] HAROLD C. GOTOFF, as I have noted, reasserts the primacy of love. He observes that there is an inconsistency in the attitude toward country life in Tibullus. In elegy 1.1 Tibullus contrasts rustic simplicity with wealth and military prowess:

> *Iam modo iam possim contentus vivere parvo*
> *Nec semper longae deditus esse viae . . .*
> (1.1.25–26)

Such a sentiment, as GOTOFF notes, is usually thought characteristic of Tibullus. But in the following poem (cf. 1.2.71–74) when Tibullus thinks about living in the country, he has a different and much less enthusiastic attitude toward the countryside: "The presence of the erotic interest is necessary to make it palat-

[29] LEO C. CURRAN, Vision and Reality in Propertius 1.3, YClS 19 (1966) 196. For pertinent bibliography on this poem, see DANIEL P. HARMON, Myth and Fantasy in Propertius 1.3, TAPA 104 (1974) 151–165.

[30] See PÖSCHL and BOYANCÉ (above, notes 26 and 27).

[31] PALMER (above, note 5) 1–10.

[32] PALMER, 3.

[33] For a discussion and bibliography of this problem, see PALMER, 3 and note 6.

able."[34] GOTOFF has reestablished the fact that Tibullus is a "love poet" in the usual sense of the term.

W. HEILMANN finds in Tibullus' Venus the portrayal of a deity which belongs to the sphere of religion. The goddess demands absolute allegiance or *servitium* from her devotee, who is *sacer* in the two senses of the word, 'cursed' and 'favored' at the same time.[35] PALMER summarizes and in large measure agrees with this point of view: "Mingling the good with the bad, suffering with salvation, the goddess assumes many of the characteristics of the pagan vision of godhead which has always known that a great deity can be gentle (*mitis*, Tib. 1.10.66) and bloody (*sanguine natam*, Tib. 1.2.41) at one and the same time."[36]

But PALMER, heavily influenced by the work of A. R. BACA, carries the view that Tibullus depicts a "religion of love" much further than HEILMANN had done. BACA had seen in the character of the poet's *domina* a figure who combined in herself the qualities of Venus, Isis, Diana, Nemesis and Hecate.[37] Tibullus' poetry belongs to an age of syncretism, in which such goddesses can be seen as closely related or even as identical because they share the same δύναμις, 'divine power'. PALMER draws upon the research of A. D. NOCK to explain this process; NOCK has written:

> "From this interest in ἡ τοῦ θεοῦ δύναμις we can understand the habit in art of investing one deity with the attributes of others. By so representing the god you invest him with an accumulation of divine powers. You also – and this is a natural step – might regard him as essentially one with the other deities whose attributes he bore. In consequence of the attitude of mind we are studying, the instinct tending towards monotheism found expression in the view 'Isis is essentially the same as Artemis, Aphrodite, Hera and the like, possessing all the powers with which they are credited', and not in the view 'Isis is the one true goddess: Artemis, Aphrodite, Hera and the like are figments of the imagination'."[38]

PALMER sees a phenomenon of this kind at work in Tibullus' poetry and accepts the formula "Delia = Amor = Venus = Nemesis = Artemis" which, he observes, BACA had suggested for the *dominae* of Books 1 and 2.[39] Delia, then, is the *mediatrix*, almost identical with and through whom this composite divinity is worshiped, as PALMER views the poems. The "religion of love" in Tibullus is thus an ecstatic religion with many of the elements found in the ancient mysteries.

[34] GOTOFF (above, note 3) 232.

[35] W. HEILMANN, Die Bedeutung der Venus bei Tibull (Diss. Frankfurt am Main 1959) 27–33.

[36] PALMER (above, note 5) 5.

[37] A. R. BACA, Delia and Nemesis in the Corpus Tibullianum (Diss. University of Southern California 1965), quoted by PALMER (above, note 5) 4.

[38] ARTHUR DARBY NOCK, Studies in the Graeco-Roman Beliefs of the Empire, JHS 45 (1925) 89–90 = ID., Essays on Religion and the Ancient World I, ed. Z. STEWART (Cambridge, Mass. 1972) 39.

[39] PALMER (above, note 5) 7.

PALMER adds that the Roman 'establishment' of the first century B.C. would have called this form of religion a *superstitio* or an *ekstasis*, a mystical state in which the worshiper feels that he is a god.[40]

In the "religion of love", as PALMER has understood it, not only is the poet's beloved the *mediatrix* of Venus and thus a kind of goddess herself; the poet also becomes a god by the agency of his *puella divina*.[41] In elegy 1.3, Tibullus dreams that he appears to Delia, "suddenly, as if coming from Heaven" (89–90). This vision, PALMER concludes, is very much like an epiphany. Tibullus descends upon his beloved in the manner of a deity so that PALMER can speak of a *hieros gamos* in this context.[42]

Scholars, then, have spoken of a "religion of love" in the Roman elegists – in Propertius, because of the heavily mythic dimension, and in Tibullus, because of a mystic blending of Delia with the composite figure Amor = Venus = Nemesis = Artemis = Isis. There can be little doubt that religious motifs of various types occur often in Tibullus, Propertius and Ovid. But we must reexamine the evidence to determine the sense in which it can be said that there is a "religion of love" in the Roman elegists.

3. Lovers and their Gods in the Elegies

The lover is by definition a kind of worshiper in the poems. Propertius speaks of the *communes deos* which lovers share (1.11.16). To fall in love is to adore the gods of love in worship:

> *Lynceus ipse meus seros insanit amores!*
> *solum te nostros laetor adire deos.*
> (Prop. 2.34.25–26)

The lover also worships Bacchus (Ov. A. A. 1.525) and Apollo (Prop. 1.8A.41) but it is, of course, primarily Amor and Venus who receive his allegiance. "It has never", Propertius declares, "been a hardship to worship Venus" (2.22.22; cf. Tib. 1.2.97–98). For the votary, this "worship" has some of the allure and fascination of a mystery religion:

> *Condita si non sunt Veneris mysteria cistis,*
> *nec cava vesanis ictibus aera sonant,*
> *attamen inter nos medio versantur in usu,*
> *sed sic, inter nos ut latuisse velint.*
> *Ipsa Venus pubem, quotiens velamina ponit,*
> *Protegitur laeva semireducta manu.*
> (Ov. A. A. 2.609–614)

[40] PALMER, 4–5. See also SALVATORE CALDERONE, Superstitio, in: ANRW I 2, ed. H. TEMPORINI (Berlin–New York 1972) 383.

[41] PALMER (above, note 5) 4.

[42] PALMER, 8.

The elegiac poet is the teacher (*praeceptor*) of love;[43] in giving instruction, he performs a religious rite (Ov. A. A. 3.616). The *praeceptor* of love does not need instruction in taking auguries; Venus and personal experience have taught him to read the future:

> *Non ego celari possum, quid nutus amantis*
> *Quidve ferant miti lenia verba sono.*
> *Nec mihi sunt sortes nec conscia fibra deorum,*
> *Praecinit eventus nec mihi cantus avis:*
> *Ipsa Venus magico religatum bracchia nodo*
> *Perdocuit multis non sine verberibus.*[44]
>
> (Tib. 1.8.1–6)

Venus is, by turns, the chief *exemplum* for the lover[45] or is named as the cause of a lover's problems.[46] She is said to aid the brave;[47] she turns her eyes from or even assists in deceit and stealth;[48] the lover believes that, with her help, he is invulnerable;[49] but Venus is not to be wronged: she is pictured as vengeful, the relentless tormentor of her enemies:

> *Nam fuerit quicumque loquax, is sanguine natam,*
> *Is Venerem e rapido sentiet esse mari.*
>
> (Tib. 1.2.41–42)

> *Laesa Venus iusta arma movet, telumque remittit,*
> *Et modo quod quaesta est, ipse querare, facit.*
>
> (Ov. A. A. 2.397–398)

In Tibullus 1.3 Venus not only punishes those who offend; she is the Ψυχοπομπός who conducts her votary to a blissful afterlife in Elysium.[50]

In this elegy, Tibullus tells of how he had accompanied Messalla to the East as a member of his staff and of how he fell sick on the island of Corcyra (Corfù):

> *Ibitis Aegaeas sine me, Messalla, per undas,*
> *O utinam memores ipse cohorsque mei.*
> *Me tenet ignotis aegrum Phaeacia terris,*
> *Abstineas avidas, Mors, modo, nigra, manus.*
>
> (Tib. 1.3.1–4)

[43] Tib. 1.4.79f.; Prop. 1.1.35f., 1.7.11f., 1.15.41f.; Ovid A.A. 1.7–8, 2.495f.
[44] Cf. Prop. 1.9.2f., 3.8.17f.
[45] Cf. Prop. 2.32.33, Ov.Tr. 2.287f., Heroid. 4.97.
[46] Tib. 2.4.21; cf. Ov.Heroid. 9.11.
[47] Tib. 1.2.16–17, 1.5.57–58.
[48] Tib. 1.2.33f., 1.8.35f., 56f., Ov. A.A. 1.633, Heroid. 16.291f., Am. 1.8.86, 2.8.17–18; cf. Prop. 2.16.47–48.
[49] Tib. 1.2.25f., 1.5.57f., Prop. 3.16.11f.
[50] Cf. Prop. 2.28.25f., 4.7.55–70.

By giving the island its Homeric name (Phaeacia) he makes it evident that he has the Odyssey very much in mind. The last third of the poem presents an Odyssean motif, a vision of the world of shades:

Sed me, quod facilis tenero sum semper Amori,
Ipsa Venus campos ducet in Elysios.
Hic choreae cantusque vigent, passimque vagantes
Dulce sonant tenui gutture carmen aves,
Fert casiam non culta seges, totosque per agros
Floret odoratis terra benigna rosis;
Ac iuvenum series teneris inmixta puellis
Ludit, et adsidue proelia miscet Amor.
Illic est, cuicumque rapax mors venit amanti,
Et gerit insigni myrtea serta coma.

(Tib. 1.3.57–66)

The topography and landscape are in many ways familiar. But Tibullus' Elysium is a lover's paradise – even the image of Cerberus, who *excubat ante fores* (72) makes use of the elegiac language of love (we think of the *exclusus amator*).[51]

Instead of the verdant lawns of Vergil's Elysium (Aen. 6.642f.), we find meadows of the roses which are sacred to Venus (62); instead of wrestling matches (cf. Verg. loc.cit.), Tibullus gives us lovers at sport (63–64); in place of the shades of warriors (cf. Aen. 6.648–660), we find the warfare of love (64). In Vergil's portrayal of the afterlife, those who have died for love inhabit the *Lugentes Campi* (Aen. 6.441). In Tibullus' paradise, such lovers dwell in Elysium and are crowned with the myrtle of Venus (65–66).

No vision of the underworld would be complete without a catalogue of the *causes célèbres* such as Ixion, Tityos, Tantalus and the *Danai proles*, who receive their traditional punishments in Tib. 1.3.67–80. Most of these hardened sinners were guilty of the profanation of love; and it is especially for the punishment of this type of offense that the elegist's Tartarus exists. He closes his depiction of the afterlife with a curse upon those who offend him in love:

Illic sit, quicumque meos violavit amores,
Optavit lentas et mihi militias.

(1.3.81–82)

In the verses which follow, the poet imagines his unexpected and perhaps miraculous homecoming to his faithful Delia:

Tum veniam subito, nec quisquam nuntiet ante,
Sed videar caelo missus adesse tibi.
Tunc mihi, qualis eris, longos turbata capillos
Obvia nudato, Delia, curre pede.

(1.3.89–92)

[51] See C. CAMPBELL, Tibullus: Elegy 1.3, YClS 23 (1973) 155; DAVID F. BRIGHT, A Tibullan Odyssey, Arethusa 4 (1971) 203 and note 24.

Again, the echo of the Odyssean theme is apparent. Tibullus has imagined Delia and her handmaidens at their weaving late at night. When he returns, Delia will play Penelope to his Odysseus.[52] PALMER and PUTNAM suggest, however, that there is something more to these lines. The phrase *videar caelo missus* (90) seems, in their view, to describe an epiphany, especially because the phrase occurs in a context which pictures Delia running to meet Tibullus *longos turbata capillos* and *nudato pede* (91–92).[53] Her dishevelled hair and bare feet could imply that Delia is in mourning (because she believes her lover is dead) but PUTNAM suggests, "Perhaps a deeper ritual meaning is present (cf. Ovid Met. 7.183 of Medea, *nuda pedem, nudos umeris infusa capillos*)."[54]

It is not clear in the final lines whether the poet imagines that he will suddenly be cured and thus unexpectedly return (*nec quisquam nuntiet ante* [89] suggests this possibility) or whether he fancies that he will come back after his death (perhaps in a vision, 90), almost as a god. C. CAMPBELL writes: "What is essential to a grasp of this passage is the recognition that it does not matter whether the poet imagines himself returning to Delia physically, as a living man, or spiritually, as a shade or a dream of a shade. He leaves both options open, but seems to imply the second."[55] The elegy, then, is a highly imaginative composition which portrays the poet's fantasy: he thinks of himself either as a returning hero like Odysseus or perhaps as a god descending from the heavens. CAMPBELL, as we have noted, expresses the view that Tibullus is deliberately ambiguous.

In his famous poem on the death of Tibullus, Ovid alludes to Tibullus 1.3. This allusion quite naturally takes up the question of the soul's immortality which had been raised by Tibullus in elegy 1.3. Ovid proclaims:

> *si tamen e nobis aliquid nisi nomen et umbra*
> *restat, in Elysia valle Tibullus erit.*
>
> (Am. 3.9.59–60)

Ovid includes Amor and Venus among the mourners (7–16). But the possibility that Tibullus will become an immortal shade rests not upon his *servitium* to Venus: Ovid speaks about the dead poet's rôle as a priest and envisions Catullus and Gallus greeting Tibullus in the Elysian Fields (61–63). Earlier in the poem Ovid had said:

> *at sacri vates et divum cura vocamur;*
> *sunt etiam qui nos numen habere putent.*
>
> (Am. 3.9.17–18)

It is, then, the fact that Tibullus is a *vates*, a priest of Apollo and the Muses, which Ovid stresses when he celebrates the dead poet's claim to immortality.

By the first century of our era the Muses had come to be especially worshiped as patron deities of the immortality of the soul. This is a subject to which

[52] MICHAEL C. J. PUTNAM, Tibullus: A Commentary (Norman, Oklahoma 1973) 74. Hereafter cited as PUTNAM.

[53] PUTNAM, 87 and PALMER (above, note 5) 7–8.

[54] PUTNAM, 87. [55] C. CAMPBELL (above, note 51) 155.

we shall return in discussing the poet as the *sacerdos* of Apollo and the Muses. But as RUDOLF HANSLIK observes, in Tib. 1.3 Venus conducts her votary to Elysium not to honor him as a great poet but because he is a great lover.[56] Several scholars in analyzing 1.3 have concluded that the elegy is an important document in the history of religion because it informs us, in their view, about an essential component of Venus' nature: the elegy, in this interpretation, gives evidence that Venus was believed to grant eternal felicity to those who "follow the commandments of the God of Love."[57] PIERRE GRIMAL writes:

> "One should not make the mistake of thinking that this was purely poetic license. Venus and Amor were truly believed to be gods who could save people and guarantee them immortality. Here Tibullus echoes the beliefs, probably Syrian in origin, that had found their way into Rome many years before, brought, we suspect, by courtesans from Syria, where the goddess the Romans called Venus and they called Astarte or Ishtar was worshipped with unusual fervor."[58]

In his explication of the structure of 1.3, RUDOLF HANSLIK endorses GRIMAL's study of the rôle of Venus in the poem.[59] Both HANSLIK and GRIMAL discuss a Roman epitaph (BUECHELER, Carmina epigraphica 1109 = C.I.L. VI.21521) of one Nepos, a young man of the Flavian period.[60] KIRBY FLOWER SMITH had long ago cited this epitaph, which is composed in elegiac couplets, as an instructive parallel to Tib. 1.3.[61]

The epitaph reports a vision in which the deceased youth appears to a relative who mourns him. Nepos speaks reassuringly:

adfinis memorande, quid o me ad sidera caeli
ablatum quereris? desine flere deum,
ne pietas ignara superna sede receptum
lugeat et laedat numina tristitia.
non ego Tartareas penetrabo tristis ad undas,
non Acheronteis transvehar umbra vadis,
non ego caeruleam remo pulsabo carinam
nec te terribilem fronte timebo, Charon . . .
nam me sancta Venus sedes non nosse silentum
iussit et in caeli lucida templa tulit.

(15–28)

[56] RUDOLF HANSLIK, Tibulls Elegie 1.3, in: Forschungen zur Römischen Literatur. Festschrift zum 60. Geburtstag von Karl Büchner, I, ed. WALTER WIMMEL (Wiesbaden 1970) 143.

[57] PIERRE GRIMAL, Love in Ancient Rome, tr. ARTHUR TRAIN, Jr. (New York 1967) 161.

[58] GRIMAL (above, note 57) 162.

[59] HANSLIK (above, note 56) 144.

[60] F. BUECHELER, Carmina Latina Epigraphica II (Leipzig 1897) 508–509. See also HEINRICH FLIEDNER, Amor und Cupido: Untersuchungen über den römischen Liebesgott, Beiträge zur klassischen Philologie 53 (Meisenheim am Glan 1974) 94–97.

[61] KIRBY FLOWER SMITH, The Elegies of Albius Tibullus, edited with Introduction and Notes on Books I, II and IV, 2–14 (New York 1913) 254.

The mourner, in turn, addresses the youth in prayer:

die Nepos, seu tu turba stipatus Amorum
laetus Adoneis lusibus insereris,
seu grege Pieridum gaudes seu Palladis [arte,
omnis caelicolum te chor[u]s exc[ipiet.
si libeat thyrsum gravidis aptare co[rymbis
et velare comam palmite, Liber [eris
pascere si crinem et lauro redimire [manuque
arcum cum pharetra sumere Ph[oebus eris . . .
(31–38)

The relative who addresses him imagines that the youth will enjoy the company of the Amores and of the Muses. Indeed, young Nepos has become immortal – a *deus*. Venus has been his ψυχοπομπός (28) and a heavenly chorus will welcome him to their company. Though this Elysium is an astral paradise (in contrast to the underworld of Tibullus 1.3), the rôle which Venus plays, and his reception by the celestial choir (cf. *choreae cantusque*, Tib. 1.3.59–60) recall the similar motifs in Tibullus' elegy.

GRIMAL describes a painting from Dura-Europus, dating from A.D. 193, in his discussion of the relationship between Tib. 1.3 and the epitaph of Nepos.[62] The painting immortalizes a man who is pictured as a hunter. Amor looks on while in another part of the scene the figure of what appears to be a goddess presides over a banquet. This, according to GRIMAL, is the «chœur des habitants du Ciel» presided over by the Syrian Aphrodite who welcomes the blessed hunter.[63] The painting, as GRIMAL understands it, exemplifies the concern of the Syrian goddess with the process of heroization. That Aphrodite (or Venus) has to do with the immortality of the soul is a notion sometimes attributed to Pythagorean 'doctrine'; FRANZ CUMONT, for example, explains the presence of Aphrodite and Ares among the iconographic motifs of sarcophagi by appealing to Orphico-Pythagorean conceptions about the nature of the soul: Ares is the body; Aphrodite, the soul. Hephaistos is the demiurge who binds body and soul together. During this life the soul is a prisoner, and death sets it free from its captivity to matter.[64] It has long been supposed that Venus' rôle in the epitaph of Nepos was inspired by Tibullus 1.3 itself. GRIMAL expresses the view that the author of the epitaph had no need to turn to Tibullus' elegy: the painting from Dura-Europus, as well as the meaning of Aphrodite on sarcophagi, indicates to GRIMAL that there were other fonts from which the anonymous author could have drawn.

But the evidence from Dura-Europus (A.D. 193) and from Roman sarcophagi (dating mostly from the second century) is late. Is it possible that Venus had

[62] PIERRE GRIMAL, Vénus et l'immortalité, in: Hommages à Waldemar Deonna, Collection Latomus 28 (Brussels 1957) 260–262.

[63] GRIMAL (above, note 62) 261.

[64] FRANZ CUMONT, Recherches sur le symbolisme funéraire des Romains, Bibliothèque Archéologique et Historique 35 (Paris 1942) 21–22.

a special concern with the afterlife at an earlier period? GRIMAL reminds us that Venus took on many of the features of the Etruscan *Turan* ('Lady'? Cf. Gk. ἡ τύραννος).[65] Moreover, the popularity of the myth of Venus and Adonis (*Turan* and *Atunis*) is attested by numerous Etruscan mirrors illustrating the subject. ROBERT SCHILLING concludes that the Etruscan goddess had a «*compétence funéraire*» based on the model of the similar goddess of Eastern myth. This characteristic of Turan, SCHILLING adds, finds its reflection in the Latin world.[66]

SCHILLING also emphasizes that the Roman Venus absorbed the obscure funerary goddess *Libitina*, whose name according to ERNOUT-MEILLET is Etruscan.[67]. Festus 322L (p. 370L²) s.v. *Rustica Vinalia* preserves the information that there was a temple of Venus *in luco Libitinensi*. Plutarch Q.R. 23 (cf. Dion. Hal. Ant. Rom. 4.15) asks why articles for funerals should be sold in the precinct of *Libitina*, who is identical (he adds) with Venus. Varro (L.L. 6.47) derives the name (Venus) *Libitina* and *Lubentina* from *lubere* 'to be pleasing'. And both Cicero (N.D. 2.23) and Varro (apud Nonius 89L) speak of *Venus Lubentina*. SCHILLING concludes that the word *Lubentina* was a middle term, an artifice created to fuse Venus and *Libitina*. The evidence taken as a whole, then, suggests a gradual assimilation of the Etruscan goddess by Venus.[68] The ancient authors consistently give the goddess *Libitina* funereal associations; indeed, it is possible that Venus Libitina was the Roman equivalent to *Alpan* (or *Alp*[*a*]*nu*), one of the Etruscan *Lases* (with an individual name). *Alpan* exhibits characteristics of a love goddess but also of an underworld deity: her name is a participle, which is also found in *alpan turce*, an Etruscan formula corresponding to Latin *libens dedit*.[69] PAUL KRETSCHMER derives *Libitina* from Etruscan *lupu-*, 'to die'.[70] SCHILLING concludes that the location of Venus' temple in the grove of *Libitina* gives evidence of funereal elements in the ancient cult of Venus.[71]

The Roman Venus, then, had some concern with funerals. There are other factors, as well, which would seem to place Venus among the gods who have

[65] GRIMAL (above, note 62) 261 and note 5.

[66] ROBERT SCHILLING, La Religion Romaine de Vénus depuis les Origines jusqu'au Temps d'Auguste, Bibliothèque des Écoles Françaises d'Athènes et de Rome 178 (Paris 1954) 165–168.

[67] SCHILLING, 202–206.

[68] SCHILLING, 203.

[69] On the funereal nature of Libitina, see SCHILLING, 204; and on Alpan, see AMBROS JOSEF PFIFFIG, Religio Etrusca (Graz 1975) 280.

[70] PAUL KRETSCHMER, Die protoindogermanische Schicht, Glotta 14 (1925) 307.

[71] SCHILLING, 202–206. On this problem, see also GÜNTHER ZUNTZ, Persephone: Three Essays on Religion and Thought in Magna Graecia (Oxford 1971) 174–175. ZUNTZ gives many examples of figurines in which Persephone exhibits features of Aphrodite. But from the material drawn in the main from Lokri and Sicily, ZUNTZ concludes, "It is not that the two goddesses became one; Aphrodite was, and remained, the second great goddess of the Lokri". Even here, there is little evidence for Aphrodite as a 'goddess of the dead'. Parmenides (DIELS-KRANZ fr. 20 [dub.]) refers to an ἄλσος . . . ἱμερόεν πολυτιμήτου Ἀφροδίτης in the underworld; neither the significance nor the author of the passage (he is called only ὁ ποιητής) is known.

special care for the afterlife. The image of Venus was colored by philosophic conceptions. She is celebrated, for example, as the symbol of the *élan vital* in Lucretius' famous hymn which forms the exordium of his first book. In the 'Erotikos' of Plutarch, Love and by extension Aphrodite have mystic qualities which hold out promise of felicity in the afterlife (20.9, p. 766): "The true lover, when he is in paradise and has cultivated beauty, as it is right to do, takes wings and celebrates ever the mysteries of the god which is his: he escorts him dancing in the heavens until he reaches the meadows of Luna and Aphrodite . . ." In myth Venus has some affinity with the circle of Bacchus and his *thiasos*, and we know that the devotees of this god hoped to earn immortality through their worship.[72]

In the cult of Venus of Mt. Eryx (whose temple was near that of Jupiter Capitolinus), and as the patroness of Sulla, Pompey and Caesar she came more and more to symbolize victory.[73] "Venus Victrix" was the defiant war cry of Caesar in his battle with Pompey (for whom this Venus had been the patron goddess) at Pharsalia.[74] Venus is frequently represented in coinage during Caesar's reign with a Winged Victory in her right hand.[75] By the first century of our era, the imagery of Victoria and the triumph found expression in scenes representing apotheosis.[76] And it was during the funeral games of Caesar celebrated in honor of Venus Genetrix that the soul of Divus Iulius was thought to have ascended to the heavens.[77] In Ovid's account (M. 15.840f.), it is Venus who, at the command of Jupiter, bears the spirit of Iulius to the celestial realms. Ovid's Venus, in the rôle of ψυχοπομπός, presides over the deification of Caesar.[78]

May we then conclude that the Venus ψυχοπομπός of Tibullus 1.3 is the reflection of a wide-spread religious conception? Was there, attached to the worship of Venus, a "religion of love" which held out promise of eternal life and happiness? GILBERT-CHARLES PICARD in his study 'La Vénus funéraire des Romains' discusses six inscriptions, all but one of which was discovered in Latium.[79] Each of these either mentions the erection of a statue representing a deceased woman with the attributes of Venus, or in one way or another associates a deceased woman with the goddess. Four of the inscriptions pertain to girls; two, to married women. And, as we should expect, there is much evidence of Syrian

[72] See M. P. NILSSON, The Bacchic Mysteries of the Roman Age, HThR 46 (1953) 175–202 and ID., The Dionysiac Mysteries of the Hellenistic and Roman Age, Skrifter utgivna av Svenska Institutet i Athen, Ser. in 8°, V (Lund 1957).

[73] SCHILLING (above, note 66) 262–266, 272–316.

[74] Appian, B.C. 2.76.

[75] SCHILLING, 315–316.

[76] See INEZ SCOTT RYBERG, Rites of the State Religion in Roman Art, American Academy in Rome, Memoirs 22 (New Haven 1955) 134. G. M. A. RICHTER, A Handbook of Greek Art (London 1959) 355. Cf. also H. v. HESBERG, Archäologische Denkmäler zum römischen Kaiserkult, ANRW II 16.2 (Berlin–New York 1978) 986 fig. 47 (Apotheosis of Titus), 992 fig. 50 (Apotheosis of Lucius Verus) e. a.

[77] SCHILLING, 320–321.

[78] Cf. Verg. Aen. 1.286f.

[79] GILBERT-CHARLES PICARD, La Vénus funéraire des Romains, in: Mélanges d'archéologie et d'histoire de l'École française de Rome 56 (1939) 121–135.

influence in several of these inscriptions, all of which would seem to attribute a special concern with death to the goddess Venus.[80] But this 'funeral cult' of Venus, if it can be properly so called, belongs to the second century of our era. It vanishes by the beginning of the third. There is a similar problem of chronology with the iconographic evidence drawn from the Roman sarcophagi. In discussions of Venus' concern with death and immortality, much significance has been attached to representations of the story of Aphrodite and Ares denounced by Helios; but as ROBERT TURCAN observes, this theme belongs to sarcophagi of the second century (toward 180), and the number of examples is relatively small.[81] Moreover, the interpretation of the meaning of this theme in the iconography is a notoriously difficult matter, as TURCAN reminds us. It is doubtful, according to TURCAN, that Orphico-Pythagorean doctrine holds the key to explicating the symbolic meaning of most of these reliefs.[82] A. D. NOCK once wrote concerning this question:

> "We must be cautious; while Pythagorean allegory enjoyed some dissemination, it was far from being anything like as familiar as the Stoic allegory in physical terms. In general, the revival of Pythagoreanism remained a thing apart, known and respected but exotic. Pythagoras was the Greek counterpart of the legendary sages of the Near East . . . So in Plutarch's Table Talk the Pythagorean interlocutor explains his symbols, so far as they may be revealed to the uninitiated. Though remembering that the funerary art under discussion belonged to men of a certain measure of wealth and potential cultivation, can we suppose that Pythagorean meanings were intended and sometimes understood over so large a range?"[83]

The meaning which has often been attributed to the image of Aphrodite on the sacrophagi is very doubtful.

In Ovid's mythic account, Venus is the ψυχοπομπός of Caesar; but she assumes the rôle because of her singular relationship to Iulius. This is a special act of grace: there is nothing in Ovid which implies that Venus' rôle springs from her nature as a "funerary goddess" or as a deity characterized by interest in the afterlife. If it is true (as seems probable) that there was an early fusion between Venus and an Etruscan goddess of death (*Libitina*), our present evidence also indicates that this was a very circumscribed institution with limited consequences for the Roman conception of Venus. By the late Republic, the Romans had apparently forgotten that the name *Libitina* had in origin anything to do with death. The ancient authors, as we have seen, derive *Libitina* from *lubere*. We know that the mysteries of Venus and Adonis made their way to Rome by the Augustan age; but

[80] PICARD (above, note 79) 129–130.

[81] ROBERT TURCAN, Les sarcophages romains et le problème du symbolisme funéraire, in: ANRW II 16.2, ed. WOLFGANG HAASE (Berlin–New York 1978) 1727.

[82] TURCAN (above, note 81) 1704–1708; 1713–1714.

[83] ARTHUR DARBY NOCK, Sarcophagi and Symbolism, AJA 50 (1946) 154 = ID., Essays on Religion and the Ancient World II, ed. Z. STEWART (Cambridge, Mass. 1972) 622–623.

these mysteries were always of small and quite secondary importance.[84] Finally, there is good reason to suspect, as I have already noted, that the part which Venus plays in the epitaph of Nepos was based upon Tibullus 1.3.

The present state of our evidence makes us conclude that at various times, and in quite different ways, the ancients thought it fitting to attribute some concern with death and the afterlife to Venus. We have no evidence, however, that such concerns were consistently expressed as a leading motif of Venus' worship in Roman religious thought. It would follow, moreover, from the thorough analysis of Tib. 1.3 by DAVID BRIGHT that the rôle of Venus was devised to advance the dramatic situation of that poem.[85] BRIGHT has shown that Tibullus thinks of himself in a number of ways as a kind of second Odysseus in 1.3.[86] In evoking the memory of Odysseus, Tibullus also invites us to contrast his own life with that of the hero: Tibullus emerges as the anti-heroic antithesis of those who win a form of immortality through war and adventure. The poet's imagined epitaph is, then, highly ironic:

> *'Hic iacet inmiti consumptus morte Tibullus,*
> *Messallam terra dum sequiturque mari'.*
> (1.3.55–56)

Although the legend engraved upon the stone celebrates his military service, the poet did not in fact want to leave home in the first place (13–22). And immediately after envisioning his tombstone, Tibullus declares that he will earn immortality not as a warrior but by being a lover. The rôle of Venus underscores the opposition between the pursuits of love and war. Venus is not only the ψυχοπομπός; she also punishes those who wish long military service upon her votary (81–82).

We must conclude, then, that Venus the ψυχοπομπός is an imaginative creation of the poet which has a dramatic purpose in the one elegy. It is quite possible that the poem expresses a genuine hope. But when Ovid alludes to its theme of immortality in the elegy upon Tibullus' death, he makes no reference to Venus as a goddess of the afterlife. She is present at the funeral only as a mourner and turns her head away from the sight of the burning pyre (Am. 3.9.45–48). Ovid suggests only that, if there is an Elysium, it is fitting that the life of such an inspired bard be continued. Propertius, too, has his "lovers' paradise"; but it is either a place in which, consonant with Roman tradition, faithful spouses are rewarded and infidelity is punished (4.7.55–70), or it is a place of eternal felicity for beautiful heroines (2.28.25f.). There is no mention of Venus in Propertius' vision of the underworld. A Roman could hope that some god, out of concerns of favoritism, would take a special interest in his life after death: Venus' part in the deification of Caesar, as Ovid describes it, exemplifies such a privilege. But we cannot conclude that there is anything like a well-defined eschatology in the Latin elegists' "religion of love". In poem 3.5 Propertius doubts the very existence of an afterlife.

[84] PICARD (above, note 79) 130, n. 3.
[85] BRIGHT (above, note 51) 197–214.
[86] BRIGHT, 201–205.

4. Devotion to Isis

WALTER WIMMEL approaches this matter from a very different point of view.[87] In the elegy on Tibullus' death, Ovid thinks of Delia and asks the question:

Quid vos sacra iuvant? quid nunc Aegyptia prosunt
sistra? quid in vacuo secubuisse toro?
cum rapiunt mala fata bonos – ignoscite fasso! –
sollicitor nullos esse putare deos.
(Am. 3.9.33–36)

Ovid is not speaking about the promise of an afterlife when he recalls Delia's devotion to Isis; he thinks rather of the futility of Delia's worship, as the general statement which he immediately adds makes clear:

vive pius – moriere: pius cole sacra – colentem
mors gravis a templis in cava busta trahet.
(Am. 1.9.37–38)

WIMMEL, however, notes in the discussion of Tib. 1.3 that the worship of Isis promised immortality to her initiates.[88] One of the most famous expressions of this promise is the speech of Isis in Apuleius' 'Metamorphoses' (11.6):

> *vives autem beatus, vives in mea tutela gloriosus, et cum spatium saeculi tui permensus ad inferos demearis, ibi quoque in ipso subterraneo semirotundo me, quam vides, Acherontis tenebris interclucentem Stygiisque penetralibus regnantem, campos Elysios incolens ipse, tibi proptitiam frequens adorabis.*

The adherence of Delia and Cynthia to the cult of Isis, and the irritation which this often caused the poets, are familiar themes in the elegies. WIMMEL has seen this interest in the goddess Isis as an expression of Tibullus' yearning for a blessed afterlife. Does she, too, as her worship is portrayed in the elegies, have to do with immortal longings or with a 'religion of love'?

In elegy 1.3.23–30 Tibullus, lying ill in Corcyra, asks to what avail Delia had rattled the sistrum (*area repulsa*), performed her ritual ablutions (*pureque lavari te*) and slept apart from him *puro toro*. He prays that the goddess heal him – the votive panels on her temple wall, he proclaims, attest her power to cure:

Ut mea votivas persolvens Delia noctes
Ante sacras lino tecta fores sedeat
Bisque die resoluta comas tibi dicere laudes
Insignis turba debeat in Pharia.
(1.3.29–32)

[87] WALTER WIMMEL, Der Frühe Tibull, Studia et Testimonia Antiqua 6, ed. V. BUCHHEIT (Munich 1968) 206.
[88] Ibid.

In the very next lines Tibullus compares his own traditionally Roman devotions with those of Delia to the Egyptian goddess:

At mihi contingat patrios celebrare Penates
Reddereque antiquo menstrua tura Lari.
(1.3.33–34)

In a similar fashion, when Corinna's life hangs in the balance, Ovid prays to Isis:

huc adhibe vultus, et in una parce duobus!
nam vitam dominae tu dabis, illa mihi.
saepe tibi sedit certis operata diebus,
qua tangit laurus Gallica turma tuas.
(Am. 2.13.15–18)

In Propertius 2.28C, Cynthia has been saved from serious illness, and the poet urges her to fulfill a vow which she has made to Isis (here, as often, identified with Io):

redde etiam excubias divae nunc ante iuvencae;
votivas noctes et mihi solve decem.
(2.28C.61–62)

As CAMPS notes, this vigil must be distinct from the sexual abstinence (also of ten days' duration) prescribed for the annual festival of Isis.[89] Those *tristia sollemnia*, which were so irksome to the poet, are described in 2.33:

Tristia iam redeunt iterum sollemnia nobis:
Cynthia iam noctes est operata decem.
atque utinam pereant, Nilo quae sacra tepente
misit matronis Inachis Ausoniis!
. . .
quidve tibi prodest viduas dormire puellas?
(2.33.1–4, 17)

The bawd of Propertius 4.5, in giving advice to a girl, mentions the periods of abstinence which were practiced by worshipers of the goddess:

denique ubi amplexu Venerem promiseris empto
fac simules puros Isidis esse dies.
(4.5.33–34)

Dipsas, the notorious bawd of Ovid Am. 1.8, gives the same advice (73–74). And in another passage of the 'Amores', the taint of scandal clings to the goddess' temple and her linen-clad votaries:

nec tu, linigeram fieri quid possit ad Isim
quaesieris nec tu curva theatra time!
(Am. 2.2.25–26)

[89] W. A. CAMPS, Propertius, Elegies Book 2 (Cambridge 1967) 194.

This theme is commonplace in the 'Ars Amatoria' (cf. 1.77; 3.393, 635). There are, then, two basic features in the cult of Isis which find expression in the elegies: the poets' mistresses invoke Isis in various threatening situations, and the sexual abstinence which her worship prescribes is a recurrent source of aggravation to the poets.

This interest which the elegists have in the religion of Isis presents several problems and anomalies. For Ovid, the temple of Isis is one shrine among many where the lovers' rendezvous takes place. GRIMAL remarks that "Isis had no more fervent and meticulous devotees than 'loose women'."[90] And R. E. WITT states:

> "In Rome Plotinus the philosopher was taken to the Iseum as 'the one unsoiled spot in Rome'. But for the baser folk in the Italian capital the same temple could mean little else than a brothel. So Roman poetry regards Isis not as the chaste and loving wife and mother but as a lady of easy virtue, countenancing the sexual enjoyments and love-making. It was this moral looseness which we are told by Josephus led to a scandal in the very shrine of the goddess. A noble lady was seduced by her lover dressed up as Anubis and the offence sternly punished by Tiberius, who shut the temple, split the statue to smithereens, and crucified the priests *en bloc*."[91]

Were the elegists' mistresses, along with others from the demi-monde, drawn to this worship because it sanctioned or even encouraged 'loose morals'? Perhaps the tawdry affair of Decius Mundus, to which WITT refers, has given rise to a distorted image of the goddess' rites as they were practiced at Rome. The studies of ILSE BECHER and SHARON KELLY HEYOB should do much to correct this distortion: asceticism, and not promiscuity, was the rule among adherents to the cult.[92] Indeed, their mistress' observation of the "pure days" is the feature of Isis' worship which most attracts our attention in Propertius and Tibullus. Even the poet Ovid remarks that he had seen a votary doing penance before the goddess' shrine (Ex pont. 1.1.51–52). We can speculate that worship in song and dance, the use of incense and Nile water in the daily celebrations of something like Matins and Evensong, and the elaborate character of the yearly festivals of Isis appealed to the aesthetic sensitivities of women such as Delia and Cynthia.[93] There is also a wry incongruity in the elegists' portrayal of their mistress' attraction to this cult with its periods of obligatory sexual abstinence.

Some doubt exists, however, about the identity of the rituals which the poets describe. Tib. 1.3.29–32 must refer to the services of morning and evening prayer

[90] GRIMAL (above, note 57) 148.

[91] R. E. WITT, Isis in the Graeco-Roman World (Ithaca, N.Y. 1971) 138.

[92] I. BECHER, Der Isiskult in Rom – ein Kult der Halbwelt?, Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde 96 (1970) 81–90 with bibliography; SHARON KELLY HEYOB, The Cult of Isis among Women in the Graeco-Roman World, Études préliminaires aux religions orientales dans l'empire romain 51 (Leiden 1975) 111–127.

[93] For accounts of the nature of Isis' worship, see P. T. TSCHUDIN, Isis in Rom (Basel, 1958 Aarau 1962) and V. TRAN TAM TINH, Essai sur le culte d'Isis à Pompéi, Images et culte (Paris 1964).

(cf. *bisque die*, 31), which were sung daily before the temple.[94] Propertius speaks of ten nights "vowed" to the goddess (*votivas noctes . . . decem*, 2.28C.61–62); and, as we have seen, these must be different from the ten nights of abstinence which elegy 2.33(1–4, 17) describes. This second passage has to do with *tristia sollemnia*, and the word *sollemnia* should refer to a great yearly festival.[95] We know that there were two annual feasts of Isis celebrated in Rome: the *Navigium Isidis* (March 5) and the *Isia* (late October and early November).[96] The latter festival included a period of mourning, during the "search" (ζήτησις), and a period of great joy, during the "recovery" (εὕρεσις) of Osiris.[97] The expression *tristia sollemnia* would be in keeping with the ζήτησις, enacted by the participants in imitation of the goddess' search for Osiris.[98] It seems likely that Tibullus 1.3.23–26 pertains to this same festival:

Quid tua nunc Isis mihi, Delia, quid mihi prosunt
Illa tua totiens aera repulsa manu,
Quidve, pie dum sacra colis, pureque lavari
Te – memini – et puro secubuisse toro?

V. Tran Tam Tinh concludes that a well-known fresco of Herculaneum, now preserved in the Museo Nazionale di Napoli (inventory no. 8919), depicts the second part (εὕρεσις) of the *Isia*.[99] A celebrant in the fresco dances for joy at the resurrection of Osiris, while votaries beat the *tympana* and shake the *sistra*.[100] In this and in a related fresco (which Tran Tam Tinh interprets as a depiction of the *Navigium Isidis*)[101] many of the congregation, which includes males and females of all ages, wear white linen. In the 'Metamorphoses' of Apuleius (11.23) we read of abstinence from meat and wine for ten days before initiation into the mysteries. Plutarch refers to this practice in 'De Iside et Osiride' (2.352):

> "The process of consecration in the meantime, by means of a continuous and temperate regimen and abstinence from many foods and the pleasures of love, keeps in check the unrestrained and pleasure-seeking element, and accustoms one to undertake austere and difficult services in sacred rites, of which the end is the knowledge of the First and the Lord, whom only the mind can understand and whom the goddess summons one to seek as a being who is near and with her and united to her."[102]

[94] Kirby Flower Smith (above, note 61) 243.
[95] Cf. σκυθρωπά of the Isia in Plut., De Iside et Osiride, 39 p. 366E. On the cycle of the festivals in the calendar, see Reinhold Merkelbach, Isisfeste in griechisch-römischer Zeit, Beiträge zur Klassischen Philologie 5 (Meisenheim am Glan 1963) especially p. 50.
[96] V. Tran Tam Tinh, Le culte des divinités orientales à Herculanum, Études préliminaires aux religions orientales dans l'empire romain 17 (Leiden 1971) 29–49.
[97] V. Tran Tam Tinh (above, note 96) 48.
[98] Heyob (above, note 92) 54–57; Tran Tam Tinh (above, note 96) 48.
[99] Tran Tam Tinh, figure 41.
[100] Tran Tam Tinh, 48 and 85.
[101] Tran Tam Tinh, 48, 83 and figure 40.
[102] Translation is that of John Gwyn Griffiths, Plutarch's 'De Iside et Osiride' (Cambridge 1970) 121.

Neither the *tristia sollemnia* of Prop. 2.33.1–4 nor the phrase *totiens aera repulsa* of Tib. 1.3.24 should refer to a single act of initiation; these passages must pertain to the *Isia*: the elegists, then, add to our knowledge the information that the practice of sexual abstinence was also observed before and probably during the *Isia*.[103]

Perhaps Tibullus' envisioning of Delia swathed in linen before the temple in 1.3.29–32 implies that she had vowed to become an initiate if Tibullus were returned safely to Rome. If that should come to pass, Tibullus promises the goddess that Delia will be faithful to her vow and join the congregation (*turba*) for daily services. We do know, in any case, that the wearing of linen was the custom among the initiates of Isis; and this is the only passage in which one of the poets' mistresses is described as dressed in linen.[104] But SHARON HEYOB calls attention to a problem in such an interpretation. In her discussion of Cynthia and Delia she notes that it is difficult to decide exactly what part these women played in the rites. It is not clear that they were initiates. HEYOB informs us that in inscriptions of the first two centuries of our era, only men are listed as initiates and women do not appear until the third and fourth centuries. Yet, she points to some literary evidence from Plutarch and Apuleius which suggests the possibility of women initiates before the third century.[105] Apparently, however, we are to suppose that the elegists' mistresses were ordinary devotees and not initiates.[106]

HEYOB traces the vicissitudes of this cult, which gained a footing in Rome only with the greatest difficulty. Antony's alliance with Cleopatra, and the triumph which he celebrated after victory over the Armenians (he conferred the spoils upon Cleopatra garbed as Isis), must have intensified Augustus' hostility toward the Egyptian forms of worship in Rome.[107] Augustus forbade the practice of Isiac rites inside the *pomerium* (Dio Cass. 53.2.4). But her worship flourished; and in Rome, as HEYOB tells us, it was especially popular among women.[108] J. GWYN GRIFFITHS explains that in her aretalogies, Isis "is pre-eminently (though not exclusively by any means) a goddess of women . . . She also claims there to have instituted sexual life, the bearing of children, and love of parents by children . . . her functions as mother, mourner and brave opponent of evil can be traced far back in mythology . . . she is at once a kindly Madonna, a *Mater Dolorosa* and a *Mutter Courage*."[109] In a similar vein R. E. WITT notes that she is above all the image of the faithful wife, the patroness of family life "esteemed as the model spouse".[110] This emphasis upon the family, which so appealed to women, was also expressed in Isis' identification with the Lares. Her image was often kept in the *lararium* among the statues of the gods who protected domestic

[103] HEYOB (above, note 92) 59 sees this abstinence as a possible preliminary ritual to initiation.
[104] HEYOB, loc. cit.
[105] HEYOB, 58.
[106] HEYOB, loc. cit.
[107] HEYOB, 20f. Cf. also W. SPEYER, Das Verhältnis des Augustus zur Religion, above in this same volume (ANRW II 16.3) 1777–1805.
[108] HEYOB, 81.
[109] GRIFFITHS (above, note 102) 73.
[110] WITT (above, note 91) 41.

life.[111] In 1.3.33–35, Tibullus seems to recognize some affinity between Delia's worship of Isis and his own devotion to the family Lares and Penates.[112]

The worship of Isis in the Roman elegists, then, seems to have to do with the hopes and needs of this life. It was a form of religious devotion which especially attracted women at Rome; hence, it is the mistresses, rather than the elegists themselves, who are votaries. The *Isia* must have held out hope of immortality to the initiates; but if it is true that the devotee of the goddess could look forward to eternal life,[113] that feature of her worship does not seem to be given prominence in the elegies.

5. Magic and Superstition

The worshiper of Venus and Isis prays not only to the goddesses of love but to a large number of deities for assistance. If Cynthia should feel that her love is in danger, she will run from shrine to shrine:

> *nullas illa suis contemnet fletibus aras,*
> *et quicumque sacer, qualis ubique, lapis.*
> (1.4.23–24; cf. 3.8.11–12)

Before Tibullus left Rome with Messalla in elegy 1.3, Delia visited temple after temple (1.3.9–18). And in the very first elegy (1.1.11–12) Tibullus describes his own religiosity:

> *Nam veneror, seu stipes habet desertus in agris*
> *Seu vetus in trivio florida serta lapis . . .*

The elegies suggest that lovers were even prone to the more benighted forms of "religious" practice. Superstitions and curses abound in the dramatic situations of the poems.[114] Lovers heed the portents of birds and the words of evil omen (Tib. 1.3.17f.; Ov. Am. 3.12.2). Tripping at the doorway is a bad sign (Tib. 1.3.17f.; Ov. Am. 3.12.2); the sputtering flame is a good omen (Prop. 4.3.58; Ov. Her. 19.151; Tib. 1.5.79f.). Lovers in their desperation draw the sacred lots (Tib. 1.3.11, 1.8.3) and ponder the meanings of dreams (Ov. Her. 9.37, 19.193). Propertius admits that he is a dupe for any quack prophet who comes his way (2.4.15) and, in a moment of self-ridicule, he confesses that he is *credulus*, 'a gullible man' (1.3.28). The figure that we most associate with this darker side of "religious" practice is the *lena*, who is usually adept in magic arts: she makes her living at the expense of lovers.[115]

[111] HEYOB, 79.

[112] On the subject of Isis among the domestic gods, see V. TRAN TAM TINH, Essai (above, note 93) 109.

[113] HEYOB (above, note 92) 57.

[114] E.g., Tib. 1.3.10, 17–22; 1.5.47f., Prop. 2.16.13–14, 2.21.1f.

[115] ANNE-MARIE TUPET, La magie dans la poésie latine I. Des origines à la fin du règne d'Auguste, Collection d'études anciennes publiée sous le patronage de l'Association Guillaume Budé (Paris 1976) 331f.

From the evidence which ANNE-MARIE TUPET cites we can conclude that the practice of magic was wide-spread in the late Republic.[116] From Ovid, who admonishes his readers to avoid such charlatans, we learn that there were indeed specialists who claimed to aid the lover with magic charms.[117] Experts of the type that Ovid describes must have existed; but the elegists' portrayal of such figures is so conventional that they do seem to be drawn more from literature than from life. The love poets, on the whole, give us little information about the practice of magic which is not to be found in abundance elsewhere in Latin literature.[118] We now have the excellent work of TUPET, La Magie dans la Poésie Latine I: Des origines à la fin du règne d'Auguste (Paris 1976) to assist us in understanding the often fantastic details of the recondite ceremonies which the elegists (and other poets) occasionally describe. GEORG LUCK, Hexen und Zauberei in der Römischen Dichtung (Zürich 1962) offers a sound and concise introduction to the subject.

It is difficult to draw a satisfying distinction between the spheres of religion and magic.[119] On the whole, it can be said that magic (in contrast to religion) makes use of spells, curses, charms and imitative rites to constrain supernatural powers.[120] Magic tries to exploit these powers for personal, and sometimes immoral, ends. The *lena*, as a general practitioner in matters of love, was usually skilled in the use of herbs, potions and love charms. In a number of elegies, she is the object of intense hostility; the poets most often express skepticism or disbelief in her claim to magic powers.[121] In elegy 1.2, for example, Tibullus has consulted a *verax saga*, who makes a charm which is supposed to enable Delia to fool her husband; Tibullus first avows that he has witnessed the powers of the old bawd. Delia should feel reassured:

> *Hanc ego de caelo ducentem sidera vidi;*
> *Fluminis haec rapidi carmine vertit iter.*
> (1.2.45–46)

We are reminded of the opening poem of Propertius' 'Monobiblos' (19–24). Drawing down the moon was the *tour de force* which proved the expertise of the *magus* or *saga*.[122] And this maneuver, which must have been accomplished by some type of hypnotic suggestion[123] (as the word *fallacia* implies in Prop. 1.1.19), was executed with the apparent intent of exploiting the moon's power for

[116] TUPET (above, note 115) 165–209. Cf. also EAD., Rites magiques dans l'Antiquité romaine, below in this same volume (ANRW II 16.3) 2591–2675.

[117] Ov., Fasti 2.425, A.A. 2.99f., Rem. 249f.

[118] See EUGENE TAVENNER, Studies in Magic from Latin Literature (New York 1916) 33–37.

[119] On this question see JONATHAN Z. SMITH, Towards Interpreting Demonic Powers in Hellenistic and Roman Antiquity, in: ANRW II 16.1, ed. WOLFGANG HAASE (Berlin–New York 1978) 430f.

[120] See s.v. Magic, J. H. CROON, The Oxford Classical Dictionary, ed. N. G. L. HAMMOND and H. H. SCULLARD (Oxford 1970) 637.

[121] Tib. 1.2.41f., 1.5.10f., 1.8.17f.; Prop. 3.6.25f., 4.5.10f., Ov. Am. 1.8.1f.

[122] On the bringing down of the moon as a magic rite, see TUPET (above, note 115) 92–103.

[123] TUPET, 103.

the benefit of lovers. For Propertius in elegy 1.1, it is no more possible to change Cynthia's heart than it is to bring down the moon. Tibullus also expresses skepticism in the efficacy of such ministrations; although he had tried to assure Delia of the bawd's powers in 1.2, he finally admits his own disbelief (1.2.59–64). It is probable that therapies of this kind were available in the Augustan age to those who wished them. In the elegies, however, recourse to magic is often a near-comic motif: it dramatizes the extremes to which the lover, in the desperation of his hopes and fears, will resort. The lover's interest in magic, however, can also be explained by the fact that love is a phenomenon of attraction as if by "charm". This is reflected in the very name of the Roman love goddess (*Venus* < **venus* 'charm') and also in the word *venenum*, one of the terms used of the magic potion.[124]

When Venus brought success, the lover could imagine himself as a *triumphator*, offering victory to Venus herself.[125] There is a certain sense in which Venus is the supreme deity in the elegist's pantheon; but before we can determine the sense in which there is a "religion of love" in Propertius and Tibullus, we must consider the meaning of the names of their mistresses, which have religious connotations. Yet, these connotations have to do not with Venus but with the spheres of Apollo and, to a lesser extent, Diana.

III. The Worship of Apollo and the Muses

1. The Names Cynthia and Delia

EDWARD N. O'NEIL has discussed a large number of passages from Latin literature which show that the epithet Cynthia was used of Luna, the moon.[126] And it is certainly the case that Diana, Hecate and Luna formed a composite divinity in Roman thought.[127] Isis, in a rather vague manner, also belongs with this constellation of deities.[128] O'NEIL has made a persuasive case that when Propertius thinks of Cynthia he often thinks of the moon at the same time. This is evident, for example, in poem 1.1 (Propertius wants the magicians to bring down his moon – Cynthia) and in 1.3 with its famous *luna sedula* (31–34). O'NEIL also makes much of the poet's reference to crossroads (*trivia*), which have an association with the triform goddess, in descriptions of their love.[129] Did the

[124] For a review of this question, see GEORGES DUMÉZIL, Archaic Roman Religion II, tr. PHILIP KRAPP (Chicago 1966) 421–422.
[125] Ov. Am. 1.11.25f.
[126] EDWARD N. O'NEIL, Cynthia and the Moon, CP 53 (1958) 1–8.
[127] L. R. FARNELL, The Cults of the Greek States (Oxford 1896–1909) II, 516f.
[128] See WITT (above, note 91) 141–151.
[129] O'NEIL (above, note 126) 3–4.

moon, in the poet's imagination, represent the vicissitudes of Love? O'NEIL concludes that "to him she *was* the inconstant moon, now giving her whole self, now only a part, now none at all."[130] AUGUSTO ROSTAGNI, for different reasons, finds a reflection of Diana (and of Tibullus' love of rural life) in the name Delia, which refers to the goddess' birthplace.[131]

Both the epithets *Cynthius -a -um* and *Delius -a -um* belong to the island of Delos, where Apollo and Artemis were born in mythic lore. PIERRE BOYANCÉ attaches much importance to the names of Varro's *Leucadia*, which makes us think of *Apollo Leucadius*, and of Gallus' *Lycoris*, which brings *Apollo Lycoreus* to mind (cf. Call. Hymn 2.19).[132] GODO LIEBERG stresses the fact that, although Propertius speaks often enough of Diana, he never gives her the epithet *Cynthia*; on the other hand, Apollo does enjoy the name:

> *tale facis carmen docta testudine, quale*
> *Cynthius impositis temperat articulis.*[133]
> (2.34.79–80)

And Cynthia in one poem takes over a function which is normally Apollo's:

> *non haec Calliope, non haec mihi cantat Apollo,*
> *ingenium nobis ipsa puella facit.*
> (2.1.3–4)

In elegy 1.2.27–30 Apollo has bestowed the gift of song upon Cynthia, and Calliope has given her a Boeotian lyre (cf. 1.3.42).[134] LIEBERG argues, by a careful analysis of these and similar passages, that Cynthia is given her name because she is the recipient of Apollo's gifts.[135] The discussions of BOYANCÉ and LIEBERG would lead us to conclude that it had become a convention for poets to name their mistresses from an epithet of Apollo. The major difficulty with this hypothesis is that the name *Nemesis*, which belongs to Tibullus' second mistress, is an apparent anomaly in the list since the goddess Nemesis has close affinities with Artemis.[136] But the poet is by vocation the devotee of Apollo and the Muses; and it would seem to be primarily to this convention that we owe the names Cynthia and Delia: the mistresses are sacred to Apollo because they are sacred to the poets. Cynthia and Delia belong to the sphere of the god and his *vates*. There are secondary associations which the elegists can and do exploit in these names (Cynthia, for example, also makes us think of the moon). But the primary reference of the names Delia and Cynthia is in all probability to Apollo.

[130] O'NEIL, 7.
[131] Fondation Hardt, Entretiens 2 (above, note 5) 210–211.
[132] Ibid., 173.
[133] GODO LIEBERG, Die Muse des Properz und seine Dichterweihe, Philologus 107 (1963) 116.
[134] LIEBERG (above, note 133) 118.
[135] LIEBERG, 116–129, 263–270.
[136] FARNELL (above, note 127) 487f.

2. The *vates*-theme in Elegy

J. K. NEWMAN has given us an indispensable study which traces the development of the meaning which the word *vates* carries in Roman poetry.[137] The *vates*, according to Posidonius, is a ἱεροποιός and φυσιολόγος; he both conducts sacred rites and has information to communicate about the divine constitution of the world.[138] In contrast to the diminishing sense in which Ennius and Lucretius had used the word, the term *vates* – which implies that the poets were prophets – came to exalt the rôle of the poets of the Augustan age. Tibullus avoids this form of self-identification (though Ovid in the poem upon Tibullus' death honors him with the title *vates*); but in various ways, the other major Augustan poets seem to delight in describing themselves as 'poet-prophets'. NEWMAN has argued with much success that this poetico-religious terminology was not merely a literary conceit drawn from Alexandrian or earlier literature: the use of the title *vates* (and the kindred term *sacerdos*) developed within a Roman setting and comprehends the social function which the poets fulfilled.[139] By the time that Ovid uses this kind of imagery, it has become trite:

> *Ille ego Musarum purus Phoebique sacerdos*
> *Ad rigidas canto carmen inane fores?*
> (Am. 3.8.23–24)

But when Propertius assumes the rôle as the *sacerdos* of Apollo and the Muses, he does so in a context which is at once striking for its artistry and rich in religious meaning.

3. Propertius the *sacerdos* (3.1–5)

The five elegies which open the third book of Propertius form a cycle which is in many ways reminiscent of Horace's 'Roman Odes'.[140] There are clear echoes of Callimachus, Hesiod, Vergil and Ennius (as well as of other poets) in the five elegies; and WILLIAM NETHERCUT has seen a high degree of irony in these allusions.[141] But there must also be a serious dimension to these poems, in which

[137] J. K. NEWMAN, The Concept of Vates in Augustan Poetry, Collection Latomus 89 (Brussels 1967).

[138] NEWMAN (above, note 137) 16. Posidonius in Strabo 4.4.4.

[139] NEWMAN, 18–19.

[140] See WILLIAM R. NETHERCUT, „Ille parum cauti pectoris egit opus", TAPA 92 (1961) 389–407; ID., The Ironic Priest, AJP 92 (1970) 385–407; F. SOLMSEN, Propertius and Horace, CP 43 (1948) 105 = ID., Kleine Schriften II (Hildesheim 1968) 278; E. COURTNEY, The Structure of Propertius Book 3, Phoenix 24 (1970) 52. See also D. P. HARMON, The Poet's Initiation and the Sacerdotal Imagery of Propertius 3.1–5, in: Studies in Latin Literature and Roman History, ed. by C. DEROUX, Collection Latomus 164 (Brussels 1979) 317–334.

[141] NETHERCUT (above, note 140) 406–407. See ATHANASIOS KAMBYLIS, Die Dichterweihe und ihre Symbolik, Bibliothek der klassischen Altertumswissenschaften, n.F. 2 (Heidel-

Propertius while making extended use of sacerdotal imagery, writes of his identity as a poet.

This opening verses of 3.1 are among the most memorable in Roman elegy:

> *Callimachi Manes et Coi sacra Philitae,*
> *in vestrum, quaeso, me sinite ire nemus.*
> *primus ego ingredior puro de fonte sacerdos*
> *Itala per Graios orgia ferre choros.*
> *dicite, quo pariter carmen tenuastis in antro?*
> *quove pede ingressi? quamve bibistis aquam?*
> (3.1.1–6)

Propertius enters the grove in which Callimachus and Philetas are buried and now worshiped as heroes. Their heroic status, and indeed the scene as a whole, are of course imaginative inventions of the poet. The first line makes us think of the conventional formula *Dis Manibus Sacrum*; but the formula has been altered in such a way that, in the context of the six lines, we are led to envision some form of religious rite: Propertius enters the grove in the ceremonial gait of a priest (*ingredior*), ritually purified (*puro de fonte*), as though he were about to offer sacrifice. Since the imagery which the poet has used in the second couplet can refer to poetic creativity and inspiration, as well as to worship, it seems clear that the offering of Propertius the *sacerdos* will consist of poetry. The mention of the Muses in the lines which immediately follow makes us understand that he is the *Musarum sacerdos*; and in the central elegy (3.3), he receives initiation as the *vates* (poet-priest) of Apollo.

In elegy 3.1 of the 'Amores', Ovid has also entered a grove (*incaedua silva*, 1): you could believe, he says, that some *numen* inhabited the place (2). There was a sacred spring and a cave in the grove: these are the conventional symbols of poetic inspiration, and we are reminded at once of Propertius 3.1. Ovid, however, has changed the mood, the music and the choreography:

> *hic ego dum spatior tectus nemoralibus umbris,*
> *quod mea, quaerebam, Musa moveret opus.*
> (Am. 3.1.5–6)

In contrast to the grandeur of Propertius in 3.1, Ovid is merely out for a stroll. When he encounters Elegy and Tragedy, he has been awaiting inspiration for his next poem. Amores 3.1 in a humorous way asserts the value of the "lighter" forms of poetry in face of claims of the "heavier" types. But there is no indication in this elegy, which alludes to Prop. 3.1, that Ovid contemplates the writing of more serious verse. At the end of 3.1, Ovid remains the poet of Elegy, just as he wishes to be.

berg 1965) 125–190; WERNER SUERBAUM, Untersuchungen zur Selbstdarstellung älterer römischer Dichter, Spudasmata 19 (Hildesheim 1968) 194–200; FRANZ QUADLBAUER, Properz 3.1, Philologus 112 (1968) 83–118; W. WIMMEL, Kallimachos in Rom, Hermes Einzelschriften 16 (Wiesbaden 1960) 214–250.

However, GEORG LUCK, in an interesting article, suggests that at the beginning of Prop. 3.1, Propertius stands "at a crucial point in his career, hesitating between the epic and the elegy".[142] In LUCK's interpretation, which follows upon a suggestion made by R. REITZENSTEIN, "one of the images that Propertius had in mind is doubtless that of necromancy . . . Respect for *decorum* may be one of the reasons why he leaves the whole situation so vague and abandons it almost at once".[143] LUCK thinks that Propertius enters the hero-shrine as a worshiper demanding an oracle of Callimachus and Philetas. He will obtain the oracle less by necromancy than by performing the *sacra*, 'rites', customary for the visitor to this hero-shrine. "But this distinction is not made explicitly."[144] LUCK writes, "As usual Propertius tries to say too much; he heaps allusions upon symbols and then, involved in the difficulties he has created for himself, simply changes the subject."[145] The cave in which Callimachus and Philetas refine their song together is identified by LUCK with the *spelunca* of elegy 3.3.27f.: "the vision of Callimachus and Philetas writing or reciting together their poems in a grotto is a little bizarre . . . Not too bizarre for Propertius, perhaps."[146] LUCK supports his hypothesis with the example of the oracle of Apollo at Colophon (cf. Strabo 14.1.27, p. 642): this oracle was surrounded by a grove, and as LUCK states "the prophet (*sacerdos*) heard the names and numbers of the consultants, then retired into a *grotto*, drank the water of a *sacred spring*, and gave his response in *verse*." Propertius, from this point of view, approaches the heroic shades of Callimachus and Philetas in a quest for "concrete and specific knowledge".[147]

Although there is considerable merit in LUCK's interpretation, nothing in Prop. 3.1 should be described as bizarre; in all probability, there are no genuine analogies between Propertius 3.1 and the customs which LUCK discusses from the oracle of Apollo. The sacred grove which Propertius enters must surely be an ἡρῷον, as LUCK has proposed.[148] Yet, the elegist describes himself not as a consultant but as a priest who performs *sacra*, 'rites', in honor of the heroic shades. When he asks to enter the grove in line 2, he does so on the basis of his claim in verses 3–4: he is a πρῶτος εὑρετής, already accomplished in the type of poetry which (though following in the tradition of Callimachus and Philetas) will be distinctively his own. R. J. BAKER and I. M. LONIE have shown that, in the rest of the elegy, Propertius insists upon his accomplishment and looks forward to future renown.[149] Propertius, in other words, anticipates the same status which Callimachus and Philetas now enjoy. He imagines that he will celebrate a triumph, during which his chariot will be lifted from the ground (9–12):

[142] GEORG LUCK, The Cave and the Source, CQ 51 (1957) 177.
[143] LUCK (above, note 142) 176–177.
[144] Ibid.
[145] Ibid.
[146] Ibid.
[147] Ibid., 178.
[148] Ibid., 176.
[149] R. J. BAKER, Propertius III. 1. 1–6 again, Mnemosyne, ser. 4 no. 21 (1968) 39. I. M. LONIE, Propertius and the Alexandrians, AUMLA 11 (1959) 18.

quo me Fama levat terra sublimis, et a me
nata coronatis Musa triumphat equis . . .
(3.1.9–10)

This kind of ascension belongs to the iconography which depicts the apotheosis o a hero.[150] And the vision of his journey to Helikon (19–20), where the Muse will confer a crown upon him, assures his immortality: comparison of thi imagery with the Apotheosis of Homer, a relief of Archilaos, is most instruc tive.[151] When Propertius asks the shades of Callimachus and Philetas about th cave and the source of their inspiration in verses 5–6, it is not because he seek oracular guidance. The questions spring from a sense of kinship with the Alexan drian heroes. Propertius, like Callimachus in the prologue to the 'Aetia' – an apparently like Philetas (about whom we know little) – has been initiated and in spired as a poet by Apollo. Propertius recalls his own initiation at the hands o Apollo and the Muses in the central elegy of the cycle (3.3.33–52). But we are t understand that this initiation occurred long before his imagined visit to th ἡρῷον of the Alexandrians in 3.1.

In the closing verses of the first elegy he defines the poet's function as beir that of a *memorator*: Homer is the exemplum of this function:

nec non ille tui casus memorator Homerus
posteritate suum crescere sensit opus.
(3.1.33–34)

Propertius concludes the poem by looking forward to receiving honors himself the place of his own burial:

meque inter seros laudabit Roma nepotes:
illum post cineres auguror ipse diem.
ne mea contempto lapis indicet ossa sepulcro
provisum est Lycio vota probante deo.
(3.1.35–38)

In the second elegy, Propertius describes himself as the companion of the Mus and as the leader of a *turba* or *thiasos*, his band of worshipers:

miremur, nobis et Baccho et Apolline dextro,
turba puellarum si mea verba colit?
(3.2.9–10)

at Musae comites et carmina cara legenti,
et defessa choris Calliopea meis.
(3.2.15–16)

[150] See HARMON (above, note 140) 321f.; cf. also above, note 76 and PAOLO MINGAZZINI, rappresentazioni vascolari del mito dell'apoteosi di Herakles, Atti della Reale Accaden Nazionale dei Lincei, ser. 6, vol. 1 (1925) 419–21, 449–50.

[151] See M. BIEBER, The Sculpture of the Hellenistic Age² (New York 1961) 127–128.

He reveals the purpose of his song:

> *fortunata, meo si qua es celebrata libello!*
> *carmina erunt formae tot monumenta tuae.*
> (3.2.17–18)

We think of Homer, the *memorator*, who bestows everlasting renown upon his subjects (especially Paris!) in verse.

In defining his role as the *Musarum sacerdos*, Propertius reflects a reality of cult practice in his own time. The Museum at Alexandria was organized as a *thiasos*, over which a ἱερεύς of the Muses presided.[152] PIERRE BOYANCÉ and FRANZ CUMONT, however, have explained that the Muses gradually became patron deities not only of the intellectual and artistic life but of the veneration of the dead, as well.[153] In the societies which grew out of the old philosophic fraternities, worship of the Muses included devotions which kept alive the memory of departed fellows.[154] In the testament of Epicteta of Thera, for example, provision was made for a hero shrine in which the deceased members of her family were to be perpetuated in memory through the offering of yearly rites by a *thiasos* and a ἱερεὺς τῶν Μουσῶν (I.G. 12.3.330).[155] It is, at least in part, a function of this kind which Propertius has in mind when he assumes the title *sacerdos* in elegies 3.1–5.

When Propertius has a vision of Helikon in the elegy which lies at the center of the group of five poems, he undergoes the experience of poetic initiation at the hands of Apollo and the Muses. This motif has a long and complex history, which has been carefully studied by ATHANASIOS KAMBYLIS.[156] In describing his investiture, Propertius interweaves symbols which belong to the realms not only of Apollo and the Muses, but of Venus and Bacchus, as well. As a sign of his election and inspiration, Calliope moistens his lips with the "water of Philetas", and he becomes the poet-priest (*vates*) of love and peace:

> *talia Calliope, lymphisque a fonte petitis*
> *ora Philitea nostra rigavit aqua.*
> (3.3.51–52)

The themes of love and peace are continued in the last two elegies of the cycle, which depict the present and envision the future life of the *Musarum sacerdos*. In the fourth, after an expression of ironic enthusiasm for a proposed campaign of Augustus against the Parthians (3.4.1–10), the elegist prays that

[152] See MÜLLER-GRAUPA, RE 16.1 (1933) s.v. Museion, col. 802f.

[153] PIERRE BOYANCÉ, Le Culte des Muses chez les philosophes Grecs. Études d'histoire et de psychologie religieuses, Bibliothèque des Écoles Françaises d'Athènes et de Rome (Paris 1937) 231–327; FRANZ CUMONT, After Life in Roman Paganism (New Haven 1922) 115, 210.

[154] BOYANCÉ (above, note 153) 249f., 277f., 329–330.

[155] See HILLER VON GÄRTRINGEN, RE 6.1 (1909) s.v. Epikteta, col. 123–126; BOYANCÉ (above, note 153) 329–335.

[156] See KAMBYLIS (above, note 141) 191–204.

Augustus and Rome will be saved from the dangers of the anticipated war. Propertius obviously implies that he will himself stay as far as possible from the madness of war and the pursuit of wealth (15–22). In the first poem, Propertius as the *Musarum sacerdos* fulfills Posidonius' definition of the *vates* as the ἱεροποιός, one who conducts worship.[157] In the last poem of the cycle, in which the poet predicts that he will turn to philosophic pursuits when he is old, we think of the second part of the definition: Propertius will be the φυσιολόγος, one who explains the divine constitution of the world. The long and tedious litany of questions about the *natura rerum* which await his study will obviously never be answered; the nature of life and death will remain a mystery. And in light of this fact, Propertius insists upon the superior value of his present way of life:

> *me iuvat in prima coluisse Helicona iuventa*
> *Musarumque choris implicuisse manus:*
> *me iuvat et multo mentem vincire Lyaeo,*
> *et caput in verna semper habere rosa.*
>
> (3.5.19–22)

This passage, which draws together many strands of the cycle of elegies, gives a cameo portrait of the poet's way of life. We think of his initiation as a poet, his devotion to Venus (whose rose crown he wears), and his dedication to Apollo and the Muses. And the image of the Bacchic dance lends a mystic dimension to this picture: the poet celebrates a way of life which has – or deserves to have – an immortal quality about it. Propertius is not, to be sure, a priest in the technical sense that he holds a civic religious office. But he does, all the same, perform a religious function; in elegy 3.4 his way of life as a lover should be instructive to those of his fellow-citizens who clamor for war:

> *qua videam spoliis oneratos Caesaris axis,*
> *ad vulgi plausus saepe resistere equos,*
> *inque sinu carae nixus spectare puellae*
> *incipiam et titulis oppida capta legam.*
>
> (13–16)

In the fifth poem he explicates the meaning of this passage by taking a new rôle. As the φυσιολόγος he considers questions about the *natura rerum* and explains the values of love and peace.

We can conclude that there is, in a real sense, a "religion of love" in Propertius. Not every comparison of Cynthia with a heroine, nor every example of cultic imagery, is laden with religious import. It is possible to read the elegies with too much absorption and piety. Yet, when themes and images of this kind occur in poems like those of the cycle 3.1–5 (which is set within a serious context – the discussion of war, peace, the very nature of human existence and the meaning of the poet's function), we are invited to understand that there is an earnestness about the poems. We need not see the process of syncretism at work when we

[157] See above, note 138, and HARMON (above, note 140) 319f.

realize that for Propertius, Cynthia is the "symbol" of that quality which is called by the name of Venus. Propertius, in an almost mystic sense, encounters Venus in Cynthia. At another moment, Cynthia makes him experience the meaning of Diana – or of Isis or even of that which is Apollonian. This form of religion was, perhaps, not traditional for a Roman, even though Propertius describes the experience through traditional religious imagery. His religious outlook and practice might very well have been considered a form of *superstitio* by more conventional Romans. Without demanding of the poet anything like the consistency of a theological view of life, we can see in his symbols and imagery, and in the supremacy which he gives to love, a pursuit of those things which have eternal value. He insists that his god of love is a god of peace (3.4.1). For Tibullus, too (although in a more conventional way), the religion of love is a religion of peace.

IV. Tibullus and the Rural Festival

Tibullus 2.1 is the fullest description of a rural festival in Roman literature. The elegy, which attests the poet's deep love of country life, communicates the religious mood and atmosphere of the holiday. It is clear that Tibullus describes an important and traditional celebration (*ritus . . . a prisco traditus . . . avo*, 2); but scholars have not always agreed about the identity of the festival which the poem recreates. Some details seem to point to the *Feriae Sementivae*, a movable feast in January; other particulars evoke the April *Cerealia*; most scholars, however, have assumed that the poem portrays the *Ambarvalia*, an observance of May.[158] The presence of religious motifs from several festivals in the poem could suggest that the elegy creates a mood which was common to a number of rural celebrations. The difficulty with such an interpretation is that Tibullus presents a sustained description, and the religious attitude of one season of the year differs from the next: the mood at sowing time is not the mood of the winter months, and the religious attitude of early spring, when there is still some danger to the crops, differs from the feelings experienced at the harvest. Tibullus in all likelihood expects his readers to envision a particular holiday. Elegy 2.1 is, then, an important source in the study of Roman religion. I shall first give an analysis of the poem and then take up the question of the identity of the festival described.

[158] See, for example, M. SCHUSTER, Volkskundliche Bemerkungen zu Tibulls Ambarvalgedicht 2.1, WS 55 (1937) 118–138 and 56 (1938) 89–103, especially WS 55, p. 124; P. PÖSTGENS, Tibulls Ambarvalgedicht, Kieler Arbeiten zur klassischen Philologie 6 (Würzburg–Aumühle 1940) 47; HERBERT MUSURILLO, S. J., A Festival on Messalla's Estate: Tibullus 2.1 Reconsidered, in: Classica et Iberica. Festschrift in Honor of the Rev. Joseph M.-F. Marique, S. J., Institute for Early Christian Iberian Studies (Worcester 1975) 107–109 and 116; DAVID F. BRIGHT, Haec Mihi Fingebam; Tibullus and his World, Cincinnati Classical Studies, n. s. 3 (Leiden 1978) 63, 188; FRANCIS CAIRNS, Tibullus: a Hellenistic Poet at Rome (Cambridge 1979) 126–134.

The ceremony recounted in 2.1 begins with an apotropaic injunction to observe a religious silence:

> *Quisquis adest, faveat: fruges lustramus et agros,*
> *Ritus ut a prisco traditus extat avo.*
>
> (2.1.1–2)

Tibullus casts himself in the role of a *lictor* or master of ceremonies, as a comparison with a passage from Paulus suggests:

> *Exesto extra esto. Sic enim lictor in quibusdam sacris clamitabat, 'hostis, vinctus, mulier, virgo exesto'; scilicet interesse prohibebatur.*
>
> (72 L, p. 198 L²)

The setting of Tibullus 2.1 seems at one moment to be the poet's farm but at the next moment his vision widens and he gives us a panorama of the countryside (the *pagus*) with its community of farmers (*pagani*).

The second distich is a brief ὕμνος κλητικός, a prayer invoking the divine presence – in this case, of Bacchus and Ceres:

> *Bacche, veni, dulcisque tuis e cornibus uva*
> *Pendeat, et spicis tempora cinge, Ceres.*
>
> (2.1.3–4)

The gods are invited to attend, wearing the emblems of those gifts, the grape clusters and ears of grain, which they will bestow at harvest time. There follows a description of the countryside at rest, an attitude which was traditionally enjoined upon Roman worshipers on festal days (5–10). The earth rests, the farmer hangs up his plow, and the oxen crowned with garlands stand at their full mangers. Because work is alien to the nature of the gods, who have been called down to share in the festivity of the day, *labor* is proscribed.

In the lines which follow, Tibullus (still in the rôle of master of ceremonies) averts another form of pollution:

> *Vos quoque abesse procul iubeo, discedat ab aris,*
> *Cui tulit hesterna gaudia nocte Venus.*
> *Casta placent superis: pura cum veste venite*
> *Et manibus puris sumite fontis aquam.*
>
> (2.1.11–14)

White vesture was the appropriate dress in many sacred rites because it expressed the wish to appear free from moral stain (to be *castus*) in the gods' eyes. The natural processes relating to child-birth were thought to be a source of ritual pollution; sexual abstinence and hand-washing also express the longing to be blameless (cf. *manibus puris*) and hence worthy of the gods' presence.[159] Thes

[159] See DANIEL P. HARMON, Family Festivals of Rome, in: ANRW II 16.2, ed. WOLFGANG HAASE (Berlin–New York 1978) 1596f.

preparatory observances lead to the high point of the festival, the lustral sacrifice which the opening couplet had anticipated:

Cernite, fulgentes ut eat sacer agnus ad aras
Vinctaque post olea candida turba comas.
Di patrii, purgamus agros, purgamus agrestes:
Vos mala de nostris pellite limitibus . . .
(2.1.15–18)

The procession of festive worshipers, garbed in white, arrives at the altar with the *sacer agnus*; and Tibullus, addressing the *di patrii*, proclaims that the celebrants purify the fields and the people with their sacred offering. He bids the gods drive away all harm from the boundaries. The next lines look to the harvest time and to the safety of the flocks:

Neu seges eludat messem fallacibus herbis,
Neu timeat celeres tardior agna lupos.
(19–20)

There follows a vision of a prosperous landowner at the future harvest-time, in high spirits at the sight of his teeming fields (21–24). The *rusticus* builds a huge fire, then sits back to watch his home-born slaves making little houses out of twigs and branches around the hearth. All of this is a pleasant reminder to the *rusticus* of his wealth. The poet returns to the present time (as the word *nunc* of line 27 signals) and in a buoyant mood orders that the best wine be opened: the festival is a day of release, and we learn from lines 29–30 that the ordinary rules of sobriety do not apply.

The theme of conviviality leads to Tibullus' salute of his patron; and the invitation that Messalla come to the rural festival (31–36) leads in turn to the poet's celebration of country life: *rura cano rurisque deos* (37). He recalls that the gods of the country, by teaching the science of agriculture, have delivered man from primitive savagery (37–46). This recollection of the gods' benevolence to the farmer culminates in the poet's second vision of the coming harvest (47–50). It was in springtime that man first celebrated the growth of the crops in song and dance. It was then that he first offered a goat to Bacchus as a prayer for the increase of his wealth (51–58). And it was in springtime that a boy first adorned the statues of the Lares with flowered crowns:

Rure puer verno primum de flore coronam
Fecit et antiquis inposuit Laribus.
(59–60)

The poem draws to a close with two other springtime motifs: soon it will be time to shear the fleece from the sheep, and soon women will take up their conventional work of spinning the wool into thread (61–66).

Finally, Amor *inter agros interque armenta . . . natus* (67–68) is invited to join the festive celebration. Tibullus asks only that he leave behind his arrows and blazing torch (67–84). The elegy comes full circle with this ὕμνος κλητικός,

which recalls the invocation of the opening lines. Amor is invited to attend only the *dapes*, the great banquet which comes in the evening after the completion of the lustral rites. In contrast to the solemn invocation of the opening verses, the close of the elegy is playful in tone. The call to *sancta castitas* grows faint as wine and music take effect. Night begins to fall, and Tibullus (once again in the rôle of master of ceremonies) speaks to those who have celebrated the day:

Vos celebrem cantate deum pecorique vocate
Voce: palam pecori, clam sibi quisque vocet,
Aut etiam sibi quisque palam: nam turba iocosa
Obstrepit et Phrygio tibia curva sono.
Ludite: iam Nox iungit equos, currumque sequuntur
Matris lascivo sidera fulva choro,
Postque venit tacitus furvis circumdatus alis
Somnus et incerto Somnia nigra pede.

(83–90)

With the invocation of Amor, the festival day had begun to wind down; Cupido had no place in the high ritual of the daylight hours (*casta placent superis*, 13). But the appearance of the god who reminds us of the love poet's everyday life creates a foil to the sacred aura with which the elegy began.

There is a realistic touch at the end of the poem when Tibullus thinks of the confused dreams (*somnia nigra*, 90) which too much wine (cf. *incerto pede*, 90) will bring. The chorus of worshipers and banqueters disperses while the chorus of stars follows upon the chariot of their mother, the Night. Behind the stars comes *tacitus somnus* with its dark wings (89–90). MICHAEL PUTNAM detects an ominous sense in the lines: "Night's chariot with its followers goes its stated mythic way, but sleep, enveloped in dark (like death, at 1.3.4–5) which in turn will surround, is the feast's last visitor. Ritual quiet in the end becomes a stillness more enduring. The poet must command the advent of Bacchus, Ceres, and Amor. Sleep comes automatically and, sometimes, with finality."[160] There is, perhaps, a touch of the melancholy which PUTNAM has detected at the end of 2.1. At another level of meaning, the darkness and troubled dreams of the closing lines mark a transition from the exhilaration of the festival with its imagery of brightness, to the realities of everyday life. The participants have shared the day with Ceres, Bacchus and the Lares; the sense of well-being which the rites, the music, and the dancing have engendered gives way to the silence (*tacitus somnus*) of the night. Not only does Tibullus share with the reader the feelings appropriate to a religious holiday; he also gives him the sense that the festival was a day set apart, cut off from ordinary and profane concerns.

The poem is an important document for the study of Roman religion. There are, however, problems of interpretation, not the least of which is the identity of the festal day which Tibullus describes. In the opening verses, as we have seen, the poet calls out: *spicis tempora cinge, Ceres* (3); and the *candida turba* walks in procession to the altar *pura cum veste* (13–16). Ovid's account of the games of

[160] PUTNAM (above, note 52) 163.

Ceres and of the *Cerealia* (Fasti 4.393–620) includes some details which are strikingly reminiscent of Tibullus' rural festival. In Fasti 4.411–416 Ovid notes that Ceres is content with a little, provided that her offerings are *casta*. The appropriate offering to Ceres is not the ox, Ovid reminds the reader, but the sow. And at the conclusion of the account of the *raptus virginis*, Ovid writes:

> *tum demum voltumque Ceres animumque recepit*
> *imposuitque suae spicea serta comae;*
> *largaque provenit cessatis messis in arvis,*
> *et vix congestas area cepit opes.*
> *alba decent Cererem: vestis Cerialibus albas*
> *sumite; nunc pulli velleris usus abest.*
>
> (Fasti 4.615–620)

Ovid's discussion of the *Cerealia* recalls the goddess' love of *casta* and her preference for white-robed worshipers in Tibullus 2.1. The ox, which is crowned with a garland for Tibullus' rural festival, is sacred to the goddess Ceres in Ovid's depiction of the *Cerealia*; and both poets envision the goddess with her *spicea serta*. Ovid, moreover, relates how Ceres taught bulls to bear the yoke and how she brought the science of agriculture to mankind (Fasti 4.395–408); again, we are made to think of Tibullus' elegy (cf. 2.1.37–50).

MARQUARDT, followed by REITZENSTEIN[161], stressed the parallels between Tibullus' rural festival and the *Feriae Sementivae* (or *Paganalia*) which Ovid also describes. During this festival, too, the oxen were crowned and stood *plenum ad praesaepe* (Fasti 1.663). As Ovid describes the day the *rusticus* hangs up his plow and the earth rests (665–666); and the *pagus agat festum* (669). This festival is explicitly described as a *lustratio* celebrated by the *pagani* in honor of Tellus and Ceres who are said to fulfill a common purpose (669–74). The prescribed offering is a teeming sow (672). It is clear that a number of details in the rite evoke Tibullus' country holiday in elegy 2.1.

But there is another category of rites, the *lustratio agri*, of which Cato gives an early example. In 'De Agri Cultura' (141), he describes a traditional manner of purifying the land (*agrum lustrare*): the formula includes the leading or carrying around "in whatever places you think best (*quota ex parte . . . censeas*)" of the *suovetaurilia*, the offering of prayers to Janus, to Jupiter and especially to *Mars pater*, and finally the offering of the *suovetaurilia* along with the sacrificial cakes. Cato includes a prayer to Mars that he be propitious to the house and family; to keep away *morbos visos invisosque*; to ward off barrenness and ruin; to allow the *fruges, frumenta, vineta* and *virgulta* to flourish; and to keep the farmer, his family, his shepherds and his flocks in good health. To these intents Cato orders that the *suovetaurilia* be led around his land (*agrum terram fundumque meum . . . circumagi*). Unfortunately, he does not indicate an appropriate season for the rite. In the immediately preceding sections he has given *formulae* for thinning a grove and tilling the ground. Perhaps Cato's formula for the lustration of the land

[161] See PÖSTGENS (above, note 158) 45; R. REITZENSTEIN, Hellenistische Wundererzählungen (Leipzig 1906) 159.

would have been used whenever such a rite was thought necessary. ANDREW KILGOUR, however, concludes that the reference to *suovetaurilibus lactentibus* must point to the spring.[162]

Cato's lustration of the farm has often been identified as an instance of the *Ambarvalia*, which is also described by Vergil in the 'Georgics' (1.338–350):

> *in primis venerare deos, atque annua magnae*
> *sacra refer Cereri laetis operatus in herbis*
> *extremae sub casum hiemis, iam vere sereno.*
> *tum pingues agni et tum mollissima vina,*
> *tum somni dulces densaeque in montibus umbrae.*
> *cuncta tibi Cererem pubes agrestis adoret:*
> *cui tu lacte favos et miti dilue Baccho,*
> *terque novas circum felix eat hostia fruges,*
> *omnis quam chorus et socii comitentur ovantes*
> *et Cererem clamore vocent in tecta; neque ante*
> *falcem maturis quisquam supponat aristis*
> *quam Cereri torta redimitus tempora quercu*
> *det motus incompositos et carmina dicat.*

ERICH BURCK and CYRIL BAILEY expressed the view that this passage combines details from more than one festival.[163] HENRI LE BONNIEC has shown that the opening lines (338–342) refer to a rite of Ceres alone, celebrated when the grain was beginning to sprout (*in herbis*, 339); this spring festival can only be the *Cerealia*. The last lines (347–350) anticipate the harvest. The middle of the passage concerns a festival celebrated by *cuncta pubes agrestis* (343) in honor of Ceres and Bacchus. The central feature of this ritual is the leading of a *felix hostia* around the crops, which are at such a stage in their development that they can be called *novae fruges* (345).[164] Servius, commenting on the line, informs us that this is the *ambarvale sacrificium . . . quod de porce et saepe fecunda et gravida fieri consueverat*. Referring to the same passage (in a comment upon Ec. 3.77) Servius notes: *dicitur autem hoc sacrificium ambarvale, quod arva ambiat victima: hinc ipse in Georgicis* ⟨1.345⟩ *terque novas circum felix eat hostia fruges: sicut amburbale vel amburbium dicitur sacrificium, quod urbem circuit et ambit victima*. On the phrase *cum lustrabimus agros* (Ec. 5.75) Servius notes that *lustrare* means *circuire*: *dicit enim ambarvale sacrificium*. Servius (on Ec. 3.77), Macrobius (Sat. 3.5.7) and Paulus (5L, p. 97L²) derive the word *ambarvalis* from *arva* (*ab ambiendis arvis*, Macr. l.c.). Vergil's description sets this rite in the spring, a time

[162] ANDREW KILGOUR, The Ambarvalia and the Sacrificium Deae Diae, Mnemosyne, ser. 3 no. 6 (1938) 233.

[163] ERICH BURCK, Die Komposition von Vergils Georgica, Hermes 64 (1929) 290f. = ID., Vom Menschenbild in der römischen Literatur. Ausgewählte Schriften I (Heidelberg 1966) 96f. and CYRIL BAILEY, Religion in Virgil (Oxford 1935) 54. PÖSTGENS (above, note 158) 49–50.

[164] HENRI LE BONNIEC, Le Culte de Cérès à Rome, Études et commentaires 27 (Paris 1958) 134f.

of year which accords with the notation *SEGETES LUSTRANTUR* found on the rustic calendars under the month of May. (CIL I², p. 280f.) Among the Anauni of northern Italy (as late as A.D. 393) the date of this type of feast seems to have been May 29.[165]

We know that this kind of lustral procession was employed for a number of circumstances; e.g., at the culmination of a census or in the purification of a military camp. At the core of the rite lies the magico-religious idea that those in the procession create a barrier against harmful elements by walking in a circle, and that the offering of a *felix hostia* (cf. Georg. 1.345) assures fertility.[166] This type of lustration could apparently be attached to the worship of a number of divinities that have to do with the cycle of growth and the harvest; e.g., Mars in Cato's 'De Agricultura' and Ceres and Bacchus in Vergil's 'Georgics'.

Paulus 5L, p. 97L² defines *ambarvales hostiae* as those *quae pro arvis a duobus fratribus sacrificabantur*. This text adds a very important consideration to the study of the rite. Since the time of Augustinus' edition, with its emendation of *duobus* to *duodecim*, many scholars have supposed that there must be some relationship between the *Ambarvalia* and the rites of the Arval Brothers. Indeed, some have identified the *Ambarvalia* with the worship conducted by the religious brotherhood in the grove of the Dea Dia.[167] This hypothesis demands that we assume the existence of a state celebration of the *Ambarvalia* in addition to the *sacra privata* and the observances within the *pagi*.

Strabo does give evidence that the rite was performed for the city: "At any rate, between the fifth and the sixth of those stones which indicate the miles from Rome there is a place called 'Festi', and this, it is declared, is a boundary of what was then the Roman territory; and, further, the priests celebrate sacrificial festivals, called 'Ambarvia', on the same day, both there and at several other places, as being boundaries" (Geography 5.3.2). Most scholars have assumed that ἡ Ἀμβαρουία means the *Ambarvalia* but some have concluded that Strabo – though he calls the rite the *Ambarvalia* – in fact describes the *Amburbium* (the purification of the city) rather than the *Ambarvalia* (the purification of the *arva*).[168] The distinction between these two rituals, however, seems to pertain to the beneficiary and not to the basic nature of the religious acts performed; i.e., the *Amburbium* is essentially the celebration of the *Ambarvalia* rite for the benefit of the city. Vopiscus (Vit. Aurel. 20.3) clearly relates the two: *lustrata urbs cantata carmina amburbium celebratum ambarvalia promissa*. Strabo's description has, in turn, evoked comparison between the *Ambarvalia-Amburbium* and the lustral sacrifices offered at the gateways of the ancient city of Iguvium (Gubbio) by the *Fratres Atiedii*. Both Strabo's passage, especially because it calls

[165] GEORG WISSOWA, Religion und Kultus der Römer², Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaft 4.5 (Munich 1912; repr. 1971) 143, note 2.

[166] See BOEHM, RE 13.2 (1927) s.v. lustratio, col. 2029f.

[167] For older bibliography on the question, see KILGOUR (above, note 162) 225; and see E. OLSHAUSEN, „Über die römischen Ackerbrüder". Geschichte eines Kultes, in: ANRW II 16.1, ed. WOLFGANG HAASE (Berlin–New York 1978) 825.

[168] KILGOUR (above, note 162) 232.

to mind the Iguvian brotherhood, and Paulus 5L, p. 97L² have been cited to support comparisons between the *Ambarvalia* and the worship performed by the Roman sodality called the *Fratres Arvales*.[169]

Indeed, the fact that a Θυσία Ἀμβαρουία was offered in a place called Φῆστοι, which happened to be the same distance from Rome as the grove of the *Fratres Arvales*,[170] has led some scholars to identify Φῆστοι with the *lucus* of the Dea Dia; i.e., with the sanctuary of the Arval brotherhood. These priests, according to an understanding of the emended passage Paulus 5L, p. 97L² at one time offered the *ambarvales hostiae . . . pro arvis*. We know from the 'Acta Fratrum Arvalium' that the sodality performed its rites toward the end of May, at the season of the year when (according to the rustic calendars) the *SEGETES LUSTRANTUR*. It would seem, then, that there was a city *Amburbium* or *Ambarvalia*, and that this rite – or at least part of it – was in origin identical with the worship of the Arval Brothers at one time.

"This hypothesis", ALFÖLDI writes, "must be abandoned".[171] Such an identification of the rites of the *Fratres Arvales* with the city *Ambarvalia* in his view depends heavily upon two passages, one of which (from Strabo) refers to an otherwise unknown place (Φῆστοι), and the second of which (from Paulus) has been emended. Moreover, the priests about whom Strabo writes are called by the name ἱερομνήμονες, which normally refers to the pontiffs.[172] We are told that the state clergy held their services not only at Φῆστοι but in many other places on the same day. ANDREW KILGOUR has still another objection to the identification of the *Ambarvalia* and the rites of the Arval Brothers: given the extensive liturgy which, we know from the 'Acta', the *Fratres* carried out in their grove and in the home of their *magister*, it is difficult to imagine that they could have performed additional sacrifices at various stations on the city's boundary on the same day.[173] KILGOUR also observes that the description of the offering of oblations in the 'Acta Fratrum Arvalium' differs from the expected pattern of the *suovetaurilia*.[174]

In spite of these objections, we must conclude that there is a basic relationship between the *Ambarvalia* and the *Fratres Arvales*, as the very names of the brotherhood and festival (both related to the word *arva*) indicate. That the ritual of the brotherhood had to do with the fertility of the *arva* is stressed by Varro, who writes: *Fratres Arvales dicti qui sacra publica faciunt propterea ut fruges ferant arva* (L. L. 5.85). Nor can we easily discount the evidence supplied

[169] On the *Fratres Arvales* and *Fratres Atiedii*, see A. MOMIGLIANO, An Interim Report on the Origins of Rome, JRS 53 (1963) 115–117.

[170] See G. HENZEN, Acta Fratrum Arvalium Quae Supersunt, (Berlin 1874; repr. 1967), 47; WISSOWA RE 2 (1896) s.v. Arvales Fratres, col. 1479; E. NORDEN, Aus Altrömischen Priesterbüchern, Skrifter utgivna av kungliga humanistiska Vetenskapssamfundet i Lund 29 (Lund 1939) 162f.; H. JORDAN, Topographie der Stadt Rom im Alterthum I (Berlin 1878) 289f.

[171] A. ALFÖLDI, Early Rome and the Latins (Ann Arbor, Mich. 1963) 296.

[172] HUGH J. MASON, Greek Terms for Roman Institutions. A Lexicon and Analysis, American Studies in Papyrology 13 (Toronto 1974) 55.

[173] KILGOUR (above, note 162) 234.

[174] KILGOUR, 239.

by two passages from Festus, the first quoted by Macrobius and the second (which I have discussed above) by Paulus.

> *AMBARVALIS HOSTIA . . . quae rei divinae causa circum arva ducitur ab his qui pro frugibus faciunt* (Macr. Sat. 3.5.7).
>
> *AMBARVALES HOSTIAE appellabantur quae pro arvis a duobus fratribus sacrificabantur* (Paulus 5L, p. 97L²).

The verbs of the second passage are in the imperfect tense, in contrast to those of the first, which are in the present. Paulus, then, must be describing a situation which was no longer true when Festus (or his probable source Verrius Flaccus) was writing: the use of the imperfect tense, as MOMIGLIANO suggests, indicates that *Ambarvalia* had once been the concern of the *Fratres Arvales*.[175] ALFÖLDI supposes that the reading *a duobus fratribus* is correct and that the phrase refers to Romulus and Remus, not to the Arval Brothers. He calls attention to the fact that Strabo dicusses the *Ambarvalia* in a section of his book which also recounts stories of Romulus and Remus.[176] ALFÖLDI in my view rightly prompts us to reconsider the emendation of Augustinus. On the other hand, Strabo does not bring Romulus or Remus directly into his remarks about the *Ambarvalia*, and it is difficult to understand why Festus should have introduced the twins into a discussion of these rites.

MOMIGLIANO has offered an alternative explanation for the reading *duobus* in the passage from Paulus.[177] He draws attention to the fact that two of the *Fratres Arvales* played a more prominent rôle in the observances of the sodality than the other ten: each May the brotherhood elected a *magister* and a *flamen* to oversee the activities of the sodality for the year. MOMIGLIANO suggests that the reference to the two brothers in the passage under discussion resulted from a mistaken etymology of *ambarvalis*; *amb-* was understood as *ambo*: *ambarvalis* was thus taken to mean 'pertaining to both of the [leading] *Arvales*'. This solution is quite plausible, especially because of the absence in the passage of any phrase like *circum arva* suggestive of the usual etymology from *arva* and *ambire*. Yet, there are still grounds for accepting the emendation of Augustinus (*duodecim* for *duobus*). The evidence as a whole, in any case, points to the conclusion that the reference to *fratres* in Paulus 5L, p. 97L² in all probability has to do with the *Fratres Arvales*. We cannot be certain on the basis of our evidence whether or not Φῆστοι is to be identified with the *lucus Deae Diae*. Strabo tells us that the ἱερομνήμονες made the offerings at Φῆστοι, and in other places along the boundaries on the same day. The word ἱερομνήμονες, as I have observed, ordinarily denotes the pontiffs.[178] One cannot rule out the possibility that in this instance the Greek word is used with a more comprehensive sense and refers to both the *pontifices* and the *Fratres Arvales*. Did the brotherhood conduct the rites at

[175] ARNALDO MOMIGLIANO, Ambarvales Hostiae, Maia 15 (1963) 47.
[176] ALFÖLDI (above, note 171) 299 and note 1.
[177] See above, note 175, p. 48.
[178] See above, note 172.

Φῆστοι (i.e., in the *lucus Deae Diae*) while the pontiffs made offerings at other stations as part of the same celebration of the *Ambarvalia*? The passage in Strabo probably belongs to a time before the restoration of the brotherhood by Augustus; at such a time the conducting of the *Ambarvalia* (which had apparently once been the responsibility of the *Fratres*) will have been largely – or perhaps entirely – in the hands of the pontiffs.

The evidence, then, indicates that the ancient writers saw some relationship between the rite of the *Ambarvalia* and the worship carried out by the Arval Brothers. As we have seen, Varro, our only Republican source, states that the *Arvales* perform their rites *propterea ut fruges ferant arva* (L. L. 5.85). The rite of the Dea Dia and the *Ambarvalia* fell at the same time of year, late in May. The *suovetaurilia* was offered in the *Ambarvalia* and in the rites of the *Arvales*. The *Carmen Arvale* indicates that the ritual of the brothers pertained to the purification of boundaries, as did the rite of the *suovetaurilia*.[179] L. R. PALMER gives this English version of NORDEN's text and translation of the archaic hymn:[180]

"(1) Hail, aid us ye Lares, (thrice)
(2) Do not allow pestilence or catastrophe to afflict the people.
(3) Be thou sated, wild Mars, leap upon the boundary mark and stand there.
(4) Call ye in turn all the Semones.
(5) Hail Mars aid us
(6) triumpe."

There is much in the hymn and in the rites which continues to puzzle scholars. There are, for example, several attractive hypotheses which explain and identify the otherwise unknown goddess Dea Dia, in whose grove and partly in honor of whom the *fratres* conducted their worship. Is this mysterious goddess an indigitation of Ceres or Diana, as some have supposed?[181] Is she a lunar deity, a goddess who has to do with the ripening of the crops?[182] Or does she bear some relation to Acca Larentia, whose first name is a nursery word for 'mother' and whose second perhaps has to do with the process of 'greening'?[183] Is her patronage of the brotherhood a later addition, a feature of the restoration by Augustus? She does not appear in the ancient hymn. Much remains to be solved but it is clear that Mars was invoked by the sodality in the *carmen*; in fact, the invocation to Mars and the prayer to drive away *lue(m)* and *rue(m)*, 'pestilence' and 'catastrophe', find a parallel in Cato's lustration of the farm (cf. the *morbi, viduertas, vastitudo, calamitas* in De Agri Cultura 141).

[179] For the text of the *carmen* see HENZEN (above, note 170) 26–27 and NORDEN (above, note 170) 114f.

[180] L. R. PALMER, The Latin Language, The Great Languages (London 1954) 63f.

[181] See NORDEN (above, note 170) 163, note 2.

[182] ROBERT SCHILLING, Dea Dia dans la liturgie des frères Arvales, in: Hommages à Marcel Renard II, Collection Latomus 102 (Brussels 1969) 675–679 = ID., Rites, cultes, dieux de Rome (Paris 1979) 366–370.

[183] See G. RADKE, Acca Larentia und die fratres Arvales. Ein Stück römisch-sabinischer Frühgeschichte, in: ANRW I 2, ed. HILDEGARD TEMPORINI (Berlin–New York 1972) 421–441, and G. RADKE, Die Götter Altitaliens, Fontes et Commentationes 3 (Münster 1965) 104.

It is not, however, Mars alone who is called upon in the *carmen* of the *Arvales* to avert such afflictions: the brothers first invoked the Lares in their ancient hymn. We must conclude either that the *Ambarvalia* were identical with the rites of the brothers or that the worship of the sodality grew out of the ritual surrounding the offering of the *ambarvales hostiae*. We can note, then, that the oldest document which relates to the *Ambarvalia* gives the Lares a place of special prominence.

The similar invocation to the Lares who are called upon to drive away pestilence in Tibullus' rural festival, is one of several indications that Elegy 2.1 depicts the *Ambarvalia*:

> *Di patrii, purgamus agros, purgamus agrestes:*
> *Vos mala de nostris pellite limitibus,*
> *Neu seges eludat messem fallacibus herbis,*
> *Neu timeat celeres tardior agna lupos.*
>
> (2.1.17–20)

Ovid's description in Fasti 4.615–620 makes it clear that the *Cerealia* belong to Ceres alone. The wearing of white garments, which we find in the *Cerealia*, was the custom for many festivals, including the *Terminalia*, the *Robigalia* and the *Dies Natalis*. It is true that we find other motifs in common between the *Cerealia* and the rustic holiday of Tibullus: the oxen are garlanded, the goddess Ceres is envisioned wearing *spicea serta*, and there is an injunction to chastity in both. But we miss any sign that there was a great procession during the *Cerealia*, a festival which belonged to Ceres alone.[184]

Nor is it possible that Elegy 2.1 depicts the *Feriae Sementivae*. It has been widely recognized that the similarities between Ovid's account of that festival and Tibullus' rustic holiday are due in large part to imitation: Ovid has, for whatever reason, echoed passages from Tib. 2.1 in Fasti 1.663–674, which describe the *Feriae Sementivae*. Indeed, several motifs (the garlanded ox, the cessation of work, etc.) are common to Ovid's *Cerealia* and *Sementivae* and to Tibullus' country festival. Ovid emphasizes, however, that the *Sementivae* are sacred to Ceres and Tellus, as LE BONNIEC reminds us; and the victim, a pig, is appropriate to those goddesses.[185] And, though Ovid describes the festival as a lustration of the *pagus*, the time of year for this observance – late January – is out of keeping with the season (clearly springtime) during which Tibullus' festival of 2.1 takes place. The victim in Tibullus' rite is a lamb, the *sacer agnus* (2.1.15), the same animal which we find as the offering in the *Terminalia* which (like the *Ambarvalia*) concerned the protection of the land and boundaries: in both cases, the *sacer agnus* is a substitute for the oblation of the full *suovetaurilia*.[186]

[184] See P. GRIMAL, La V^e Éclogue et le culte de César, in: Mélanges d'archéologie et d'histoire offerts à Charles Picard à l'occasion de son 65^e anniversaire (Paris 1949) 406–419. I, 412f., and LE BONNIEC (above, note 164) 145, note 1.

[185] LE BONNIEC, 144.

[186] LE BONNIEC, 147.

The recipients of the *sacer agnus*, a token of the *suovetaurilia* in 2.1, are Bacchus, Ceres and the *di patrii*. Other passages in Tibullus indicate that the *di patrii* are the Lares. In 1.3, as we have seen, the poet contrasts Delia's devotions to the goddess Isis with his own worship of the traditional *patrii Penates* and *antiquus Lar* (33–34). In Elegy 1.1, we have another reference to the *Ambarvalia* when the poet envisions the lustral offering of more prosperous days:

Vos quoque, felicis quondam, nunc pauperis agri
Custodes, fertis munera vestra, Lares.
Tunc vitula innumeros lustrabat caesa iuvencos,
Nunc agna exigui est hostia parva soli.
Agna cadet vobis, quam circum rustica pubes
Clamet 'io messes et bona vina date'.
(1.1.19–24)

In days past, Tibullus recalls, the Lares received the most costly victim of the *suovetaurilia*. Mars is invoked by the *Fratres Arvales* and in Cato's lustral prayer. In elegy 1.10, a poem in which Tibullus celebrates peace and opposes war, we find the apparent explanation for the omission of Mars in the *Ambarvalia* of 2.1; in the anti-war elegy (1.10), Tibullus prays to the *patrii Lares* to save him:

Sed patrii servate Lares: aluistis et idem,
Cursarem vestros cum tener ante pedes.
(1.10.15–16)

He recalls nostalgically how as a child he worshiped the wooden statue of the old family god in simple rites, and begs that the Lares rescue him from the perils of war:

Sic placeam vobis: alius sit fortis in armis
Sternat et adversos Marte favente duces,
Ut mihi potanti possit sua dicere facta
Miles et in mensa pingere castra mero.
(1.10.29–32)

The Lares represent the country, home, protection and peace. They are *patrii* and *custodes*. Indeed, not only in 1.10 but also in 2.1, Tibullus cannot think of the Lares without also thinking of the security of childhood:

Rure puer verno primum de flore coronam
Fecit et antiquis inposuit Laribus.
(2.1.59–60)

In Tibullus the Lares represent the sense of well-being that one experiences in the more care-free times of childhood and in spring, when the harvest is approaching. The *Ambarvalia* will have evoked memories of those comfortable times in the hearts of Tibullus' contemporary readers. If the Romans by and large preferred

Tibullus, it is probably not only because he was *tersus* and *elegans* but because he seems almost to worship the peace of the countryside: the Lares, above all others, are his gods.

The feelings of comfort and warmth, which the assurance of the gods' beneficence engenders, culminate in the poet's vision of the harvest-fire or bonfire that the *colonus* builds:

> *Tunc nitidus plenis confisus rusticus agris*
> *Ingeret ardenti grandia ligna foco,*
> *Turbaque vernarum, saturi bona signa coloni,*
> *Ludet et ex virgis exstruet ante casas.*
>
> (2.1.21–24)

PUTNAM must be correct in stating that both the vocabulary and context of this passage should make us think of the slave-children at play building little houses, not of their parents making *tabernacula* like those used at the *Neptunalia* or at the feast of Anna Perenna.[187] The *vernae* make toy huts from the twigs and small bits of firewood piled before the hearth. The scene is again one of childhood and the warmth of security. It leads quite naturally to the opening of the wine jars; and the thought of wine, and the warm feeling which it brings, leads in turn to the salute offered to Messalla "now the subject of all conversation for your triumph over the Aquitanians" (2.1.31–34). Book 1 of Tibullus refers to this triumph of Messalla (1.7.7f.) and must for that reason have been published after 27 B.C. An epigram of Domitius Marsus places the death of Tibullus around 19 B.C. Messalla Corvinus will have been one of the *Fratres Arvales* by 21–20 B.C. and he may well have played an important rôle in the restoration of the ancient sodality.[188] It was, perhaps, in part a genuine and common interest in these traditional customs which drew together the poet and his patron: Tibullus describes Messalla as his inspiration in this song (2.1.35–39). We can wonder, as JOHN SCHEID speculates in his admirable dissertation, whether Tibullus indirectly praises Messalla for his membership in the college of the *Fratres Arvales*.[189] The elegy is, in any case, a monument to the poet's "religion of peace", which is the corollary to the "religion of love".[190]

[187] PUTNAM, 155. Cf. W. WARDE FOWLER, Note on the Country Festival in Tibullus 2.1, CR 23 (1908) 39. FOWLER identifies the festival of 2.1 as the Ambarvalia.

[188] JOHN SCHEID, Les Frères Arvales: recrutement et origine sociale sous les empereurs julio-claudiens, Bibliothèque de l'École des Hautes Études, section des sciences religieuses 77 (Paris 1975) 337, note 1. As BRIGHT (above, note 158) 62–63 observes, the greeting to Messalla in 35–36 is expressed in a form ordinarily meant for a divine addressee; see also CAIRNS (above, note 158) 127 and 129, "Tibullus' rustic Ambarvalia is his indirect poetic tribute to the restoration by Augustus of the priestly college of Arval brothers".

[189] SCHEID (above, note 188) 337, note 1.

[190] According to FRANCIS CAIRNS, Tibullus: a Hellenistic Poet at Rome (Cambridge 1979) 130, we are to suppose that Messalla (*absentis*, 32) is "at Rome celebrating the Amburbium in his official capacity as *Frater Arvalis*".

V. Religion in Propertius, Book Four

1. Elegy 4.1 and the *curtus equus*

In the fourth book of elegies, Propertius assumes the guise of a Roman Callimachus, modeling himself upon the poet who was famous as the author of 'Aitia'. The first elegy of Book Four is unusual in that it provides a double and (at least on the surface) contradictory introduction to the book: in lines 1–70, the poet promises that he will compose aetiologies but in 71–150, an imaginary astrologer named Horos warns him (in a characteristically elegiac motif) to restrict the scope of his creativeness to more appropriate themes, especially to love. W. R. NETHERCUT and W. SUERBAUM have demonstrated the unity of Propertius 4.1; and E. LEFÈVRE has shown that the second part of the elegy is an *excusatio* for writing both aetiological and amatory verse.[191]

P. GRIMAL insists that Propertius does retrace the destiny of Rome, just as he has promised. In the first poem, we meet the three peoples from which Rome will grow to greatness: the Romans from Romulus, the Sabines from Tatius and Lucumo's Etruscans. The Rome which the elegist portrays is not merely that of Romulus; it is the city which Fate has made ready and over which Augustus is destined to preside.[192] GRIMAL, A. DIETERICH and W. NETHERCUT have given helpful discussions of the structure of Book Four.[193] CARL BECKER and K. W. WEEBER have recognized analogies to Vergil's 'Aeneid' in Propertius' aetiological works.[194] There is, then, a seriousness which is contrapuntal to the lighter, more typically elegiac themes. In the story of Tarpeia (4.4), and in his *aition* for the exclusion of women from the rites of the *ara maxima* (4.9), we find erotic leitmotifs; the inauguration of the Palatine temple of Apollo, which Propertius celebrates in 4.6, is the occasion for symposiac verse; 4.10, the retelling of the three occasions when the *spolia opima* were taken, is a more traditional aetiology, which includes an explanation of Jupiter's cult title *Feretrius*.[195] But it is elegies

[191] WILLIAM R. NETHERCUT, Notes on the Structure of Propertius Book IV, AJP 89 (1968) 449–464. W. SUERBAUM, Der Schluß der Einleitungselegie zum 4. Properzbuch, RhM 107 (1964) 340–361. E. LEFÈVRE, Form und Funktion der Einleitungselegie des 4. Buches des Properz, WS 79 (1966) 427–442. Cf. also J. F. MILLER, Callimachus and the Augustan Aitiological Elegy, ANRW II 30.1 (Berlin–New York 1982) 380–396.

[192] P. GRIMAL, Les intentions de Properce et la composition du livre IV, Latomus 11 (1952) 183ff.

[193] GRIMAL (above, note 192); NETHERCUT (above, note 191); A. DIETERICH, Die Widmungselegie des letzten Buches des Properz, RhM 55 (1900) 191ff.

[194] CARL BECKER, Die späten Elegien des Properz, Hermes 99 (1971) 449–480; K. W. WEEBER, Properz IV 1, 1–70 und das 8. Buch der Aeneis, Latomus 37 (1978) 489–506. Cf. J. F. MILLER, Callimachus and the Aitiological Elegy (above, note 191) 382f.

[195] On the meaning of *Feretrius*, see A. DRUMMOND in his review of G. RADKE (Die Götter Altitaliens [Münster 1965]), CR, n.s. 21 (1971) 240.

4.1, 4.2 and 4.8 which, more than any others in the book, are basic *testimonia* for important religious traditions of Rome.

In the first elegy of Book IV, Propertius takes the rôle of a tour guide helping an unidentified stranger (*hospes*, 1), for whom he contrasts the simplicity of archaic Rome with its grandeur in his own days. In particular, the elegist contrasts the simple rites of old with the more elaborate ritual which his contemporaries know:

> *nulli cura fuit externos quaerere diuos,*
> *cum tremeret patrio pendula turba sacro,*
> *annuaque accenso celebrante Parilia faeno,*
> *qualia nunc curto lustra nouantur equo.*
>
> (4.1.17–20)

In these verses, the elegist depicts the first of four ancient religious festivals which concern him in the poem. But this reference to the *Parilia*, celebrated on April 21, has been a controversial passage because of the mention of the *curtus equus*.[196] There should be no question of whether Propertius means that the blood of a horse was used in the rites of the *Parilia*: Ovid (Fasti 4.731–734) describes the ingredients of the *suffimen* of the *Parilia* as blood of a horse, ashes of a calf, and empty stalks of beans. The ashes, we know, were those of a calf sacrificed during the *Fordicidia*.[197] It was the responsibility of the Vestals to preserve them for the *Parilia*. Ovid makes it clear that the Vestals also supplied the blood of the horse for the same rite:

> *i, pete virginea, populus, suffimen ab ara:*
> *Vesta dabit, Vestae munere purus eris.*
>
> (Fasti 4.731–732)

The Vestals, then, had prepared the *suffimen* ahead of time; and the substance was evidently burned with the heaps of straw which the Romans leaped over and which formed the material used for the lustration during the *Parilia*.

Most commentators on the text have assumed, along with H. J. Rose, that the *curtus equus* refers to the October Horse, which was sacrificed to Mars on the Campus Martius.[198] Both the head and the tail were severed in that rite; and afterwards a runner tried to deliver the tail to the Regia before whatever blood remained upon it coagulated. Dumézil has written extensively about the rite of the *Equus October*, relating it quite appropriately to the Vedic sacrifice of the horse, the *ásvamedha*.[199] He has also related Pales to an obscure Indian goddess *Viśpálā*,

[196] See, above all, G. Dumézil, Le *curtus equos* de la fête de Pales et la mutilation de la jument *Viś-palā*, Eranos 54 (1956) 232–245 and Id., Archaic Roman Religion, tr. Philip Krapp (Chicago 1970) 224, note 24.

[197] See Harmon, Public Festivals of Rome, in: ANRW II 16.2 (above, note 159) 1463. On the Fordicidia, see J. Whatmough, *Fordus* and *Fordicidia*, CQ 15 (1921) 108–109.

[198] H. J. Rose, Some Problems of Classical Religion (Oslo 1958) 5–6. Cf. J. H. Croon, Die Ideologie des Marskultes unter dem Principat und ihre Vorgeschichte, ANRW II 17.1 (Berlin–New York 1981) 263–268.

[199] See Dumézil, Archaic Roman Religion (above, note 196) 215f.

whom he interprets as the **Palā* of the *viś*, the word *viś* referring to 'the principle of the function of the herdsmen-farmers'.[200] *Viśpálā* plays a rôle in the saga of the *Nāsatya*, who as twin gods of the 'third function', were givers of wealth, health and youth. The *Nāsatya* had a special interest in horses and cattle, and *Viśpálā* was apparently "conceived as a mare who, during a race, loses a leg which the twins replace."[201] DUMÉZIL speculates, on the basis of rather inconclusive evidence (which could suggest a relationship between *Viśpálā* and the Roman *Pales*), that a horse was mutilated on the occasion of the Parilia.[202] It seems more likely that the older interpretation is correct; i.e., that some of the blood was preserved from the sacrifice of the October Horse, whose tail was cut off as part of that rite (hence, the expression *curtus equus*).[203]

GEORGE DEVEREUX, followed by JAMES H. DEE, has made the interesting suggestion that the words οὐρά and *cauda* used in the sources for the rite of the October Horse, do not refer to the tail but rather (euphemistically) to the *membrum virile*, on the grounds that the latter was equivalent, as a trophy, to the head and that the blood of the tail would in all likelihood have coagulated before the runner could have reached the hearth of the Regia from the distance of the Campus Martius.[204] This explanation, however, would miss the point of the information in Festus 190L, p. 296L²: *eiusdemque coda tanta celeritate perfertur in Regiam ut ex ea sanguis distillet in focum participandae rei divinae gratia*. If DEVEREUX' view is correct, neither the unusual speed nor the exceptional nature of the runner's performance about which Festus writes would have been necessary. From Propertius, then, we gain the information that the blood of a *curtus equus* "a horse whose tail had been cut off" – probably the October Horse – was put to ritual use in the *Parilia*. This late addition to the *Parilia* will have brought the festival of Pales, a patron divinity of the Roman city, into relationship with the most important sacrifice to Mars, the god to whom the Romans traced their ancestry.

Propertius goes on to describe, in thumbnail fashion, the *Vestalia*, the *Compitalia* and the *Lupercalia* – all early festivals, which he sets in the age of Romulus before the synoecism of the Romans and the Sabines. Romulus emerges as a sovereign and religious leader (9–26); Lycmon (i.e., Lucumo), as a military technician (27–29); and Titus Tatius, as a man of wealth: *magnaque pars Tatio rerum erat inter ouis* (30). In one verse, which follows the analytic treatment of the three heroes of the regal period, Propertius synthesizes much of what has gone before and recalls the synoecism of Romans, Sabines and Etruscans: *hinc*

[200] DUMÉZIL, Le *curtus equos* (above, note 196) 238 and ID., Archaic Roman Religion (above, note 196) 384.

[201] DUMÉZIL, Archaic Roman Religion (above, note 200).

[202] DUMÉZIL, Le *curtus equos* (above, note 196) 238.

[203] See ROSE (above, note 198).

[204] GEORGE DEVEREUX, The *Equus October* Ritual Reconsidered, Mnemosyne, ser. 4 no. 23 (1970) 297–301; JAMES H. DEE, Propertius IV. 1. 20: *Curtus equus* and the *Equus October*, Mnemosyne ser. 4, no. 26 (1973) 289. Cf. also H. WAGENVOORT, On the Magical Significance of the Tail, in: ID., Pietas. Selected Studies in Roman Religion (Leiden 1980) 147f.

Tities Ramnesque uiri Luceresque Soloni (31). These are the three tribes founded, he implies, by Tatius, Romulus and Lucumo. DUMÉZIL has made a good case that the elegist's treatment of the subject of Rome's origins in 4.1 reflects the tripartite ideology upon which the Indo-European political and social order was based.[205]

2. Propertius 4.2: The Vertumnus Elegy

In Propertius' elegy 4.2, the statue of a god addresses an imaginary passer-by to explain his origin and the meaning of his name. The poem derives its basic motifs from sepulchral verse and from the *Priapea*, as THOMAS A. SUITS has shown[206]; but elegy 4.2 gives important information about the god Vertumnus. It is clear from Propertius and other sources that a statue of Vertumnus did, in fact, stand on the Vicus Tuscus near the entrance to the Forum (Varro L. L. 5.46, Livy 44.16.10, Cic. Verr. 2.1.154, Hor. Epist. 1.20.1). Pseudo-Asconius (on Cic. Verr. 2.1.154) places the statue at the right-hand corner of the Vicus Tuscus between the Basilica Julia and the Temple of Castor, near the point at which the Vicus meets the Sacred Way. It was in this vicinity that the podium of the statue came to light in 1549. The statue base bore the inscription *VORTUMNUS TEMPORIBUS DIOCLETIANI ET MAXIMIANI* (CIL VI 804 = DESSAU 3588). Porphyrio (ad Hor. Epist. 1.20.1) speaks of a *sacellum* but the word must refer only to an open-air shrine (cf. Festus 422L, p. 413L²: *sacella . . . loca dis sacrata sine tecto.*) In Prop. 4.2.5–6 Vertumnus states:

> *haec me turba iuuat, nec templo laetor eburno:*
> *Romanum satis est posse uidere Forum.*

Most of the poem is an explication of the god's character and his name; Propertius offers three etymologies, all based upon *vertere* 'to turn': Vertumnus is called from the turning of the river Tiber (9–10); or from his reception of the first fruits as the year turns round (11–18); or from the fact that his nature fits every form: *in quamcumque uoles uerte, decorus ero* (22). It is clearly the third derivation which the elegist prefers. We are told that Vertumnus sometimes carries the sickle, like a farmer (25) or a basket, like a reaper (28); in the past he has borne arms, like a soldier (27). He can be sober on law-court days (29) or bacchic when the occasion allows (31). He appears, by turns, as a hunter (33), a fowler (33), a charioteer (35–36), a fisherman (37), a shepherd (39) but above all, as the recipient of the fruits or as the proprietor of a garden:

> *nam quid ego adiciam, de quo mihi maxima fama est,*
> *hortorum in manibus dona probata meis?*
> (4.1.41–42)

[205] GEORGES DUMÉZIL, Mythe et Épopée: l'idéologie des trois fonctions dans les épopées des peuples indo-européens I (Paris 1968) 304–336, especially 318ff.

[206] T. A. SUITS, The Vertumnus Elegy of Propertius, TAPA 100 (1969) 475–486, now the standard article on 4.2, is essential for an understanding of the poem.

THOMAS SUITS has emphasized the affinities between Vertumnus and Priapus, who is often described as a god of the garden.[207] Both gods were represented as being carved of wood; and both, according to Fulgentius, belong to the ambiguous group of deities called *semones* (Serm. ant. 11). Vertumnus, like Priapus, received offerings of fruits, vegetables and flowers (45–46). Propertius' elegy concludes with one last play on the name Vertumnus (cf. *versus*, 57):

sex superant uersus: te, qui ad uadimonia curris,
non moror: haec spatiis ultima creta meis.
stipes acernus eram, properanti falce dolatus,
ante Numam grata pauper in urbe deus.
at tibi, Mamurri, formae caelator aenae,
tellus artifices ne terat Osca manus,
qui me tam docilis potuisti fundere in usus.
unum opus est, operi non datur unus honos.
(4.2.57–64)

As SUITS observes, the lines exemplify "one of the most persistent motifs in epitaphs . . . the plea that the hastening wayfarer stop and read the inscription through to its end, coupled with a promise to be brief and to cause no delay".[208]

In the second couplet of the poem, Vertumnus insists upon his origin and recalls how he came to Rome:

Tuscus ego et Tuscis orior, nec paenitet inter
proelia Volsinios deseruisse focos.
(4.2.3–4)

The lines have usually been interpreted as a reference to the triumph of M. Fulvius Flaccus over the Volsinii in 264.[209] On the assumption that the name *Vertumnus* is a Latin derivation from Etruscan *Voltumna* (the most important of the Volsinian gods), V. BASANOFF and a number of other scholars have concluded that Vertumnus must have been brought to Rome in 264 (cf. *deseruisse*, 4) through the rite of *evocatio*.[210] We are told, moreover, by Pliny (N.H. 34.15.34) that 2,000 statues were taken from Volsinii after the storming of the city. It is a reasonable inference that Propertius has such a ritual in mind. Unfortunately, we have no direct evidence that an *evocatio* did, in fact, take place in 264 B.C. And in the concluding six lines of the poem, Vertumnus reveals that he came to Rome during the reign of Romulus. It was Mamurius, we are told, who replaced the original statue of maple with one in bronze. This information agrees with the chronology

[207] SUITS (above, note 206) 477f.
[208] SUITS (above, note 206) 483.
[209] Cf. CIL I², p. 172; and see Festus 228L, p. 315L² (s.v. ‹*Picta toga*›).
[210] See V. BASANOFF, Evocatio: Étude d'un rituel militaire romain (Paris 1947) 56–67. LILY ROSS TAYLOR, Local Cults in Etruria, Papers and Monographs of the American Academy in Rome 2 (1923) 152–153; W. V. HARRIS, Rome in Etruria and Umbria (Oxford 1971) 115–117 and note 6, p. 116. On the subject of the *evocatio* in general, see JOËL LE GALL, *Evocatio*, in: L'Italie et la Rome républicaine. Mélanges offerts à Jacques Heurgon I, Collection de l'École française de Rome 27 (Paris 1976) 519–524.

transmitted by Varro in L. L. 5.74: Vertumnus was among the earliest gods of the city. (Indeed, Varro in 5.74 makes Vertumnus a Sabine!) It is also possible, as SUITS observes, that lines 3–4 of Propertius 4.2 refer to the hypothetical *evocatio* of 264 but that they allude to a different statue of Vertumnus, the one which must have been in his Aventine temple.[211] If SUIT's interpretation is correct, in Propertius 4.2 the statue on the Vicus Tuscus asserts that it is of greater antiquity than the cult image of the Aventine sanctuary, which was vowed to the god by the *triumphator* over the Volsinii.

Ovid, Met. 14.640–692 relates the courting of Pomona by Vertumnus, who in his attempt to please the reluctant goddess takes on many of the same forms that he assumes in the Propertian elegy. But it is Vertumnus' disguise as an old woman (14.656) that Ovid stresses, a change of form which is reminiscent of the god's first and most striking metamorphosis in Propertius 4.2. In the elegy, the god says:

> *indue me Cois, fiam non dura puella:*
> *meque uirum sumpta quis neget esse toga?*
> (4.2.23–24)

In Ovid, the young god pursues Pomona, whose nature is closely akin to his own. Other ancient sources agree with Propertius and Ovid in relating the name Vertumnus to *vertere*.[212] Both Propertius and Ovid stress his change from male to female form. But it is Ovid who emphasizes the fact that Vertumnus is *iuvenis*.

Vertumnus, then, must in origin have been a god – perhaps a youthful god – who came to Rome from Volsinii quite probably long before 264 B.C. when the Etruscan city fell to the Romans. Propertius reflects the tradition that *Vertumnus* is Etruscan, as the god's prominence on the Vicus Tuscus itself implies. Varro, moreover, indicates that *Vortumnus* (clearly an alternate form of *Vertumnus*) stood on the Vicus Tuscus because he was the *deus Etruriae princeps* (L. L. 5.46; but cf. 5.74, where *Vertumnus* is Sabine!) The existence of this *deus princeps* in Volsinii is confirmed by references to a *fanum Voltumnae* which, most scholars agree, must have been in that Etruscan city "considered by the ancients to be the very center of the Etruscan nation".[213] Every year, the twelve Etruscan 'peoples' gathered in the sanctuary of Voltumna, and the evidence indicates that this shrine was in Volsinii, near modern Bolsena or perhaps to be identified with Orvieto.[214] The reunion of the twelve nations in the shrine of the deity must explain Varro's reference to Vertumnus as the chief god of the Etruscans. And, as AMBROS JOSEF PFIFFIG has shown, the Latin *Voltumna* (known from Livy) and

[211] SUITS (above, note 206) 485f.

[212] See, e.g., Plaut. Curc. 484, Porphyrio on Hor. Epist. 1.20.1.

[213] MASSIMO PALLOTTINO, The Etruscans, Revised and Enlarged, tr. J. CREMONA (Bloomington, Ind. 1975) 115.

[214] See JACQUES HEURGON, Recherches sur l'histoire, la religion et la civilisation de Capoue préromaine des origines à la deuxième guerre punique, Bibliothèque des Écoles Françaises d'Athènes et de Rome 154 (Paris 1942) 69–73; WERNER EISENHUT, s.v. Voltumna, RE IXA, 1 (1961) 849–851; ID., s.v. Vertumnus, RE VIIIA, 2 (1958) 1675.

the later form *Vertumnus* are to be derived from Etruscan.[215] The *-ol-* of Latin *Voltumna* should (according to the ordinary pattern of change from Etruscan to Latin) reflect Etruscan *-el-*; and the Latin *-t-*, Etruscan *θ*: *Voltumna* should correspond to an Etruscan **velthumna*.[216] The later Latin form *Vertumnus* (for *Voltumna*), in turn, reflects the familiar *r/l* and *e/o* alternations, while the termination *-us* of *Vertumnus* is a conversion to the normal Latin masculine from the *-a* ending found in such Etruscan masculine names as *Caecina, Sisenna, Perperna,* etc.

PFIFFIG explains that *Voltumna* is adjectival in form; indeed, in 1928, P. PETTAZZONI advanced the hypothesis that *Voltumna* was in origin an epithet expressing a special aspect of Tinia, emphasized or localized in Volsinii where he was the supreme god of the Etruscans.[217] In this view, the god was patron of the Etruscan league which met in the *fanum Voltumnae*. [*Tinia*] *Voltumna* (*Velthumna*) is, then, comparable to Jupiter Latiaris of the Latin league. In 1930, M. PALLOTTINO discussed a bronze mirror from Tuscania, upon which the name *Velθune* (= *Velthumna*) is inscribed over the naked form of a Zeus-like bearded male whose attribute is a long spear.[218] There are four other figures in the scene, which almost certainly depicts a moment in the saga of Tages, the revealer of the Etruscan discipline.[219] Tarchon and an otherwise unknown woman named Ucernei watch the young man *PAVATARCHIES* (the second part of the word is related to Tages) as he examines a liver, which he holds in his hands. *Velθume* looks on from the right; a naked male figure whose name is *Raθlθ* stands on the left. Because *Raθlθ* carries a laurel twig and is in other ways so Apollonian in form, he is easily identified as *Ap(u)lu* (Apollo); *Raθlθ* seems to be his epithet.[220] PFIFFIG, building upon the suggestion of PETTAZZONI, holds that *Velθune* (to which the Latin *Voltumnus/Vertumnus* conforms) is either an epithet or an alternate name for Tinia, the Etruscan Jupiter.[221] The mirror does, after all, depict Tarchon, the legendary founder of Tarquinia and, at least in some accounts, of the Etruscan dodecapolis. [*Tinia*] *Velθune*, then, is present in the scene as the patron deity of the confederation; *Ap(u)lu* is present because the point of interest is divination.

Etruscologists in general agree that the noun *velθa*, of which *velθune* is an extended form, refers to the 'earth' or 'ground'.[222] Pliny N.H. 2.140 mentions

[215] AMBROS JOSEF PFIFFIG, Religio Etrusca (Graz 1975) 234–236. See also ANDREAS ALFÖLDI, Römische Frühgeschichte (Heidelberg 1976) 168–169.

[216] PFIFFIG (above, note 215) 235.

[217] P. PETTAZZONI, La divinità suprema della religione etrusca, Studi e Materiali di Storia delle Religioni 4 (1928) 207–209.

[218] M. PALLOTTINO, Uno specchio di Tuscania e la leggenda etrusca di Tarchon, Rendiconti della R. Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, Classe di scienze morali, storiche e filologiche, ser. 6, vol. 6 (1930) 49–87, especially 53f., 62f.., 83f.

[219] PFIFFIG (above, note 215) 37–39.

[220] PFIFFIG (above, note 215) 38.

[221] PFIFFIG (above, note 215) 235–236.

[222] See AMBROS JOSEF PFIFFIG, Die Etruskische Sprache: Versuch einer Gesamtdarstellung (Graz 1969) 309–310.

the slaying by lightning of a *monstrum* named *Olta* (< *Volta*) at Volsinii. According to VETTER, *Olta* (= 'a creature from the deep earth') goes back to an Etruscan locative *velθe*, which belongs to *velθa* 'earth' or 'ground'.[223] PALLOTTINO identifies *velθa* and *Voltumna* as one and the same when he defines them as, in origin, the „*genio dei campi*", "a god with strange and contrasting attributes, represented at times as a maleficent monster, at others as a vegetation god of uncertain sex, or even as a mighty war god. By a typical process, this local earth spirit, worshipped in a small part of southern Etruria, is individualized and transformed into a superior divinity, the national god *par excellence*, the *deus Etruriae princeps* . . ."[224]

LILY ROSS TAYLOR wished to retain Latin *vertere* as the basis of Vertumnus, while GERHARD RADKE suggests that the name is derived not from *vertere* but from **Vorta* < **u̯r̥-tā* or **Vortus* < **u̯r̥-tu*, which belongs to the Indo-European **u̯ŏr-*, **u̯ĕr* occurring in a number of words that refer to friendship, security and trust between men and gods – for example, in ἑορτή < *FεFοϱτά* 'feast for the gods'.[225] *Vertumnus*, in this view, brings **Vorta* < **u̯r̥ta* or *u̯r̥tu* '*Erfüllung*', '*Gewährung*', '*Gottesdienst*'.[226] In the interpretations of TAYLOR and RADKE, the *deus Etruriae princeps* will, in origin, have been Italic.

The evidence of Propertius and Ovid tips the balance in favor of the etymology from Etruscan *velθune* < *velθa* 'earth', 'field'. There is no need to posit the evolutionary process which PALLOTTINO describes. Rather, we should note that the most striking of *Vertumnus*' metamorphoses is the assumption of a woman's likeness. It is most improbable that the ending *-a* in *Vortumna*, the Latin form of the god's name which approximates the Etruscan, will have suggested this motif to Propertius or Ovid, for whom masculine names like Caecina, Perperna, etc. (as well as Latin masculines like *poeta* and *agricola*) would have been too familiar. Nor is there, at present, evidence to support the conclusion of J. BAYET that we are dealing with an *«être primordial bisexué.»*[227] GUSTAV HERBIG in 1922 indicated that *Voltumna* was a masculine form. Indeed, we have evidence only of a male god Vortumna.[228] The Etruscan *Velθune*, in all likelihood to be identified with Tinia, combines the quality of a patriarchal god like Jupiter, with concern for the earth. A very common function of divine double names is to bring one god into relationship with a second, in whose sphere he works (cf. Janus Junonius, Flora Cerreia, Mars Grabovius).[229] Tinia Voltumna, then, will have been the god who presided over, fertilized, protected or even possessed the earth. A Latin conception inherent in the word *patria* (sc. *patria terra*) is instructive: the noun means '[mother-]land belonging to the father[s]'.

[223] Glotta 28 (1940) 203. See R. ENKING, s.v. Volta, RE IX A, 1 (1961) 847–848.

[224] PALLOTTINO, Etruscans (above, note 213) 141.

[225] GERHARD RADKE, Die Götter Altitaliens, Fontes et Commentationes 3 (Münster 1965) 319 and JULIUS POKORNY, Indogermanisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch I (Bern 1959) 1165.

[226] Ibid.

[227] JEAN BAYET, Histoire politique et psychologique de la religion romaine[2] (Paris 1969) 112.

[228] G. HERBIG, Religion und Kultus der Etrusker, Mitteilungen der Schlesischen Gesellschaft für Volkskunde 23 (Breslau 1922) 13f. PFIFFIG (above, note 215) 234–236.

[229] See KARL OLZSCHA, Gnomon 38 (1966) 773.

Inspired, in part, by the folk etymology from *vertere*, Propertius changes his *Vertumnus* into many forms. Some of the metamorphoses are, to be sure, sheer poetic fancy. Others, we can conclude, must have been suggested by the god's iconography. In questioning the identification of *Velθune*, the name which occurs upon the Etruscan mirror, with *Vertumnus*, EISENHUT[230] notes the spear in the engraving, an attribute which he considers an anomaly for *Vertumnus*. On the contrary, Propertius seems to recall something from the god's lore which makes the weapon quite appropriate: *arma tuli quondam et, memini, laudabar in illis* (27). The iconography of *Vertumnus* must have cast him, at times, in the rôle of a warrior. The poet tells us, however, that in the god's most characteristic pose he receives the choice gifts of the garden. And, at least in his ancient statue of maple, *Vertumnus* carried the sickle (59). For Propertius, he is above all a god of the harvest who receives offerings of the first fruits:

> *prima mihi uariat liuentibus uua racemis,*
> *et coma lactenti spicea fruge tumet;*
> *hic dulcis cerasos, hic autumnalia pruna*
> *cernis et aestiuo mora rubere die;*
> *insitor hic soluit pomosa uota corona,*
> *cum pirus inuito stipite mala tulit.*
>
> (4.2.13–18)

The statue of Antinous in the pose of Vertumnus, a sculpture now displayed in the Gregorian Profane Museum (Inv. 9805), preserves the god's image as recipient of offerings from the fields and orchards. The *sinus* of the young man's toga is filled with the type of gifts of which we read in Propertius. Such iconography recalls the traditional image of Pomona; and it is perhaps for this reason that Ovid makes Vertumnus her suitor in the 'Metamorphoses':

> *quid, quod amatis idem, quod, quae tibi poma coluntur,*
> *primus habet laetaque tenet tua munera dextra!*
>
> (14.687–688)

There was, in fact, an Umbrian god *Puemunus*, a male counterpart to the Latin *Pomona* (cf. also the Sabine *Poimunien*).[231] Scholars have conjectured, for this reason, that a „*Götterpaar*" *Pomonus–Pomona* once existed in the Latin pantheon.[232] Our evidence points to the conclusion that Vertumnus did, just as Propertius states, come to Rome from Volsinii. Varro L. L. 5.46 and the iconography of the Tuscania mirror, indicate that he is to be identified with Tinia (Jupiter). As protector (and perhaps consort) of *velθa* 'the land or earth', he had the epithet *velθune*, a title which became his name in Volsinii or at least in the *fanum Voltumnae*. In the Latin *testimonia*, the god (as he was worshiped at Rome) was the

[230] EISENHUT, s.v. Voltumna (above, note 214) 854.

[231] CARL DARLING BUCK, A Grammar of Oscan and Umbrian (Boston 1928; repr. Darmstadt 1979) 54.

[232] See GEORG WISSOWA, Religion und Kultus (above, note 165) 198–199; RADKE (above, note 225) 267; PFIFFIG (above, note 215) 227, 291.

recipient of first fruits. His iconography was similar to Pomona's. It is reasonable to conclude that Vertumnus displaced a male counterpart to that goddess. PALLOTTINO, as we have seen, writes of the transformation of a local earth spirit of southern Etruria into a superior divinity and national god. Vertumnus was almost certainly, in fact, a manifestation of Tinia as the patron deity of the Etruscan league. In Propertius and Ovid, we can observe the last stages of the transformation of the *deus Etruriae princeps* into a minor god of cult who became little more than a curiosity to the passer-by. By the Augustan age, the memory of his past greatness has grown dim. But the saga of Vertumnus is a noteworthy example of the fact that, in the sphere of religion, the Romans rarely did away with anything.

3. Propertius 4.8: Juno Sospita of Lanuvium

Propertius 4.8 is one of two primary sources in ancient literature for the serpent festival of Juno Sospita in Lanuvium.[233] Aelian (De Animalibus 11.16) describes the ordeal in which the purity of several παρθένοι ἱεραί, girls specially chosen for the ritual, was put to the test. A maiden or maidens descended into a cavern to feed a sacred snake, whose cave, according to Aelian, was in a grove (ἄλσος) near the temple of Argive Hera in Lavinium. From Propertius, whose testimony is confirmed by other evidence, we learn that the ritual in fact belonged to the cult of Juno in Lanuvium, not in Lavinium[234]; and the same poet attributes

[233] The literature on the subject is extensive: L. PRELLER–H. JORDAN, Römische Mythologie I (Berlin 1881) 276–278; ROSCHER, s.v. *Iuno*, Ausführliches Lexikon der Griechischen und Römischen Mythologie II, ed. W. H. ROSCHER (Leipzig 1890–1897), 595ff.; GEORG WISSOWA, Religion und Kultus (above, note 165) 187–189; E. M. DOUGLAS [VAN BUREN], Juno Sospita of Lanuvium, JRS 3 (1913) 61–72; THULIN, s.v. *Iuno*, RE X, 1 (1918) 1120; E. L. SHIELDS, Juno, a Study in Early Roman Religion, Smith College Classical Studies 7 (1926), 67–70; Sir JAMES GEORGE FRAZER, Publii Ovidii Nasonis Fastorum Libri Sex: the Fasti of Ovid, edited with a translation and commentary, II (London 1929), 295–300; A. E. GORDON, The Cults of Lanuvium, University of California Publications in Classical Archaeology 2.2 (1938) 23–41; ALBERTO GALIETI, Intorno al culto di „Iuno Sispita Mater Regina" in Lanuvium, Bullettino della Commissione Archeologica Comunale di Roma 44 (1916) 3–36; G. DUMÉZIL, Juno S.M.R., Eranos 52 (1954) 105–119; J. C. HOFKES-BRUKKER, Juno Sospita, Hermeneus 27 (1956) 161–169; KURT LATTE, Römische Religionsgeschichte, Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaft 5.5 (Munich 1960), 166–167; GEORGES DUMÉZIL, Archaic Roman Religion (above, note 196) I. 297–298, II. 430–431, 460–461; ROBERT E. A. PALMER, Roman Religion and Roman Empire: Five Essays, The Haney Foundation Series no. 15, University of Pennsylvania (Philadelphia 1974) 30–32; GENEVIÈVE DURY-MOYAERS and MARCEL RENARD, Aperçu critique de travaux relatifs au culte de Junon, in: ANRW II 17.1, ed. WOLFGANG HAASE (Berlin–New York 1981) 161–162; H. H. SCULLARD, Festivals and Ceremonies of the Roman Republic, Aspects of Greek and Roman Life (London and Ithaca, N.Y. 1981) 70–71.

[234] Confusion of Lavinium and Lanuvium existed even in the eleventh century of our era, when the city was revived as Cività Lavinia. The modern name (since 1914) is Lanuvio; see D. C. SCAVONE, s.v. *Lanuvium*, The Princeton Encyclopedia of Classical Sites, ed. RICHARD STILLWELL (Princeton 1976) 481 and G. RADKE, s.v. *Lanuvium*, Der Kleine Pauly III (1969) 478. Also GORDON (above, note 233) 21.

an agricultural significance to the rite, which is in all probability the correct interpretation.

Aelian recounts that on certain days established by custom, the maidens entered the cavern with sacred barley cakes (μάζαν). The girls' eyes were blindfolded; yet, guided as if by some mysterious force, they made their way toward the lair of the serpent (κοίτη δράκοντος). Aelian sees evidence in the rite that snakes at times possess the faculty of divination: this serpent, he observes, could discern the chaste maiden from the unchaste and thus accepted offerings only from those who were truly παρθένοι. The barley cakes of the deflowered, should any such dare to approach, were refused and remained in the lair until ants carried them out crumb by crumb. When it was evident to the public that the δράκων had declined one or more of the cakes, the indignant citizenry conducted a „*Keuschheitsprobe*" and punished the offending maiden ἐκ τοῦ νόμου, 'in accordance with the law'. Aelian supplies more details than does Propertius, who is most interested in the ferocity of the snake and the anxiety of the virgins. According to the elegist, the maidens turned pale when, during the yearly observance (*pabula . . . annua*, 7–8), they descended into the lair with baskets in their shaking hands. It is understandable that they should have trembled, for – Propertius seems to imply – only the chaste returned:

> *si fuerint castae, redeunt in colla parentum,*
> *clamantque agricolae 'Fertilis annus erit'.*
> (4.8.13–14)

For Propertius, then, the annual rite had to do with the agricultural cycle: it was of particular interest to farmers, who were assured of a good harvest if the *virgines* accomplished their mission and returned safely to the embrace of their families.

Two versions of a Christian legend from the fifth century are now, upon the suggestion of l'abbé DUCHESNE, usually thought to refer to the serpent festival of Lanuvium.[235] Both versions tell of a ritual offering by (or consisting of!) virgins (described as *devotae* or *sacrilegae*) to a dragon who inhabited a cave at Rome. In the *Liber Pontificalis* we read that it was St. Silvester who dispatched the monster and that the beast lived under the Capitoline in a cavernous lair approached by 365 steps(!). In the other version, an unnamed hermit descended to attack the serpent which (he discovered) was nothing but a mechanical contrivance with flashing jewels for eyes and a sword in its mouth: the pious monk smashed the diabolical enormity to pieces and returned to expose the pagan cult as a fraud.[236] H. J. ROSE and A. E. GORDON conclude that the legend was in all probability

[235] See M. l'abbé L. DUCHESNE, Le *Liber Pontificalis*: texte, introduction et commentaire, Bibliothèque des écoles françaises d'Athènes et de Rome, ser. 2, no. 3.3 (Paris 1886), cxi; ID., Notes sur la topographie de Rome du Moyen-Age, VIII, Mélanges d'archéol. et d'histoire 17 (1897) 31–32; B. MOMBRITIUS, ed., Vita Sancti Silvestris, Sanctuarium seu Vitae Sanctorum², (Paris 1910) II, 529.

[236] Incerti Auctoris Liber de Promissionibus et Praedictionibus Dei, a Nonnullis S. Prospero Attributus (Part 3, chapter 38), in: Patrologiae Cursus Completus, Series Latina, ed. J.-P. MIGNE, Vol. 51 (Paris 1861) 833f.

inspired by a careless reading of Propertius 4.8.[237] It is possible that, at some later date, the serpent cult was transferred from Lanuvium to Rome, or that the Lanuvian custom inspired an imitation in the capital; yet, even if this were so, we can gather no new information about the original institution from the later Christian stories.

We have, then, the literary testimony only of the Roman Propertius and of Aelian, who lived at Praeneste, both of whom were in a position to know the external facts, as A. E. GORDON concludes.[238] Moreover, the images upon a number of coins and *tesserae* corroborate the existence of the serpent ritual as a feature of Juno's worship in Lanuvium. One series of denarius struck by L. Roscius Fabatus, whose family is known to have been of Lanuvian origin, shows (on the observe) the head of Juno Sospita dressed with the goatskin. On the reverse, we see a young girl feeding a large coiled serpent. The series dates to about 58 B.C.[239] A large number of late Republican coins, many or perhaps all of which were issued by moneyers of Lanuvian ancestry, bear similar images with various combinations of Juno wearing the goatskin headdress (sometimes hurling a spear, holding a shield or riding in a *biga*), of a serpent or of a girl feeding a serpent.[240] A series of these denarii, struck by the Lanuvian L. Thorius Balbus between 119–91 B.C., bears the inscription *I. S. M. R.* (= *Iuno Sispes Mater Regina*), the same title under which the goddess was known in Lanuvium itself.[241] Reference to Juno Sospita becomes a commonplace numismatic motif during the Empire, especially upon the coinage of Antoninus Pius and Commodus, both of whom were from Lanuvium: a sestertius bearing the legend *Iunoni Sispitae* shows the goddess advancing with shield, preceded by a snake and brandishing a javelin.[242] The evidence of the coins, then confirms the place of the snake in the cult of Lanuvian Juno and makes it clear that her worship included the ritual feeding of the snake by young girls. A series of *tesserae lusoriae*, lead tokens used for games during the period of the Empire, gives added evidence: the *tesserae* from Lanuvium are struck with the image of Juno and show a young girl feeding a

[237] H. J. ROSE, Juno Sospita and St. Silvester, CR 36 (1922) 167–168; A. E. GORDON (above, note 233) 41.

[238] GORDON (above, note 233) 38.

[239] See EDWARD A. SYDENHAM, The Coinage of the Roman Republic, revised by G. C. HAINES, F.S.A. (London 1952) 152 (no. 915 and pl. 25) or ERNEST BABELON, Description historique et chronologique des monnaies de la république romaine II (Paris–London 1886) 402 (1 Roscia).

[240] E.g., SYDENHAM (above, note 239) 84 (no. 598 and pl. 19) = BABELON (above, note 239) 488 (1 Thoria); SYDENHAM, 126 (no. 771, 772 and pl. 22) = BABELON, 386–387 (1–2 Procilia); SYDENHAM, 127 (no. 773 and pl. 22) = BABELON, 280 (1 Papia); SYDENHAM, 161 (no. 964) = BABELON, 283 (2 Papia); SYDENHAM, 161 (no. 966) = BABELON, 284 (4 Papia); SYDENHAM, 177 (no. 1057) = BABELON, 20 (31 Julia); SYDENHAM, 177 (no. 1058) = BABELON, 223 (1 Mettia); SYDENHAM, 177 (no. 1059) = BABELON, 224 (2 Mettia); SYDENHAM, 212 (no. 1352) = BABELON, Vol. I, 433f. (1 Cornuficia).

[241] See SYDENHAM (above, note 239) 84 (no. 598).

[242] HAROLD MATTINGLY and EDWARD A. SYDENHAM, The Roman Imperial Coinage, III: Antoninus Pius to Commodus (London 1930) 108 (no. 608).

snake which sticks its head from the lair. The tokens bear such inscriptions as *sodales Lanivini, sacr(a) Lani(vina) iuven(alia)* and *sacr(is) Lan(ivinis) feliciter.*[243]

The cult title *I(uno) S(ispes) M(ater) R(egina)* recurs frequently in inscriptions; but in the literary sources the Lanuvian goddess is usually called *Juno Sospita* (or *Sospita Juno*).[244] *Sospes, -itis* is a *nomen agentis*, while the enlarged form *Sospita, -ae* with the suffix *-ta* is a *nomen actionis*. It is clear from Festus that *Sispes/Sispita*, rather than the Roman form *Sospes/Sospita*, was the earlier and more correct title: *Sispitem Iunonem, quam vulgo Sospitem (-tam?) appellant* (462L, p. 432L²). A pre-Sullan inscription (CIL I² 1430) from Cività Lavigna (present-day Lanuvio) reads *Q. CAECILIVS CN. A. Q. FLAMINI LEIBERTUS IVNONE SEISPITEI MATRI REGINAE.*[245] The spelling of the epithet in this inscription is the only evidence which suggests that the first syllable of *Seispes* should have a long vowel. In this same sentence, however, there occur three variations of the third-declension dative singular (*-e, -ei, -i*), as well as *-ei-* in *Leibertus* next to *-i-* in *reginae*: the confusion inspires no confidence in the accuracy of the spelling *Seispitei*, which is probably a mistake prompted by the *ei* for *i* in the neighboring word *Leibertus*. *Sispes*, like *Sospes* (the more common spelling in Roman use), in all likelihood has a short vowel in the first syllable.[246]

There have been various attempts to explain the meaning of *Sispes/Sispita*, and nearly all have encountered resistance from scholars. H. EHRLICH, assuming a long *i* (< *ei*) in the initial syllable, interpreted the epithet to be a contracted form of **sīd(e)s-pŏtis*, 'having power or influence over the stars'.[247] This explanation was accepted by FREDERIK MULLER JZN., who separated *sispes* from *sospes* and understood the latter as a derivation from **su̯o-pŏtis/su̯es-pŏtis = sui compos.*[248] EHRLICH's explanation of *Sispes*, which depends upon the reading *Seispes*, has found some support from WALDE, PEDERSEN and (with strong reservations) A. E. GORDON.[249] M. LEUMANN, K. LATTE and many others, however, consider the problem unsolved.[250]

[243] M. ROSTOWZEW, Römische Bleitesserae: ein Beitrag zur Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte der römischen Kaiserzeit, Klio. Beiträge zur Alten Geschichte, ed. C. F. LEHMANN and E. KORNEMANN, Beiheft 3 (Leipzig 1905) 50–51, 80 and pl. 20; J. P. WALTZING, Étude historique sur les corporations professionnelles chez les romains depuis les origines jusqu'à la chute de l'empire d'occident III (Louvain 1900) 647–648.

[244] CIL XIV 2088, 2089, 2090, 2091, 2121, Ephem. epig. IX. 605; Cic. Nat. Deorum 1, 82, pro. Mur. 41.90; Livy 8.14.2; 22.17; 23.31.15; 24.10.6; 29.14.3; 31.12.6; 32.30.10; 40.19.2; Julius Obseq. 6 (181 B.C.) and 46 (99 B.C.); Ovid, Fast. 2.55f.; Festus 462L, p. 432L²; SYDENHAM (above, note 239) 84 (no. 598).

[245] On the date, see H. DESSAU, Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae II. 1 (Berlin 1902), no. 3097.

[246] On this whole problem, see especially RADKE (above, note 225) 288.

[247] H. EHRLICH, in: Zeitschrift für Vergleichende Sprachforschung 41 (1907) 285.

[248] FREDERIK MULLER JZN., Altitalisches Wörterbuch (Göttingen 1926) 463.

[249] H. EHRLICH (above, note 247); A. WALDE–J. B. HOFMANN, Lateinisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch³ (Heidelberg 1954) 564–565 s.v. Sospes; H. PEDERSEN, Mémoires de la société de linguistique de Paris 22 (1922) 10f.; GORDON (above, note 233) 36.

[250] M. LEUMANN in: STOLZ–SCHMALZ, Lateinische Grammatik⁵ I (Munich 1928) 59 note 2; LATTE (above, note 233) 166, note 5.

The real difficulty is with the word *sispes*. The meaning of *sospes* 'safe and sound', 'fortunate', is attested by frequent examples in Classical Latin.[251] Evidence, however, from Festus and Paulus-Festus shows that (at least in Ennius) *sispes/sospes* had a transitive as well as an intransitive meaning: *Sospes: salvus. Ennius tamen sospitem pro servatore posuit. Sospitare est bona spe adficere aut bonam spem non fallere* (Paulus-Festus 388L, p. 400L[2]). Festus 462L, p. 432L[2] relates Sispes to Greek σώζειν. The vowing of a temple to Juno Sospita by the consul C. Cornelius Cethegus in 197 B.C., on condition that she save the Romans in battle, would seem moreover to depend upon a transitive sense of the epithet (Livy 32.30.10).[252] That *sospes* should have had such a meaning (= *servator*) is in keeping with the goddess' militaristic character. GERHARD RADKE, in a convincing explanation,[253] has shown that both *sispes* and *sospes* can be traced back to the Indo-European root **sĕp/*sŏp*, 'to occupy oneself [with something]' (seen, for example, in Greek ἕπω, Aorist ἕσπον, and ὅπλον) or 'to hold in honor' (cf. Latin *sepelio, sepultum* and Skt. *sápati*, 'have care for, venerate'). ἕπω < **sĕpo* has both an intransitive ('to occupy oneself') and a transitive meaning ('to take care of', 'guard', 'protect'; cf. ἀμφιέπω).[254] According to this interpretation, *Sospes* is a reduplicated *t*-stem (cf. Māmers < **smăr-smr̥-ts*) built upon **sŏp*: **sŏ̆p-sŏp-ĕ-t-s*. As often, the accent upon the first (the reduplicated) syllable results in the weakening of the second (the root): **sŏ̆p-sp-ĕ-t-s* > **sŏ̆(p)-sp-e-t-s* (with assimilation of *-psp-* > *-sp-*) > *Sospes*.[255] *Sispes* should go back to **sĕp* (which exists next to **sŏp*; cf. ἕπω and ὅπλον) and apparently has the *ĭ* for *ĕ* of rustic speech: **sĕ̆p-sĕp-ĕ-ts* > **sĕ̆p-sp-ĕ-t-s* > **sĕ(p)sp-ĕ-t-s* > **sĕspēs* > *sĭspēs*.[256] Both *sospes* and *sispes*, then, can be explained as reduplicated forms in origin, much like such divine names as Mamers, Mamurius, Fufluns and Pampanon.[257] Archaic liturgical texts must have fostered the development of doublets like Dea Dia and reduplicated forms (cf. *berber*, a demonstrative in the *carmen Arvale*).[258]

Juno Sispes, in this interpretation, is the fostering and protective goddess, the bringer of *sispita* (*sospita*), 'welfare' or 'salvation'. In works of art, as in her images on coins, she is invariably depicted as the warrior.[259] Cicero so describes her in De Natura Deorum 1.82: *Tam hercle quam tibi illam vestram Sospitam.*

[251] PEDERSEN (above, note 249).

[252] See RADKE (above, note 225) 289.

[253] RADKE (above, note 255) 287–289.

[254] See HJALMAR FRISK, Griechisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch I (Heidelberg 1960), 546 s.v. ἕπω; PIERRE CHANTRAINE, Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue grecque: histoire des mots III (Paris, 1974) 363 (s.v. ἕπω) and 810 (s.v. ὅπλον); JULIUS POKORNY (above, note 225) I, 909 (**sep-*).

[255] RADKE (above, note 225) 288–289.

[256] See FERDINAND SOMMER, Handbuch der Lateinischen Laut- und Formenlehre[4] (Heidelberg 1977) 54.

[257] Cf. RADKE (above, note 225) 135, 195, 199–202, 244. On reduplicated nouns, see W. M. LINDSAY, The Latin Language: an historical account of Latin sounds, stems and flexions (Oxford 1894) 363.

[258] See L. R. PALMER, The Latin Language (London 1961) 63.

[259] E. M. DOUGLAS (above, note 233) 62–67.

Quam tu numquam ne in somnis quidem vides nisi cum pelle caprina cum hasta cum scutulo cum calceolis repandis. This passage calls to mind the well-known statue of Juno Sospita displayed in the Rotonda of the Vatican Museum (inv. no 241): the goddess wears the goatskin drawn over her head; the goat's forelegs are knotted over her breast.[260] She carries a sword and shield (both reconstructed) and wears *calceoli repandi* (also restored).[261] The statue dates from the second century A.D. but reflects traditions which go back to Etruscan and early Ionian art. Scholars have recognized influences of Athena and Argive Hera in the traditional representation of Juno Sospita as the armed goddess.[262]

The site of her temple, which was almost certainly on the arx of Lanuvium, makes it clear that Juno Sospita was the tutelary goddess of the city, much as Athena watched over Athens from her temple on the acropolis and as Hera protected Argos.[263] The *annosus draco*, which Propertius describes as the *tutela* of old Lanuvium (4.8.3), will have been inspired by the οἰκουρὸς ὄφις of the old palace goddesses who, like Athena, became the divine guardians of cities; indeed, the ritual worship of Athena, like that of Juno Sospita, included the periodic feeding of sacred cakes to her serpent (Herod. 8.41).[264] There is, in fact, a pattern of conceptions and religious imagery which Juno of Lanuvium shares with Athena: in addition to their armour, their snakes, and the site of their temples on citadels, both goddesses wore the goatskin, both had sacred birds, and in their cults (albeit in very different ways) they shared a special concern for virginity or maidenhood.[265] Athena was παλλάς, 'the maiden'; and the Palladion (the image of the goddess as a maiden) became the talisman not only of Troy (Dion. Hal. 1.69) but also of Rome, where it was entrusted to the virgins who tended the city's hearth (Serv. Aen. 2.166, Sil. Ital. 13.36–50, Dion. Hal., loc. cit.). Athena was παρθένος, and Juno Sospita was acutely interested in the virginity of the παρθένοι chosen for her worship: the well-being of several ancient cities depended either upon a virgin goddess or upon the virgin attendants of a goddess.[266]

Ovid (Am. 3.13) describes a yearly festival of Juno in Falerii, where the goddess' cult title was *Cur(r)itis*. G. DURY-MOYAERS and M. RENARD have reviewed the various theories about the meaning of the epithet, which unfortunately remains unclear; but it is evident that Juno of Falerii has much in common with

[260] DOUGLAS (above, note 233) 62.

[261] Ibid.

[262] GORDON (above, note 233) 37; G. DURY-MOYAERS and M. RENARD (above, note 233) 146.

[263] G. BENDINELLI, Monumenta Lanuvina, Monum. dei Lincei 27 (1921) 294–370; A. GALIETI, Il tempio italico rinvenuto nell'acropoli di Lanuvio, Bullettino della Commissione Archeologica Comunale di Roma 56 (1928) 75–118, 199–244; F. COARELLI, Il santuario tardo-repubblicano di Lanuvio, Archeologia e Società 2 (1976) 62–70.

[264] MARTIN P. NILSSON, Geschichte der Griechischen Religion I, Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaft 5.2.1 (Munich 1955) 348–349.

[265] ID., The Minoan-Mycenaean Religion and its Survival in Greek Religion[2] (Lund 1968) 491–504.

[266] This dependency seems to originate in the royal age; DUMÉZIL compares the legendary Welsh king Math who "could live only if he kept his feet in the lap of a virgin girl, except during military expeditions." See ID., Archaic Roman Religion (above, note 196) 586.

Sospita of Lanuvium: she is armed, she is a tutelary goddess, her cult has to do with fecundity; and the goat figures in her worship in both cities.[267] During the annual rite at Falerii, youths and maidens bore gifts in procession to the goddess, whose image was solemnly escorted by her priestesses (30). Ovid lays great stress upon the purity of the white-robed maidens and youth who attended Juno Cur(r)itis:

> *virginei crines auro gemmaque premuntur,*
> *et tegit auratos palla superba pedes;*
> *more patrum Graio velatae vestibus albis*
> *tradita supposito vertice sacra ferunt.*
> (Am. 3.13.25–28)

At Falerii, then – just as was the case in Lanuvium – there is evidence of Juno's interest in the virginity of her young worshipers.

According to Festus (55L, p. 168L²), the rite of passage, in which the hair of intending brides was combed with a spear (*caelibari hasta*), belonged to the Falerian goddess: *quia matronae Iunonis Curitis in tutela sint, quae ita appellabatur a ferenda hasta quae lingua Sabinorum curis dicitur*. The rite brings together Juno's two principal concerns: the spear calls to mind her patronage of the young men who protect society, and the brides-to-be betoken her patronage of motherhood. These same two concerns are united in still another rite of passage, enacted in Rome at the Tigillum Sororium on October 1.[268] The *tigillum* was a beam which spanned a narrow street and formed a passageway between two altars, one of which belonged to Janus Curiatius (< *curia*); and the other, to Juno Sororia (< *sororiare*.)[269] As R. SCHILLING explains, the ceremony marked both the entry of young men into the *curiae* (and thus into the military organization of the state) and also the arrival of young women at the childbearing age.[270] Juno shared this rite of passage with Janus, the god of beginnings; but it is one of a number in which the goddess is concerned with the rôles of young men and women in the life of the state. Her very name, which is related to *iuvenis* and *iunior*, is derived from the Indo-European root **yu*, expressing the notion of fecundity, 'vigor' or the '*force vitale*'.[271] A *iuvenis* (the word is a suffixed, zero-grade form < **yu*) is one who is in full possession of this vitality[272]; and the social order is in turn dependent upon this *vital force*: as her name itself implies, Juno has to do with a natural power which is essential to life. The vitality which lies at the heart of her nature also finds expression in the prominence of the goat – a

[267] G. DURY-MOYAERS and M. RENARD (above, note 233) 162.

[268] Festus 380L, p. 396L² s.v. *Sororium tigillum*.

[269] Ibid., s.v. *Sororiare*: *mammae dicuntur puellarum cum primum tumescunt . . .*

[270] ROBERT SCHILLING, Janus, Le Dieu introducteur et le dieu des passages, Mélanges d'archéologie et d'histoire, École française de Rome 72 (1960) 109–113 = ID., Rites, cultes, dieux de Rome (Paris 1979) 239–244; Cf. J. GAGÉ, la poutre sacrée des Horatii, in: Hommages à Waldemar Deonna (Collection Latomus 28, 1957) 226–237.

[271] For a review of the literature on this subject, see G. DURY-MOYAERS and M. RENARD (above note 233) 144f.

[272] Ibid., p. 145.

familiar symbol of vigor and fecundity – in her cult.[273] As the protectress of the *force vitale*, Juno is more concerned than any other deity with purifications – to such an extent that February, the month of ritual cleansings, lies in a special way under her patronage at Rome.[274] The goatskin (or Juno's cloak, as it was called in the *Lupercalia*) was applied in rituals intended to banish sterility, to promote the increase of flocks and to drive out all those forces which were deemed hostile to the principle of life.[275] At Lanuvium, Juno Sospita 'the protectress' was at once *Mater* (an epithet which must have to do with fertility) and *Regina* (as the sovereign goddess of the state).[276]

It is clear that the Greeks and Romans attributed some mystical power to the state of virginity. There is, for example, an analogy between the virginity of the Vestals and the purity of the fire which they tended. The sacred flame was believed to be essential for the continuation of the Roman state.[277] But it was because the virgins' ritual concerns extended beyond the hearth to the agricultural cycle that their goddess enjoyed the epithet *Mater*.[278] According to JANE HARRISON, the relation which the ancients saw between the power of virginity and the process of natural growth is expressed in the existence of mythic naiads and korai, those guilds of maidens like the Graces and Seasons who passed the hours dancing in union with the dance of nature itself.[279] The virginity of such maiden goddesses as Athena and Artemis does not express ambiguous gender so much as it does the unspent power to give birth and thus a concentration of the *force vitale*. Whether it resided in a virgin goddess like Athena or in the παρθένοι of Juno Sospita, this concentration of power was put to ritual use and, as if by magic, transferred through worship to the flocks and fields.[280] The virginity of holy women was, then, thought to benefit the natural processes of growth. The converse was also true: a moral lapse on the part of one of these ministering virgins could lead to disaster. The live burial in an underground chamber prescribed for an unchaste Vestal was, in all probability, a propitiatory offering to the earth. Its purpose was to forestall the blight upon growing things which the priestess' offense would otherwise have caused.[281] FRAZER has collected considerable evidence, including the well-known case of Oedipus, that even unwitting sexual transgressions were thought to blight the process of natural growth.[282]

[273] On the goatskin in ritual, see HARMON (above, note 197) 1445.
[274] See R. E. A. PALMER (above, note 233) 18–19.
[275] HARMON (above, note 197) 1441–1446.
[276] G. DUMÉZIL (above, note 233) 113–116 and ID., Archaic Roman Religion (above, note 196) 297–298.
[277] See ANGELO BRELICH, Vesta, Albae Vigiliae n. s. 7 (Zurich 1949) 48–57. On the mystical powers and 'magic' character of the virgin state, see DUMÉZIL, Archaic Roman Religion (above, note 196) 587.
[278] BRELICH (above, note 277) 57–66.
[279] JANE ELLEN HARRISON, Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion (London 1907) 261–263, 286–292, 300–307.
[280] BRELICH (above, note 277) 59.
[281] FRAZER (above, note 233) 297.
[282] Sir JAMES GEORGE FRAZER, The Golden Bough: a study in magic and religion, II (London 1911) 107–117.

GEORGES DUMÉZIL has concluded that the nature of Juno Sospita embraced at one and the same time 'sovereignty' (she was *Regina*), 'martial prowess' (hence, her epithet *Sospes*) and 'fecundity' (she was *Mater*).[283] From the greater prominence of her epithet *Sospes*, as well as from her iconography, DUMÉZIL is also convinced that Juno above all represented military force, the second of the three functions which characterized the Indo-European conception of the social order.[284] There are, however, difficulties in this conclusion: the epithet *Sospes* has a range of meanings which includes not only the war-like dimension of Juno but also the 'fostering' and 'nursing' which sprang from her very nature. We owe to Propertius 4.8 the information that Juno's festival in Lanuvium had the character of a fertility or agricultural rite. Lanuvium was, without question, one of the most important centers of the goddess' worship in Italy; and it is evident, in spite of the armour in her Lanuvian iconography, that Juno Sospita was there, as elsewhere, the "deity or spirit of youthfulness" above all else.[285] The goddess represented the interdependence of the rôles which young men and young women played in the social order. Seen in another way, Juno Sospita is an expression of the interdependence of the social order and the *force vitale* of nature.

[283] DUMÉZIL (above, note 233) 105f.
[284] DUMÉZIL (above, note 233) 118.
[285] PALMER (above, note 233) 39.

SONDERDRUCK AUS:

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GESCHICHTE UND KULTUR ROMS IM SPIEGEL DER NEUEREN FORSCHUNG

HERAUSGEGEBEN
VON
HILDEGARD TEMPORINI
UND
WOLFGANG HAASE

II

PRINCIPAT

SECHZEHNTER BAND
(3. TEILBAND)

HERAUSGEGEBEN VON WOLFGANG HAASE

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