

youth and age in 1. 25. The world of Phyllis in 4. 11, by contrast, is one of complexity and contradictions: bright greens set the stage for the sprinkled blood of a sacrifice (2–8); the bustle of young men and women leads unexpectedly into black smoke and flickering flame (9–12);⁷ a festive and loving birthday celebration calls to mind the passing years (13–20); and an invitation to wine and song is set against a backdrop of failed hopes (cf. 25–26) and dark cares (cf. 35–36). This mixture of moods in 4. 11 leads to similar mixtures in the two poems that follow—in 4. 12 to the counterpoint between spring and death, light banter and dark thoughts, loving recollection of past joys and sorrowful confrontation of present realities,⁸ and in 4. 13 to a poignant interplay of scorn and sympathy, happiness and sorrow, cruelty and gentleness.⁹ Chloe's youth is as yet untouched by age, while the springtime in which Phyllis is placed in 4. 11 has its autumnal colorings: in the same way, the seasonal contrast with which 1. 25 ends draws a sharp line between the garlands of the young and the sere leaves of winter, while in 4. 13 the winter with which Horace associates Lyce is one whose chill he himself feels as well; and the absolute separation of the living from the dead that we find in 1. 24 yields to a mysterious blending of life and death, of the winter of mortality and the eternal spring of poetry, in 4. 12.

Finally, the poems which immediately precede these two small groups foreshadow the distinctive qualities of each: the lilting Lalage ode, 1. 22, deals in absolutes—safety against danger, heat against cold, right against wrong—and is an appropriate introduction to the absolute separations that characterize 1. 23–25—fawn from tiger, life from death, joy from sorrow, winter from summer. In the same way, the complex mixture of moods that characterizes 4. 11–13 finds apt introduction in the complexities of the bitter-sweet Ligurinus ode, 4. 10—a minute poem that in its eight-line compass mingles laughter with tears, younger with older, the rose of spring with the leaves of fall.¹⁰

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7. On the "discordant image" in lines 11–12, and on the mixed mood of the whole poem, see K. J. Reckford, "Some Studies in Horace's Odes on Love," *CJ* 55 (1959–60): 30–31; also Commager, "Odes" of Horace, pp. 302–6.

8. For this interpretation of 4. 12, see my articles cited above, n. 3; D. E. Belmont, "The Vergilius of Horace, Ode 4. 12," *TAPA* 110 (1980): 1–20, supports a similar interpretation.

9. On 4. 13, see E. Fraenkel, *Horace* (Oxford, 1957), p. 416.

10. On 4. 10, see Fraenkel, *Horace*, pp. 414–15.

ISIS AND AGAPE

At the end of his instructive review of F. Solmsen's *Isis among the Greeks and Romans* (*CP* 78 [1983]: 81–83), M. N. Nagler remarks on the author's observation that "the only textual association of Isis with the quality of *agape* may even be a mistake." The reference is to *POxy.* 1380. 109–10, a text probably composed in the first century A.D., where the writer calls Isis, according to the reading of Grenfell and Hunt, confirmed by C. H. Roberts, ἄ[γά]πη θεῶν, "the love of the gods." Much attention has been focused on the locus because it

constitutes the earliest instance of ἀγάπη in a non-Jewish and non-Christian text. Its validity, however, as Solmsen reminds us, has been questioned. Elaborating on suggestions by G. Manteuffel and E. Peterson, S. West has proposed an emended reading, ἀγαθὴν θεόν, explaining the words as an allusion to the Bona Dea, which would suit the previous words ἐν Ἰταλίᾳ.¹ She does not challenge the papyrus reading, which I can myself confirm, but argues that a careless copyist has wrongly transcribed the phrase. Perhaps I may refer to two subsequent discussions in which this question has been reopened.

The first is my own contribution, "Isis and 'The Love of the Gods'," in *JTS* 29 (1978): 147–51. There I seek to support the validity of the original reading. I have urged that the phrase agrees well with the main emphasis of the whole text, which is on the loving kindness of Isis, culminating in her saving grace (20 σώτειραν and 55 ἀνδρασώτειραν; cf. 76 σώζουσιν). Several epithets point in this direction: "affectionate" (12 and 131 φιλόστοργον); "gentle" (11, 86, and 155 ἡπιαν); "bringer to harbor" (74 ὁρμίστριαν); "giver of favors" (10 χαριτοδώτειραν). While she is the "Lady of war and rule" in 239–40 and "in Rome warlike" in 83, yet she is "enmity-hating" in 137. If one word sums up her character, it is "friendship" (94 φιλίαν).²

In line 28 Isis is again called "*agape* in Thonis" (a place in the northwest Delta); here "in Thonis" comes first and *agape* is followed by a lacuna of nine letters, so that a longer word from the same root may have been present here.³ As for the phrase in lines 109–10, an objective genitive might be possible, in the sense that Isis furthered "the love of the gods," an idea found in the Aretalogies. But *POxy.* 1380 strongly suggests the subjective meaning of the genitive: identified as she is here with a vast pantheon of goddesses, Isis in her kindness and grace offers to mankind "the love of the gods."⁴ Roman religious tradition was much concerned with the *pax deorum*, and in this sense the phrase would suit the prefix "in Italy." The Bona Dea was not, on the other hand, an Italian creation, but a transplant from Greek soil. The localized connection is not demanded, however, by the framework of the whole text. If Isis is "joy in Caene" (31–32), "providence in Catabathmus" (43–44), "understanding in Apis" (44), "inventiveness in Schedia" (60–61), "truth in Menouthis" (63), and "freedom at Myra in Lycia" (79–80), there is no evident nexus in cultic fact to explain the abstractions used.⁵ As for the scope of meaning, the quality of *agape* in Isis

1. *JTS* 18 (1967): 142–43. See also *JTS* 20 (1969): 228–30, where she replies to the opposing view of R. E. Witt in *JTS* 19 (1968): 209–11.

2. It may be adjectival, as Dr. West kindly reminds me, but several abstractions appear in the list: Isis is εὐφοροσύνη (31–32), πρόνοια (43), φρόνησις (44), ἐπίνοια (60–61), ἀληθία (63), and ἐλευθερία (79–80).

3. C. H. Roberts in *JEA* 39 (1953): 114, noting ἀγάπησιν as a possibility.

4. Solmsen, *Isis among the Greeks and Romans* (Cambridge, Mass., 1979), p. 149, n. 46, says that "ἀγάπη, if correct, would have no Christian connotations but mean 'beloved by the gods,'" implying that Isis herself is the particular object of their love. Cf. E. Peterson's "Liebling der Götter" in *Biblische Zeitschrift* 20 (1932): 378; but ἀγάπημα, rather than ἀγάπη, would be expected for this sense, which is indeed present in lines 135–36, where Isis is "the Harpocratis [fem.] of the gods," i.e., their darling.

5. All except the last are Egyptian place-names, and if we knew more about the local festival calendars, a possible link might emerge. *Alethia* in line 63 seems to reflect the Egyptian Mâat; and the "joy in Caene" (31–32) might refer to an Isiac *Hilaria* festival. An episode of joy marked the main Isiac festival in the *Heuresis Osiridos*; cf. R. Merkelbach, *Isisfeste* (Meisenheim am Glan, 1963), p. 35.

herself, if we apply it to the various facets of her affection, clearly includes sexual love, for she is said to ordain the physical union of men and women (146–48). Here there is a sharp contrast to Christian usage. Other facets are certainly comparable with those of the Christian concept, particularly her benevolence and saving power.⁶

In a more widely-ranging study, O. Wischmeyer of Heidelberg has traced the use of *agape* in the non-Christian literature of antiquity.⁷ This includes, of course, the many occurrences in the Septuagint, among which are those in the Song of Songs where physical passion is lyricized; and there are five instances in Philo. Linguistically the early puzzle concerns Greek literary usage. The verb ἀγαπάω occurs in classical Greek, and so do the nouns ἀγάπησις (Aristotle) and ἀγαπῆσις (Menander) as well as ἀγάπημα (Crates Thebanus, fourth century B.C.). It is very likely, I urged, that ἀγάπη itself was also used thus early, even though the extant record does not reveal it. Wischmeyer is happily able to confirm that inference by pointing to two early instances of “Agape” as a personal name: one occurs on a tomb inscription of the sixth century B.C. from Pharsalus (= *SE* 19 [1963]: 422, Ἀγάπα); the other instance is on a psykter of about 500 B.C. which bears a painting signed by Euphronius. This object is now in the Hermitage, Leningrad, and the painting shows four *hetairai* with their names, the third being called Agap<e>. Here was an instance which led J. D. Beazley to declare roundly that it disproves the idea “that ἀγάπη is not a classical Greek word.”⁸ The existence of the personal name plainly points to the existence of the substantive. From this Wischmeyer (p. 227) rightly infers that it was not in the Hellenistic Koine or in the Septuagint that the word had its origin.

Yet it was the Septuagint and Hellenistic Judaism that first gave it widespread literary status. In this process the force of the Hebrew אָהָבָה (^ʾ*h^abhah*) was naturally potent, and its semantic range included the emotions of sexual love, friendship, love as opposed to hatred, and the love of God for Israel. The translators varied between ἀγάπη, ἀγάπησις, and the substantival infinitive ἀγαπᾶν. In her discussion of the two instances in *POxy.* 1380, Wischmeyer ends on a note of uncertainty, but she makes one telling point against the emendation ἀγαθὴν θεόν: it is hard to credit the idea that the easily understood ἀγαθὴν could be wrongly written as the difficult ἀγάπην.

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6. Cf. Apul. *Met.* 11, 25: “thou bringest the sweet love of a mother [*dulcem matris adfectionem*] to the trials of the unfortunate.” See the comment in my *Apuleius of Madauros: The Isis-Book* (Leyden, 1975), p. 321.

7. “Vorkommen und Bedeutung von Agape in der ausserchristlichen Antike,” *Z. für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* 69 (1978): 212–38. I am grateful to her for the gift of an offprint.

8. For the full references, see Wischmeyer, “Vorkommen und Bedeutung,” pp. 226–27.