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Nicolas Cacace

King Osiris and Lord Sarapis

Abstract: Osiris and Sarapis find their common origin in the funeral field. The articulation between the two gods has been demonstrated through another osirian form, Osiris-Apis. However, the two gods are not separated from each other following the cultural context of evocation. According to the bilingual funeral documentation of Greco-Roman Egypt, they appear jointly: Osiris can be pictured and listed, Sarapis only called. From these specific sources, it is possible to understand the link between Osiris and Sarapis, in particular through their divine sovereignty. This royal function is particularly linked with the osirian rites of Khoiak, the celebration of the divine burial of Osiris, and the renewal of his sovereign power over the world. Nevertheless, if “King Osiris” and “Lord Sarapis” are jointly present and can reach each other through some common ways, the relationships established between them in Coptos, Abydos and Terenouthis, appear as factors of separation. The living and the dead wished to reach the eternity, following Osiris’ example, or requested the divine justice; but using Egyptian or Greek vocabulary, they could not unite them. Osiris and Sarapis are jointly present, but always separated, because their cultural expressions reveal two dynamics opposed.

In the multicultural Egypt of the latest centuries before Christ, an original society came to light. Individual and collective cultural identities met there, confronted each other, and negotiated their place. Sarapis, traditionally introduced as a Greco-Roman divinity, is an example of this reality. Some years ago, Philippe Borgeaud and Youri Volokhine¹ studied the many influences that the legend of Sarapis arrival in Egypt shows just beneath the surface in Tacitus and Plutarch². Both stories would come from an alexandrine and anti-Judaic common model, inspired by an Egyptian source. Hellenistic literary *topoi* from the classical tradition, as aretalogies, are close to Egyptian *topoi*, as dream epiphanies or the *Königsnovelle*. In addition, Sarapis’s origin and nature are controversial subjects in Modern writings. The protecting divinity of Alexandria would be a Hellenised entity that comes from Osiris-

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1 Ph. Borgeaud, Y. Volokhine, “La formation de la légende de Sarapis: une approche transculturelle”, *Archiv für Religionsgeschichte* 2. Band, Heft 1, Berlin, De Gruyter, 2000, p. 37–76.

2 Tacitus, *Historiae*, IV, 83–84; Plutarch, *De Iside et Osiride*, 28, 361–362; Plutarch, *De sollertia animalium*, 36, 984.

Apis, a god worshipped in Memphis by Egyptians and Greeks. Recently, Didier Devauchelle³ has underlined that Osiris-Apis is the funerary god of Memphis, as an Osirian divine form among others. So, “Apis” would not be part of Sarapis. Consequently, my MA thesis⁴ investigated the link between Osiris and Sarapis when both are jointly present in Egyptian documentation of the Greco-Roman period. Following László Castiglione⁵ on the worshipped image of Sarapis, it appeared essential to consider an *evolving* process that turns the Osirian form Osiris-Apis to the Ptolemaic god Sarapis. The political, social and cultural contexts created the divinity: it could be seen in the legend and the different worshipped images. This process can also be approached in the wake of Jean-Pierre Vernant⁶: “Les dieux helléniques sont des Puissances, non des personnes. La pensée religieuse répond aux problèmes d’organisation et de classification des Puissances.” This author believed that within a network of relationships, the divine *puissance* “n’apparaît pas nécessairement comme un sujet singulier, mais aussi bien comme un pluriel: soit pluralité indéfinie, soit multiplicité nombrée.” In fact, Osiris and Sarapis can appear as two sides of the same divine *puissance*, as similar as they are distinct, related to each other. This *evolving* and *interactive* process is tangible in Sarapis’s “genesis”, promoted by the young Ptolemaic dynasty, within a thousand-year-old divine system. It seems better to consider Sarapis as a progressively constructed divinity, based on the strategies of the royal and then imperial power, and the expectations of the Egyptian-born Greeks and Egyptians, rather than a spontaneous creation.

In the following pages, these considerations are developed in the funerary and monarchic fields using five documents, which jointly present Osiris and Sarapis on offering tables and stelae which are the only ones that exist, during the reign of Ptolemy I Sôter (305–282 BCE), who founded the Ptolemaic dynasty and eventually the worship of Sarapis, and the Edict of Thessalonica (28th February 380 CE), making Christianity the only lawful religion of the Empire. The disadvantage of the broad historical span is compensated by the direct link between the two gods in two par-

3 D. Devauchelle, “Osiris, Apis, Sarapis et les autres. Remarques sur les Osiris memphites au Ier millénaire av. J.-C.”, in L. Coulon (éd.), *Le culte d’Osiris au Ier millénaire av. J.-C., découvertes et travaux récents, Actes de la table ronde internationale à l’université Lyon II, 8–9 juillet 2005, Bibliothèque d’Études* 153, Le Caire, IFAO, 2010, p. 49–62; D. Devauchelle, “Pas d’Apis pour Sarapis!”, in A. Gasse, Fr. Servajean, Chr. Thiers (éd.), *Et in Ægypto et ad Ægyptum. Recueil d’études dédiées à Jean-Claude Grenier, Les Cahiers d’Égypte Nilotique et Méditerranéenne* 5, II, Montpellier, Équipe Égypte nilotique et méditerranéenne, 2012, p. 213–225.

4 *La présence conjointe d’Osiris et de Sarapis dans la documentation égyptienne d’époque gréco-romaine*, directed by Pr. Laurent Bricault, Université Toulouse II Jean Jaurès, 2013.

5 L. Castiglione, “Nouvelles données archéologiques concernant la genèse du culte de Sarapis”, in M. B. de Boer, T. A. Edridge (éd.), *Hommages à Maarten J. Vermaseren, I, Etudes préliminaires aux religions orientales dans l’Empire romain* 68, Leiden, E.J. Brill, 1978, p. 208–232.

6 J.-P. Vernant, *Mythe et pensée chez les Grecs. Etudes de psychologie historique*, Paris, F. Maspero, 1969, p. 79.

ticularly rich artifacts. It is a matter of two offering tables: one from Coptos⁷, dated from the Ptolemaic period; the other from Terenouthis⁸, from the Imperial period. I will compare the details of these tables with three stelae from Abydos where Osiris was worshipped: the stela of *T3-p3-hy*⁹ from the 1st c. BCE or CE, the stela referring to three murdered boatmen¹⁰ (with the same dating), and a third stela referring to Apollōnios¹¹ (from the 1st c. CE). The paper will consider the documentary variety and the density of the information linking Osiris and Sarapis, and their common manifestations as funerary *puissance(s)*.

1 One Sarapis, many Osirises

The analysis of the elements related to the divinities reveals an imbalance. On the one hand, Sarapis is described as “great god”¹², “Lord”¹³ or “very great god”¹⁴. On the other hand, Sarapis seems to be a generic divine figure in comparison with several Osirises distinguished by their specific iconography or appellation.

1.1 The Osiris of the offering table from Coptos

The two texts of this Ptolemaic document show the link between Osiris and the funerary rite of libations. The hieroglyphic text is about libations of milk, wine, and water, executed by Horus in the Horizon (*Hr-m-3h.t*) to Coptite Osiris, Foremost of the Gold House. The aim of this rite is to regenerate Osiris, the archetypal deceased, with the ritual act performed by his son and heir. The demotic text dedicates the of-

7 Ägyptisches Museum, Berlin, inv. 2304. The provenance is quite certain because of the inscription for “Coptite Osiris”. See S.P. Vleeming, *Some coins of Artaxerxes and other short texts found on various objects and gathered from many publications*, *Studia demotica* 5, Louvain, Peeters, 2001, p. 233–234, n°250; the author presents the translation of greek and demotic texts; the hieroglyphic text is translated in Königliche Museen zu Berlin, *Ausführliches Verzeichnis der aegyptischen Altertümer und Gipsabgüsse*, Berlin, 1899, p. 334, n° 2304.

8 Egyptian Museum, Cairo, inv. CG 23182, JdE 40563. Greek and demotic texts are given and translated by S.P. Vleeming, *Some coins of Artaxerxes*, p. 240, n° 260.

9 Ägyptisches Museum, Berlin, inv. 2133. Hieroglyphic, demotic and greek texts are translated by J. Moje, “*Demotica Varia III*”, *Göttinger Miscellen* 217, Göttingen, Ägyptologisches Seminar der Universität Göttingen, 2008, p. 65–66.

10 Musée du Louvre, Paris, inv. C278–AF48. The greek text is translated by E. Bernard, *Inscriptions grecques d’Égypte et de Nubie au musée du Louvre*, Paris, éd. CNRS, 1992, p. 138–140.

11 Musée du Louvre, Paris, inv. N328. The greek text is translated by E. Bernard, *Inscriptions grecques d’Égypte et de Nubie au musée du Louvre*, p. 143–144.

12 Σαράπιδι θεῷ μεγάλῳ (Offering table from Coptos).

13 τὸν κύριον Σεράπιον (stela of *T3-p3-hy*); κύριε Σάραπι (stelae of the three murdered boatmen and Apollōnios).

14 ΣΕΡΑΠΙΕΙ ΘΕΩΙ ΜΕΓΕΙΣΤΩΙ (Offering table from Téréouthis).

fering table to “Coptite Osiris, Foremost of the Gold House”¹⁵. These epithets allow distinguishing between the three Osirian forms of Coptos as determined by Marc Gabolde¹⁶. (I have deliberately left aside one associated with Amon in the Northern temple, to focus on the two funerary ones.)

Coptite Osiris represents the god buried under the sacred hill of the necropolis. Claude Traunecker¹⁷ underlines the ten-day rites executed for him by Min, god of Coptos. He acts as Horus in the hieroglyphic text: transported in his processional boat, the god goes out of his temple, honours the Blessed buried under the square, reaches the necropolis and performs the ritual libations in the grave of Osiris. Officiating, Min-Horus is “Lord of life” (*nb ‘nh*); as the beneficiary of the rites, Osiris transmits life to the deceased as the one who “gives life to”¹⁸. In addition, Osiris, Foremost of the Gold House, is central in the festivals of the Khoiak month in the town. I will discuss this further.

1.2 The Osiris of the three stelae from Abydos

In their image field, the stela of *T3-p3-hy* and the one of the three murdered boatmen show Osiris from Abydos. He appears as king of the dead, wrapped in strips, wearing the *Atef* crown, the *hq3.t* (the crook of the shepherd) and *nh3h3* (the flail) sceptres¹⁹, crossed over his chest. Isis-Hathor is behind him in the stela of *T3-p3-hy*. Facing him, the deceased are introduced by Anubis, two as mummies (stela of *T3-p3-hy*), three as men standing up and praying (stela of the three murdered boatmen). This reception of the deceased precedes their judgement related to their wish to reach eternity. In addition, the inscriptions of the stela of *T3-p3-hy* mention Osiris Khentymentyou²⁰ in hieroglyphs, and “Osiris, the great god, master of Abydos”²¹ in Demotic. The word *hnty* is spatial (“in front of”), cardinal (“in the south of”), temporal (“the first”), hierarchical (“foremost”). In Abydos, this Osirian form is the king and

15 *Wsr Qbt hnt Hwt-nwb*.

16 M. Gabolde, “Osiris et Amon”, in *Coptos, L’Égypte antique aux portes du désert*, catalogue de l’exposition, Lyon, Musée des Beaux-Arts, 3 février–7 mai 2000, Lyon, Musée des beaux-arts, 2000, p. 106–115.

17 Cl. Traunecker, *Coptos. Hommes et dieux sur le parvis de Geb*, *Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta* 43, Louvain, Peeters, 1992, p. 333–363.

18 This is the reason why the deceased also mentions “gives life to Pamin, son of Pa-sheri-Ousir, ‘with his brothers’, with his servants, unto eternity” (*di.t ‘nh n P3-Min s3 P3-sr-Wsr ‘irm n3y-f sn.w’ irm n3y-f hm-hl.w s3 d.t*).

19 The *hq3.t* sceptre symbolises the government in link with the name *hq3.t* (“sovereignty”) and the verb *hq3* (“to govern”). The *nh3h3* sceptre symbolises the power of punishment, in link with the name *nh3* (knife) and the verb *nh3h3* (“to tousele”, calling to mind the traditional massacre of the enemies by the king who hold them by the hair).

20 *Wsr Hnty-Imnty.w* (“Foremost of the Westerners”).

21 *Wsr p3 ntr 3 nb ‘Ibdw*.

judge of the dead, this Westerners introduced in front of him, their archetype as the first raised from the dead.

Regarding the stela of Apollônios, a quite similar Osiris is represented, except that he wears a see-through coat. The god Oupouaout (Ophoïs) is standing at the prow of a solar-boat. There is no Egyptian inscription. According to Pierre Koemoth²², this is Osiris Ounnefer (Onouphris) at the time of a specific festival in Abydos: the coronation of the god's head reliquary. This holy object is named *t3-însu* from the word *nsw* ("King of Upper Egypt"). At the end of the rite, Osiris receives the coronation name Ounnefer and executes his first procession (*pr.t tp.t*) out of the temple, Oupouaout preceding him. The name of this god means "Opener of the ways", his function is to destroy the enemies on the road. The association between the two gods is attested from the Middle Kingdom and can be read in the *Ritual of the opening of the mouth*²³, in the unction formula: "Quand tu auras pris possession de la Double Couronne par-devant les dieux qui sont sur terre, Oupouaout ouvrira pour toi les chemins pour te protéger contre tous tes ennemis!"²⁴. The Apollônios family chose these two gods and this festival of Abydos, because the deceased comes from the city of Lykopolis/Assiout protected by Oupouaout, and wishes to "triumph over his enemies".

So, there are two Osirises in these stelae from Abydos, linked to each other. Mythically and theologically, Osiris appears as a crown god, king of the dead, and the only judge to allow the deceased to reach eternity.

1.3 The Osiris of the offering table from Terenouthis

The offering table comes from Terenouthis (Kôm Abou Billou), around sixty kilometres in the south-east of Alexandria going to Cairo. The excavations sponsored by the IFAO in the Greco-Roman necropolis and the work of Sylvain Dhennin²⁵ enable us to look at the document in context. It was installed near the tomb surrounded by a mud-brick superstructure, in front of an eastern recess with a representation of the deceased. The offering table was used to execute the funerary rite of libation, to maintain his life *post mortem* symbolised by the plants engraved on it.

²² "A propos de la stèle d'Apollônios (Louvre N32): Ophoïs, Osiris et Sérapis en Abydos", *Studien zur altägyptischen Kultur* 29, Hamburg, Buske, 2001, p. 217–233.

²³ Rite practised towards the statues since the reign of Kheops, and towards the dead since the period. The numerous versions of the text were compiled and fixed at the end of the New Kingdom until the Roman period. The ceremony took place at the time of the inhumation of the deceased, or to consecrate statues in the Gold House. See J.-Cl. Goyon, *Rituels funéraires de l'ancienne Égypte: le Rituel de l'Embaumement, le Rituel de l'Ouverture de la Bouche, les Livres des Respirations*, Paris, Editions du Cerf, 1972.

²⁴ J.-Cl. Goyon, *Rituels funéraires de l'ancienne Égypte*, p. 150.

²⁵ "Térénouthis—Kôm Abou Billou: une ville et sa nécropole", *Bulletin de l'institut français d'archéologie orientale* 111, Le Caire, IFAO, 2011, p. 105–127; see also their good synthesis at IFAO, <http://www.ifao.egnet.net/archeologie/mefkat-kom-abou-billou/>, [online], consulted 18th January 2015.

The demotic inscription is a dedication to “Osiris-Apis, the great god and the gods who rest with him”²⁶. The proximity of Memphis and the funerary nature of the god explain this mention in this context. In addition, Didier Devauchelle underlines particularly the link between Osiris-Apis and the trinity Ptah-Sokar-Osiris in the stelae of Memphis²⁷. They are all qualified as either “great god”, “master of Rosetaou” (the Memphite necropolis), or “Foremost of the West” (*Hnty-Imnt.t*), complementary forms of the same god. Ptah and his herald Apis represent the act of creation like Atoum-Râ, the sun-god. Sokar directs the transformations of the deceased in the hereafter like those of the sun-god who regenerates at the fifth hour of the night in the “Cavern of Sokar” (*Book of the Amdouat*). Osiris symbolizes the successful transformation and the triumph over death. Every night the sun-god regenerates in Osiris, as Osiris-Râ, to rise every morning. So the deceased, Apollos, faces Osiris-Apis in Terenouthis, near Memphis, wishing to be revived like the sun and Osiris. In this way, he would be triumphant.

In three places, we meet five divine forms of Osiris. Sarapis corresponds to each of them, although without a particular epithet. He is “great god” in the offering tables, to increase the performance of his action and to guarantee the effectiveness of the rites. In the stelae, he is “Lord” as recipient of the prayers. The two *puissances* seem to be expressed by two different dynamics: a monolithic Sarapis with epithets according to the type of artifact, a multiform Osiris with different names and aspects but always as a funerary god-king. All these Osirian forms related to Sarapis fulfil a funerary and royal function, in line with the rites of Khoiak.

2 Sarapis and the Osirian rites of Khoiak

These rites were originally studied by Emile Chassinat who published the texts with translation and commentaries²⁸. These texts amount to a collection of seven “books” engraved inside the temple of Hathor in Denderah, written by independent authors. Each book deals with a specific aspect of the rites²⁹. The first book enumerates the

²⁶ *Wsir H̄p p̄3 ntr ʿ irm n̄3 ntr.w nti h̄tp [---] irm=f.*

²⁷ “Ptah-Sokar-Osiris et Apis-Osiris sont deux appellations complémentaires du même dieu funéraire” (D. Devauchelle, “Osiris, Apis, Sarapis et les autres. Remarques sur les Osiris memphites au Ier millénaire av. J.C.”, in L. Coulon (éd.), *Le culte d’Osiris au Ier millénaire av. J.-C., découvertes et travaux récents, Actes de la table ronde internationale à l’université Lyon II, 8–9 juillet 2005, Bibliothèque d’études* 153, Le Caire, IFAO, 2010, p. 49–62, quote p. 59).

²⁸ E. Chassinat, *Le mystère d’Osiris au mois de Khoiak*, Le Caire, IFAO, 1966.

²⁹ The titles explain the contents (E. Chassinat, *Le mystère d’Osiris*, (p. 4–7): “Knowing the mysteries of the labour of the vat-garden of Khenty-Imentet in the House of Shentit” (Book II), “Knowing the mystery of the *trh* made with the tin of Sokar as labour not known in the hidden place and the nome where (the labour) takes place” (Book III), “List of the consort gods of the House of Shentit without omission, each one by his name” (Book IV), “Knowing all the things of the House of Shentit” (Book V), “Knowing the secret of the hidden place to do the labour of the festival of Dena with that is not

towns celebrating the rites, followed by the second which deals with geographical matters and reveals two traditions coexisting: the one from Busiris (metropolis of the IX nome of Lower Egypt), and the other from Abydos (metropolis of the VIII nome of Upper Egypt) whence the three stelae come. Each nome adopts one or the other tradition. According to the provenance of the five documents studied, Coptos (metropolis of the V nome of Upper Egypt), Terenouthis (town in the Prosopite, the IV nome of Lower Egypt), and Abydos of course, take up the tradition from Abydos. Sarapis is related to forms of Osiris that perform in the same kinds of rituals. All the books teach ritual prescriptions to execute between the 12 and the 30 of the month of Khoiak. The making of three Osirian substitutes is central.

- a) The divine scrap represents the Osirian relic conserved in the nome: the “belly of the divine humours”³⁰ in Coptos, the sides³¹ in Terenouthis, the head conserved in the reliquary *ḫ-insw* in Abydos and used to the coronation of Osiris. The divine scrap is linked to the next substitute.
- b) The substitute Osiris Khenty-Imentet (*Ḥnty-Imnt.t*), “Foremost of the West”, also called corn-mummy by modern scholars. It is a human mummy wearing the white crown, made of sand and barley mixed in a tin³² on the 12th of Khoiak. Then, to germinate, it is put in a vat-garden³³ dedicated to the Isiac goddess Shentayt, until the 21st. The germinated barley symbolises the regeneration of the god. The vat-garden is located in the House of Shentayt, also called “House of Barley” or “House of Gold”³⁴. “House of Gold” evokes the epithet of “Coptite Osiris, Foremost of the Gold House” in the offering table from Coptos. The germination of the corn-mummy called Osiris Khenty-Imentet (*Ḥnty-Imnt.t*, “Foremost of the West”), in the Gold House, also corresponds to Osiris Khenty-imentyou in the stela of *T3p3-hy*. This is Osiris, the first dead, the first regenerated, and consequently the king and judge of the deceased who wish to imitate him.

known, and that takes place in the House of Shentit in Busiris” (Book VI), “Knowing the mystery that is not seen, that is not heard, and that the father passes on to his son” (Book VII). Only the first book is untitled: it enumerates the towns where the rites take place.

30 L. Coulon, “Les reliques d’Osiris en Égypte ancienne: données générales et particularismes thébains”, in Ph. Borgeaud, Y. Volokhine (éd.), *Les objets de la mémoire. Pour une approche comparatiste des reliques et de leur culte*, Berne, P. Lang, 2005, p. 35.

31 J.-Cl. Goyon, “De seize et quatorze, nombres religieux. Osiris et Isis-Hathor aux portes de la Moyenne Égypte” in N. Kloth, K. Martin, E. Pardey (éd.), *Es werde niedergelegt als Schriftstück, Studien zur Altägyptischen Kultur. Beihefte* 9, Hamburg, Buske, 2003, p. 153.

32 E. Chassinat, *Le mystère d’Osiris au mois de Khoiak*, p. 54; book II, col.17 (p.198, 811), Livre VI, col.113 (p. 768, 820), Livre VII, col. 157 (p. 790, 802, 823).

33 One has been discovered in Coptos and studied by J. Yoyotte during one of his conference in the EPHE (see Ecole pratique des hautes études, section des sciences religieuses, *Annuaire*, T.86, 1977–1978, 1977, p. 163–169). He underlines the strong relation between Osiris and Min by the way of the rites of Khoiak.

34 E. Chassinat, *Le mystère d’Osiris au mois de Khoiak*, p. 16–19: the author uses inscriptions about the Prosopite nome (where Terenouthis is located) and Coptos. This underlines again the relation between the Osirian forms from these towns, Abydos and the rites of Khoiak.

- c) The third substitute, called Osiris-Sokar, associates the dead god-king with the underworld god of the transformations, related to the nocturnal destiny of the sun-god. The substitute is made of different materials: clay, dates, incense, resin of turpentine, herbs and spices, and fourteen pulverized precious stones (including gold, silver, and lapis lazuli). It cannot germinate. This is an Osiris as human mummy with divine wig and beard, the sceptres crossed over the chest. His divinity is underlined because his body is made of precious elements³⁵. This Osiris-Sokar is related to Osiris-Apis, present in the offering tables from Terenouthis³⁶.

The Osirian forms of the five documents are linked with the substitutes of Khoiak. Other components of the rites allow us to find other relations.

- d) The nautical procession on the 22nd Khoiak, during the eighth hour of the day³⁷. Thirty-four boats sailing with the substitute Khenty-Imentet and the divine scrap, twenty-nine images of gods, and three hundred and sixty-five lamps. The different types of boat show this rite is monarchical. Among the names of the boats are: falcon, falcon king of the South, king of the North, king of the South, king of the South and the North. The nautical procession executed in Abydos could also explain the deposit of the stela of the three murdered boatmen.
- e) The procession of *wn-pr* (“open the temple”) on the 16th and the 24th Khoiak³⁸, includes the god Anubis, four obelisks, and “the gods upon their support”. It moves around the temple and the necropolis. Émile Chassinat did not comment on this procession. However, the god Oupouaout comes to mind, thanks to the analysis of Pierre Koemoth³⁹. The support of the god, represented on the stela of Apollônios, is exactly the same hieroglyphic sign used to determinate the supports of the god in front of the procession 𓂏 . There are two Oupouaout. The first stands up on his support, symbol of Upper Egypt, guardian of the royal necropolis of Abydos, associated with Osiris-Ounnefer crown king of Egypt. The second is lying on his support like Anubis, symbol of Lower Egypt, associated with Osiris-Khentyimentyou, king of the dead. In addition, in Lykopolis, the town associated with Oupouaout, he is worshipped as the son of Osiris or a form of Osiris. This procession could be the same, or another very similar to the one suggested on the stela of Apollônios, which could explain the deposit of this document.

³⁵ A footnote of G. Lefebvre (*Romans et contes égyptiens de l'époque pharaonique*, Paris, J. Maisonneuve, 1982, p. 87, n. 78) presents the references which allow us to consider the gods with silver bones, gold flesh, and lapis lazuli hair.

³⁶ See *supra*, section 1.3.

³⁷ E. Chassinat, *Le mystère d'Osiris au mois de Khoiak*, p. 71; this festival is evoked in the book II, col. 20–22 (p. 205, 811); book V, col. 73–77 (p. 613–617, 817); book VI, col. 113–114 (p. 768–769, 820).

³⁸ E. Chassinat, *Le mystère d'Osiris au mois de Khoiak*, p. 70, 72; this festival is evoked in the book V, col. 82 (p. 635–636, 818)

³⁹ “A propos de la stèle d'Apollônios (Louvre N32): Ophois, Osiris et Sérapis en Abydos”, p. 219–227.

symbolises enigmatically the confluence between the funerary rites and the making (of the image of Sarapis) from the mummy, since this name is formed by the synthesis of Osiris and Apis, giving Osirapis.” The Greek and Christian authors link the origin of the name Sarapis with his image, with Osirian funerary rites, with mummies like the substitutes of the Khoiak rites, and with a coffin.

Gerard Mussies has pointed to similar interpretations using *interpretatio Judaica*. Among them⁴⁵, some refer to the idea of a coffin, related to Osiris and the patriarch Joseph. Julius Firmicus Maternus⁴⁶ (c. 346–350 CE) writes: “And he (Sarapis) also took his name from his first ancestor (...). For as he had been the great-grandson of Sarah (...) he was given the Greek name Serapis, that is Σάρπας ἀπό (“from Sarah”). So, Joseph himself would be Sarapis. Moreover, the patriarch would also be an *interpretatio Judaica* of Osiris. According to Mussies, the myth of Osiris in Plutarch (*De Iside et Osiride*) resembles the story of Joseph’s bones (Gen 50: 25–26): “Joseph had made his compatriots promise that they would take his bones with them should they return to Canaan; then he died, was embalmed and laid in a coffin (*sorós*)”⁴⁷. The author adds that Osiris and Joseph “are both put in coffins, their coffins are thrown into the Nile, are searched and found, their scattered limbs or bones are reassembled”⁴⁸. In fact, Joseph seems to be the *interpretatio Judaica* of the two gods.

The idea of a coffin, which corresponds to Sarapis’s name and Osiris’s myth, deals with the ritual prescriptions of the burial of Apis, and the rites of Khoiak. However, it can be read only in non-Egyptian sources. The coffin is the only evocation of the divine body that can be seen by those who assist in the processions. These exterior events are the only ceremonies seen by people and described by authors⁴⁹. In addition, the rites of Khoiak are executed in most of the nomes because of the progressive Osirianisation of Egypt over the course of the first millennium before Christ⁵⁰. The

45 “The *interpretatio Judaica* of Sarapis” in M. J. Vermaseren (éd.), *Studies in Hellenistic Religions, Études préliminaires aux religions orientales dans l’empire romain* 78, Leiden, E.J. Brill, 1979, p. 189–214. The fundamental relation is made from the idea that “Serapis alludes to Joseph who became a prince (*sar*) and appeased (*hephhis*) the whole world “ (p. 189), with the character of the one who feeds the country with grain and protects it against famine, like Sarapis, the biblical Joseph and Osiris in Plutarch. In addition, the etymology *Sarhephhis* is related to (p. 200) *Wsir-Ḥp* (Osiris-Apis). About Joseph and Sarapis, see also R. Ulmer, “The Egyptian Gods in Midrashic Texts”, *HThR*, 103.2, 2010, p. 181–204.

46 *De errore profanarum religionum*, XIII, quoted by G. Mussies.

47 G. Mussies, “The *interpretatio Judaica* of Sarapis”, p. 206.

48 G. Mussies, “The *interpretatio Judaica* of Sarapis”, p. 206–209; he comments the *Melkita* related to Plutarch.

49 Among other, Herodotus (*Inquiry* I, 20; II, 170–171) and Plutarch (*De Iside et Osiride*, 27). See E. Chassinat, *Le mystère d’Osiris au mois de Khoiak*, p. 9–12.

50 L. Coulon, “Le culte osirien au Ier millénaire av. J.-C., une mise en perspective” in L. Coulon (éd.), *Le culte d’Osiris au Ier millénaire av. J.-C., découvertes et travaux récents, Actes de la table ronde in-*

joint presence of Sarapis and Osirian forms, through the rites of Khoiak, shows a formal (ritual, etymological) and functional (universal kingship) link between both of them. Sarapis seems to be the shrine or the coffin to highlight the sovereignty of Osiris. He appears as the visible and exterior aspect, permeated with Greek forms, surrounding an interior and hidden *puissance* inherited from ancient Egyptian times. These theological considerations about the funerary field have to be connected to the relationships between the living, the dead, and the gods.

3 Living and dead facing Osiris and Sarapis

In the five documents studied, living and dead are highlighted by their names inserted in genealogy, and their invocation of Osiris and Sarapis. These elements specify Osiris and Sarapis joint presence.

3.1 An Egyptians and Egyptian-born Greeks story

The *interpretatio graeca* relates Osiris to Sarapis. The offering table from Coptos belongs to “P3-Min son of P3-šr-Wsir” in Demotic, equivalent to “Πανίσκος Σαραπίωνος” (Paniskos son of Sarapion) in Greek. The dialogue from one text to the other is based on the *interpretatio graeca* of the Egyptian god Min as the Greek god Pan⁵¹, and Osiris as Sarapis. The meaning of the names does not change: “The one of Min/Pan son of the young man of Osiris/Sarapis”. Diodorus Siculus⁵² reports that many men think Sarapis is not only Osiris, but also Pan.

The stela of T3-p3-ḥy from Abydos is dedicated to a woman⁵³ named “T3-p3-ḥy daughter of P3-Ḥr, her mother (is) T3-šr.t-p3-Ḥr “ in Demotic. In the Greek text, she is “Τάπχω (daughter) of Παώρου”. The names seem to have been transcribed phonetically from the Egyptian to the Greek, with an omission of the mother. Nevertheless, the *interpretatio graeca* phenomenon is used to translate to Greek, “Osiris Khentyimentyou” and “Osiris, the great god, master of Abydos”, as “Lord Sarapis”⁵⁴.

This *interpretatio* is fundamental and is independent from the cultural background of the deceased. Indeed, the same process as the one of the stela of T3-p3-

ternationale à l'université Lyon II, 8–9 juillet 2005, Bibliothèque d'Études 153, Le Caire, IFAO, 2010, p. 1–17.

51 H. CUVIGNY, “Le crépuscule d'un dieu. Le déclin du culte de Pan dans le désert Oriental”, *Bulletin de l'institut français d'archéologie orientale* 97, Le Caire, IFAO, 1997, p. 139–147.

52 *Bibliotheca historica* I, 25,2: Τὸν δὲ Ὅσιριν οἱ μὲν Σάραπιν, οἱ δὲ Διόνυσον, οἱ δὲ Πλούτωνα, οἱ δὲ Ἄμμωνα, τινὲς δὲ Δία, πολλοὶ δὲ Πάνα τὸν αὐτὸν νενομίκασι.

53 Her gender is revealed by the hieroglyphic graphemes n=s (“for/to her”).

54 Wsir Ḥnty-Ḥmnty.w in Hieroglyphic and Wsir p3 ntr ʕ nb Ḥbdw “ in Demotic, translate τὸν κύριον Σεραπίων in Greek.

hy, can be read in the offering table of Apollos from Terenouthis. His name is only present in the Greek text, and the document is dedicated to “Osiris-Apis, the great god, and the gods who rest with him”⁵⁵ in Demotic, equivalent to the Greek inscription “Sarapis, the very great god, and the gods associated with him.”⁵⁶ Does the cultural background of the deceased affect the ritual practice?

The link between cultural profiles and ritual practices can be determined from the stela of the three murdered boatmen, and the stela of Apollônios. These documents from Abydos present an Egyptian iconographic field, which enables the identification of the Osirian form, and a Greek text naming the deceased. The three murdered boatmen are “Bêsis the oldest and Bêsis the youngest, both sons of Sentôous, pilot, from Ptolemaïs, and Bêsis boat manufacturer, their mother’s brother”⁵⁷. They come from Ptolemaïs, one of the three Greco-Egyptian *poleis*, around forty kilometres to the north of Abydos. Greek culture is familiar to them, whether they are citizens educated with *paideia*, gymnasial class members, or simply Egyptians living in the *polis* and permeated by the predominant culture. In comparison, the Apollônios stela presents him as “Apollônios, son of Erôs, grandson of Erôs, and son of Aristion, his mother, nicknamed the son of Erôspsa, from Lykopolis”⁵⁸. He is an Egyptian-born Greek. His Greek family lives in Lykopolis, the Egyptian Assiout (S3wt), the Upper Egypt XIII nome metropolis.

So Apollônios and the three Bêsis lived in privileged cities, *polis* or metropolis, administrative centres where Greek culture was well represented. Their populations had a different socio-political and fiscal status according to their degree of Greekness since the Augustan reform (5–6 CE)⁵⁹. The two stelae are dated from the centuries before and after the Christian era, which fits with this Hellenistic context. The four deceased appear to come out of a Greek cultural background, whether they are Egyptian or Greek, but still they adopt the same funerary traditions seen in the Egyptian iconographic field of the stelae. The *interpretatio graeca* seems to serve as a tool for mediation as with the images as well: Sarapis is named in Greek while Osiris is depicted in Egyptian style. The bicultural strategies are distinguished from the native cultural background. They demonstrate the pragmatism of the living towards their post-mortem future.

55 *M-b3h Wsir H3p p3 ntr 3 irm n3 ntr.w nt3 htp [...]* *irm=f*.

56 ΣΕΡΑΠΕΙ ΘΕΩΙ ΜΕΓΕΙΣΤΩΙ ΚΑΙ ΤΟΙΣ ΣΥΝΝΑΟΙΣ ΘΕΟΙΣ.

57 Βῆσις πρεσβύτερος καὶ Βῆσις νεώτερος, ἀμφότεροι Σεντωούτος κυβερνήτου, ἀπὸ Πτολεμαίδος, καὶ Βῆσις καρβάς, ἀδελφὸς τῆς μητρὸς αὐτῶν.

58 Ἀπολλώνιος Ἐρωτος τοῦ Ἐρωτος, μητρὸς Ἀριστίου, λεγόμενος ὁ τοῦ Ἐρωσιῶ Λυκοπο(λ)εΐτης.

59 K. Blouin, *Le conflit judéo-alexandrin de 38–41, L'indentité juive à l'épreuve*, Paris, L'Harmattan, 2005, p. 62–63; she exposes the distinction between *cives Romani* and *cives peregrini* (*astoi*, the Greek citizens in *poleis*), exempted from *laographia* (capitation tax), and the *peregrini Aegypti* (*laoi*) divided in three groups: Greek residents and members of the gymnasial class in metropolis, metropolitan residents out of the gymnasial class, and Egyptians and Jews.

3.2. Pragmatic and complementary invocations

The *interpretatio graeca* functions as a bridge between the two cultures. However, the worshippers seem to establish a distinction between Osiris and Sarapis using languages.

In the Egyptian texts of the five documents, wishes for eternity without any temporality are inscribed. Under the patronage of Osiris, the deceased mention an unchanging life as idealized by the living. The word *d.t* (“eternity”) can be read in Hieroglyphic and Demotic in the offering table from Coptos and the stela of *T3-p3-ḥy* from Abydos. In contrast, the Greek texts engraved on the offering tables provide a precise dating of the events—“Year XVIII, Pakhons, (day) 27” (offering table from Coptos) and “Year XII month 2” (offering table from Terenouthis). The stelae from Abydos reveal another use of Greek: it allows relating some precise events. The three murdered boatmen have been “assassinated in the harbor of Pouchis in the Anteopolite nome⁶⁰ and (someone) set fire to their boat”⁶¹. The Apollônios family expresses their pain on his stela, as we infer because the stela provides the detail that he is “prematurely dead, the seventh year, day 21 of the month of Pakhons, at the age of 34 years, 5 months, and 25 days”⁶². The detail of “prematurely” seems to be more a feeling among the living than a reality, given that men had a life expectancy of thirty-six years in Roman Egypt⁶³.

The Egyptian text sets the deceased in an eternal dimension in the context of his reception by Osiris. In contrast, the Greek places him in a temporal dimension, in the present, which gives to the living an opportunity to express themselves and to tell of their beloved parents’ death. This gap between the two allows the elaboration of individual strategies. *T3-p3-ḥy*, in her stela, uses the Greek to translate phonetically the Egyptian names into Greek; she does the same with the final mention *σπήλιη^{sic} Τάπχω* which indicates the property of the stela. So the names could be read in both languages and be pronounced to shield the persons from oblivion. Through such strategic choices *T3-p3-ḥy* hopes for a better chance to triumph over the death.

In these five documents, the pragmatism of such devotional choices arises from the distance between Osiris in his Egyptian background, and Sarapis in his Greek one. There has so far been no document found that translates phonetically “Sarapis” into Egyptian, although “Osiris” exists in Greek. These cultural particularities are the same in the funerary and monarchical fields because the gods are kings. The pragmatism of the devotional choices forges links between gods, living, dead and kingship over Egypt.

⁶⁰ Metropolis of the Xth nome of Upper Egypt, in the north of the IXth nome where Ptolemais and Abydos are.

⁶¹ ἐσφαγμένοι ἐν ὄρμῳ Πούχεως τοῦ Ἀνταιοπολείτου νομοῦ καὶ τὸ πλῆ(ο)ν αὐτῶν ἐνπέπρηκαν.

⁶² ἄσρος ἐτελεύτησεν τῷ (ἐ)βδόμῳ ἔτι, μηνὶ Παχῶν κα, ἐτῶν λδ, μηνῶν ε, ἡμερῶν ιε.

⁶³ R. S. Bagnall, B. W. Frier, *The Demography of Roman Egypt*, Cambridge, Cambridge university press, 1994, p. 100, table 5.3.

The recipient of the invocations in Greek is Sarapis. The next of the three murdered boatmen claims “Help, Lord Sarapis!”⁶⁴, asking for justice. The Apollônios family implores the god: “Lord Sarapis, grant him (Apollônios) to triumph over his enemies!”⁶⁵. These requests reveal a Sarapis with royal functions linked with justice and victory. Because the Greek anchors the prayers in the present, Sarapis appears as a divine listener and a *puissance* with whom the living can interact. Like the king of Egypt, he grants justice. In addition, Sarapis seems to be a generic divine form, unique like the royal power that creates and chooses him as protector. The Ptolemaic and Imperial dynasties of Egypt use a single main title to qualify the king: *basileus* for the Lagids, *stephanos* or *imperator* or *Caesar* for the *Princeps*. The same principle of unity exists about their vision of Egypt: one land, one kingdom, one province.

And yet, this land is also the dismembered body of Osiris, according to the funerary texts and his myth as reported by Plutarch (*De Iside et Osiride*). King on earth, he was dismembered by his brother Seth, each member put into a different part of Egypt. Most of the nomes claim to have one. This is the divine scrap of the Khoiak rites which celebrates the Egyptian thousand-year model to triumph over death. Osiris is inscribed in the land and in eternity. The Egyptian texts and images present the same characteristics, fixing in eternity the request of the living and the dead. The Osirian body symbolizes an Egypt in which unity arises from plurality, just as the multiple Osirian forms are linked to an Osirian *puissance* as god-king-judge triumphant over the death. The pharaonic royal power used the same principle since the third millennium before Christ, with two royal compound names over the five traditional ones. The name of the two mistresses (*nb.ty*) symbolizes the reunion of the Northern Kingdom, the Lower Egypt protected by the cobra goddess Ouadjet, and the Southern Kingdom, the Upper Egypt and its vulture goddess Nekhbet; likewise the name of the coronation preceded by the two titles *nsw*, King of Upper Egypt with the white crown, and *bity*, King of Lower Egypt with the red crown. The Pharaoh inherits these titles as successor and son of the god-kings. This is the reason why he is also “Son of Râ” and “Horus” heir of Osiris. However, like the body and the divine forms of Osiris, the Egyptian king unites the two crowns, the two titles, the two parts of Egypt in himself, but the different elements are not merged. As Erik Hornung says, Egypt is “The One and the Many”⁶⁶.

The funerary and monarchical spheres are linked through a bilingualism based in Greco-Egyptian culture itself. The masters of Greco-Roman Egypt use *basileus*, *stephanos*, *imperator*, *nsw-bity*, according to the language(s) and the people envisaged. This pragmatism in political choices is the same as the one used by the living in the

64 Ἀντιλαβοῦ κύριε Σάρασι.

65 Κύριε Σάρασι δὸς αὐτῶι τὴν κατεξου(σ)ίαν κατὰ τῶν ἐκθρῶν αὐτοῦ.

66 E. Hornung, *Der Eine und die Vielen, Ägyptische Gottesvorstellungen*, Darmstadt, Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1971 (translated by John Baine, *Conceptions of God in Ancient Egypt, The One and the Many*, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1982; traduit de l'anglais par Paul Couturiau, *Les dieux de l'Égypte, l'Un et le Multiple*, Monaco, Paris, éd. Du Rocher, 1987).

five documents discussed above. Whether Greeks or Egyptians, they use each culture's advantages to reach their specific objectives. The Egyptian register gives a model to imitate, ancient and dependable and inscribed in the land where they live. The Greek register allows the invocation of events in the present of divine justice itself to govern on earth. This pragmatism is more visible on stelae in full public view than on offering tables used only for rituals. These stelae are dated between the 1st c. BCE and the 1st c. CE, a transitional period. The Principate of Augustus succeeds the Ptolemaic dynasty. For the first time, the king is not present in Egypt at all and an equestrian prefect stands in for him⁶⁷; society is reorganized⁶⁸, and disturbances arise⁶⁹. The joint presence of Osiris and Sarapis could have answered the evolving expectations of worshippers according to their cultural backgrounds and their hopes for political stability and justice. Calling jointly on the two gods reveals pragmatic choices and a complementarity between the two cultural worlds.

The correspondences between a relatively monolithic Sarapis and a plurality of Osirian forms in the Greco-Egyptian funerary documents can be surprising. The two gods are brought closer through the use of *interpretatio graeca*, the various individual strategies in wording inscriptions, and the support of Egyptian funerary traditions by the Egyptian-born Greeks. Yet the network of Osirian forms also underlies the unique function of the funerary god-king, while the unchanged and unique Sarapis bears only two epithet-functions: he is the "great god", making the offering tables' rites effective, and he is the "Lord" of stelae who listens to prayers. In addition, in line with the rites of Khoiak, Osiris appears as a hidden *puissance* and Sarapis as his visible and exterior aspect. This distance between the two of them appears in concrete terms thanks to the biculturalism that creates a diglossy in the funerary field, related to one of the royal powers in Greco-Roman Egypt. The devotional choices reveal a connection through the gods' complementarity, indeed, a pragmatism in trying to create effective rites, invocations, and acts. Osiris is the god-king of all the deceased, the model of the living. The Osirian destiny raises their aspirations for the dead and the aim of all their own lives on earth. As for Sarapis, he is expressed as a mediator, the auxiliary to gain efficiency in ritual performances, the ultimate resort of the living to counterbalance the central political deficiency. So the pragmatic choices of the living share, between Osiris and Sarapis, the responsibility of the divine and royal functions are shared in the pragmatic choices of the

⁶⁷ The first prefect is G. Cornelius Gallus, attested by an inscription in Philae (17th April 29 BCE) as *praefectus Alexandriae et Aegypti*. See M. Solieman, "G. Cornelius Gallus, Praefectus Aegypti, and Aethiopia: a self propagandist", *JAH* 17, 2014, p. 1–27.

⁶⁸ See K. Blouin, *Le conflit judéo-alexandrin de 38–41, L'indentité juive à l'épreuve*, Paris, L'Harmattan, 2005, p. 62–63; and L. Capponi, *Augustan Egypt. The creation of a Roman province*, London, Routledge, 2005.

⁶⁹ Strabo, *Geographica*, XVII, 1,53–54. There are rebellions in Thebaid and Nubian attacks in the South.

living. The ancient Egyptian god is the target to hit while Sarapis is the arrow shot. The Osirian funerary field is reorganized through the new domination by the Greeks and the Romans. The new dynasties create and are supported by Sarapis, who takes charge of practical and worldly aspects: for instance, he cures illness while Osiris is still the one who allows the rebirth of all things, all gods, and all men by freeing them from death, which is no longer an end. The two deities are sovereign on different scales, depending on the areas in which they are invoked. And so, kings and men take over and reorganize the *puissances* with which they rule over the world to fulfill their expectations.

Appendix

Offering table from Coptos⁷⁰

Ptolemaic period, Ägyptisches Museum (Berlin), inv. 2304.

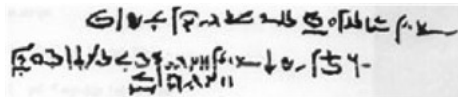


Greek inscription

Σαράπιδι θεῷ μεγάλῳ Πανίσκος Σαραπίωνος
 Λ η Παχῶν κζ

*To Sarapis, the great god, Paniskos son of Sarapion,
 Year XVIII, Pakhons, (day) 27.*

Demotic inscription



Wsr Qbt hnt Hwt-nwb d.t ḥnh n P3-Min s3 P3-šr-Wsr ḥm n3y=f sn.w' irm n3y=f hm-hl.w šc d.t
 (To) Coptite Osiris, Foremost of the Gold House, gives life to P3-Min son of P3-šr(i)-Wsr, 'with his brothers', with his servants, unto eternity.

Stela⁷¹ of T3-p3-ḥy

Abydos, 1st c. BCE–1st c. CE, Ägyptisches Museum, Berlin, inv. 2133

⁷⁰ The provenance is quite certain because of the inscription for “Coptite Osiris”. See S.P. Vleeming, *Some coins of Artaxerxes and other short texts found on various objects and gathered from many publications*, *Studia demotica* 5, Louvain, Peeters, 2001, p. 233–234, n°250, pl. VII. This author publishes the transcription and translation of the Greek inscription; the facsimile, transliteration and translation (personal read-through) of the Demotic; and the photography (pl. VII).

⁷¹ J. Moje (“*Demotica Varia III*”, *Göttinger Miscellen* 217, Göttingen, Ägyptologisches Seminar der Universität Göttingen, 2008, p. 65–66) published the facsimile (p.65), transliterations, transcriptions and

The iconographic register under the arch presents, under the winged solar disk, Anubis introducing two mummified characters in front of Osiris seated, and Isis-Hathor standing behind him.

Hieroglyphic inscription

ḏ.t s3.t nṯr.w n=s nb.w Wsīr Ḥnty-Ḥmnty.w

eternity—daughter—gods—for/to her—master/all—Osiris Khentyimentyou

Demotic inscription

*m-b3ḥ Wsīr p3 nṯr 3 nb **Ḥbdw** n rn T3-p3-ḥy ʔ P3-Ḥr mw.t=s T3-šr.t-p3-Ḥr (?) [///] šᶜ ḏ.t*

Facing Osiris, the great god, master of Abydos

In the name of T3-p3-ḥy daughter of P3-Ḥr

Her mother (being) T3-šr.t-p3-Ḥr [///] and unto eternity.

Greek inscription

1 πρὸς τὸν 2 κύριον Σεραῖ-3-πιν σπήλι^{sic} 4 Τάπχω Παώρου.

1 Facing the 2 Lord Sera-3-pis. Stela 4 of Τάπχω (daughter) of Παώρου.

translations of the inscriptions. I personally translate again the Egyptian texts. Regarding the hieroglyphic inscription, the author puts forward this is a collection of various elements from another inscription, with a retrograde memory of the engraver who could not know Hieroglyphic.

Stela of the three murdered boatmen

Abydos⁷², 1st c. BCE or 1st c. CE, Musée du Louvre, Paris, inv. C278 (AF 48)



The iconographic register under the arch presents, under the winged solar-disk, two jackals lying down, facing each other. Beneath, Osiris on the right welcomes three men standing and praying. Anubis follows them.

Greek inscription

Ἄντιλαβοῦ, κύριε Σάρασι. Βῆσις
 πρεσβύτερος καὶ Βῆσις νεώτε-
 ρος, ἀμφότεροι Σεντωῦτος κυβερνήτου,
 ἀπὸ Πτολεμαΐδος, καὶ Βῆσις καρβάς,
 ἀδελφός τῆς μητρὸς αὐτῶν,
 ἐσφαγμένοι ἐν ὄρ- μῳ Πούχεως τοῦ
 Ἀνταιοπολεί- του νομοῦ καὶ τὸ

⁷² See transcription, translation and comments in E. Bernard, *Inscriptions grecques d'Égypte et de Nubie au musée du Louvre*, Paris, éd. CNRS, 1992, p. 138, n°90. The photography is the one of the Musée du Louvre (Dist. RMN-Grand Palais, Christian Larrieu).

πλῦ(ο)ν αὐτῶν ἐνπέ-
πρηκαν

Help, Lord Sarapis! Bêsis the oldest and Bêsis the youngest, both sons of Sentôous, pilot, from Ptolémaïs, and Bêsis boat manufacturer, the brother of their mother, (have been) assassinated in the harbour of Pouchis in the Anteopolite nome and (someone) set fire to their boat.

Stela of Apollônios⁷³

Abydos, 1st c. CE, Musée du Louvre, Paris, inv. N328



⁷³ See transcription, translation and comments in E. Bernard, *Inscriptions grecques d'Égypte et de Nubie au musée du Louvre*, Paris, éd. CNRS, 1992, p. 143, n° 92. The photography is the one of the Musée du Louvre (Christian Larrieu, 1996).

The iconographic register under the arch presents, under the winged solar-disk, Osiris on the left, the god Oupouaout upon his support preceding him. Facing the gods, a priest burns incense on an altar.

Greek inscription

Ἀπολλώνιος Ἔρωτος τοῦ Ἐρω-
τος,
μητρός Ἀριστίου, λεγόμενος ὁ τοῦ
Ἐρωσψᾶ Λυκοπο(λ)εΐτης ἄορος
ἔτελεύ- τησεν τῶι (ἐ)βδόμῳ ἔτι, μηνὶ
Παχῶν κα, ἐτῶν λδ, μηνῶν ε, ἡμερῶν
ιε. Κύρι- ε Σάραπι, δὸς αὐτῶι τήν
κατεξου(σ)ίαν κατὰ τῶν ἐκθρῶν αὐτοῦ.

Apollōnios, son of Erōs, grandson of Erōs, and son of Aristion, his mother, nicknamed the son of Erōspsa, from Lykopolis, is prematurely died, the seventh year, day-21 of the month of Pakhons, at the age of 34 years, 5 months, and 25 days. Lord Sarapis, grant him to triumph over his enemies!

Offering table ⁷⁴ from Téréouthis (Kôm Abou Billou)

Roman period, Egyptian Museum (Cairo), inv. CG 23182, JdE 40563

Demotic inscription

- 1 *M-b³h Wsir H₃p p₃ ntr 3*
- 2 *irm n³ ntr.w nti htp [---]*
- 3 *irm=f*

1 Facing Osiris-Apis, the great god 2 and the gods who rest [---] 3 with him.

⁷⁴ Facsimiles, transliterations and translations by S.P. Vleeming, *Some coins of Artaxerxes and other short texts found on various objects and gathered from many publications*, *Studia demotica* 5, Louvain, Peeters, 2001, p. 240, n° 260. I personally translate again the Demotic.

Greek inscription

ΣΕΡΑΠΕΙ ΘΕΩ
ΜΕΓΕΙΣΤΩΙ ΚΑΙ
ΤΟΙΣ ΣΥΝΝΑΟΙΣ
ΘΕΟΙΣ ΥΠΕΡ ΑΠΟΛΛΩΤΟΣ
ΑΠΟΛΛΩΣ ΕΤΩΝ ΙΒ ΜΗΝΕΣ Β

To Sarapis, the very great god, and the gods associated (with him), for Apollos, Apollos, year XII month 2.