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THE FOUR GREEK HYMNS
OF ISIDORUS
AND THE "GET OF ISIS"

VERA FREDERIKA VANDERKlip
THE FOUR GREEK HYMNS OF ISIDORUS AND THE CULT OF ISIS

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A. M. HAKKERT LTD. TORONTO MCMLXXII
To

the late Professor C. B. Welles of Yale University

and my parents

Maud M. Vanderlip and the late Fred Y. Vanderlip
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Throughout my research I have accepted the basic data and facsimiles of the original excavation reports from the University of Milan and I thank Professor I. Cazzaniga for permission to use certain of their photographs in Plates I-XI and XIV. I thank him also for permission to use the photographs of Isermuthis from E. Bresciani's report of the new excavations at Medinet Madi (XII).

Further, I should like also to acknowledge the special help of others who have made certain areas of my study more reliable. The expert advice on Ptolemaic dating given me by Professor Alan E. Samuel, now of University College at the University of Toronto, has made it possible for me to attempt an intelligible interpretation of Isidorus' dates in Hymns II and III. Furthermore, in 1968, at Mr. Samuel's suggestion, I had the unexpected opportunity of working under the direction of Professor R. Merkelbach at the University of Cologne. For Professor Merkelbach's many hours spent in reading my manuscript and advising me where best to curtail or amplify my line-by-line commentary, I am grateful and I welcome this chance to thank him publicly for his generous help. At the same time, I wish also to thank Mr. Manfred Weber of the Egyptian Seminar at the University of Cologne; his advice has helped me to interpret with some degree of confidence the Egyptian names of Isidorus' Hymns.

Finally, I wish to state my gratitude to Mrs. N. Leinen, Curator of the Greek and Roman Department of the Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto, for her permission to publish the Museum's Fayum statuette of Isermuthis, and to Katharine Peacock for her advice on the final edition of my manuscript.
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XIII. Isermuthis, Fayum Statuette, Roman, from the Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto, No. 916.1.430 (date unknown). Reprinted with permission.
XIV.* Isermuthis, Anchoes (?), Sokonopis; a fresco found in situ in an alcove of the Second Court, 1936.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviations for the classical authors, journals, editions of papyri and inscriptions given in the Greek Lexicon of Liddel and Scott (Jones), revised 1940 (LSJ), pages xvi-xlviii, and the Lewis and Short Latin Dictionary, pages vii-xi, are not included below.

A. The Andros areatalogy to Isis, W. Peck, Der Isihymnos von Andros und verwandte Texte, 1930, pp. 15-22; IG XII Supplement, 1939, p. 98; D. Müller, op. cit., p. 11 and note 2. First century B.C.


APA, Abhandlungen der preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin.

App. Met., Apuleius, Metamorphoses.


ASAW, Abhandlungen der Sachsischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Leipsig.


BIE, Bulletin de l'Institut d'Egypte, Cairo.

Brady, Reception, T. A. Brady, The Reception of the Egyptian Cults by the Greeks (300-30 B.C.), University of Missouri Studies, X, I, 1935.


Chronique, Chronique d'Egypte.
Chalkis, The Karpokrates Aretalogy. See Harder, Karpokrates usw.
Class. Rev., Classical Review.
D., Aretalogy to Isis quoted in D. S. I 27. See also Peek, Andros, p. 126.
First century B.C.
DRAW, Denkschriften der Wiener Akademie der Wissenschaften.
Délos, Roussel et Launey, Inscriptions de Délos; also, Délos Inscr.
Dendera, Unpublished texts from Dendera, numbered from the catalogue and quoted by D. Müller, Isisaretalogien, p. 95.
Dessau (ILS), H. Dessau, Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae, Berlin, 1892-1916.
G., The aretalogy to Isis from Gomphoi. See Peek, Andros, pp. 134-5.
H. Ceres, Hymnus Homericus Cereris.
H. Gautier, Nomes, H. Gautier, Les Nomes d'Egypte depuis Herodote jusqu'à la conquête Arabe, Cairo, 1935.
Goodwin, Goodwin, Greek Grammar, Cambridge, Mass., 1892.
Goodwin and Gulick, Goodwin and Gulick, Greek Grammar, 1930.
B. van Groningen, De P. Oxy. 1380, B. van Groningen, De Papyro Oxyrhynchita 1380, Diss. Groningen, 1921.
H. Th. R., Harvard Theological Review.
I. Mag., Inschriften von Magnesia.
J. The Isis aretalogy from Ios. See IG XII Suppl. 98; Peek, Andros, pp. 123-5. Second/third centuries A.D.
JEA, Journal of Egyptian Archaeology.
Jahresh., Jahreshefte des Österreichischen archäologischen Instituts.
K. The Isis aretalogy from Cyme. See BCH 51, 1927, pp. 378 ff.; IG XII Suppl. 98; Peek, Andros, pp. 122-24. Late Hellenistic (second century B.C.?) or
first/second century A.D. For the earlier date see M. Nilsson GGR 2.2, p. 627.


Kees, Göttergläube, G. Kees, Der Göttergläube im alten Aegypten, Leipzig, 1941.


Kühner-Blass, Grammatik, Kühner-Blass, Ausführliche Grammatik der Griechischen Sprache 1.1, 1.2, Hannover, 1892.


LSJ, Liddell and Scott (Jones), A Greek-English Lexikon, 1925, revised 1940.


Manteuffel, De Opusculis Graecis Aegypti e Papyris, Ostracis Lapidibusque collectis, Warschau, 1930.

MDAIK, Mitteilungen des Deutschen archäologischen Instituts in Kairo.


Mém. Miss., Mémoires publiés par les membres de la mission archéologique Française au Caire.


Nock-Harder, Karpokrates, A. D. Nock, Harder, “Karpokrates von Chalkis,”
Gnomon 21, 1949, pp. 221-228.
Nock, Otto Bengtson, A. D. Nock, American Journal of Philology 63, 2,
PGM, Preisendanz, Papyri Graecae Magicae.
Otto-Bengtson, Geschichte, W. Otto und H. Bengtson, Zur Geschichte des
Niederganges des Ptolemäerreiches, München, 1938.
H. Oxy., Isis hymn from Oxyrhynchus, Oxyrhynchus Papyrus XI 1380.
P. Yale, Yale Papyri in the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library,
Peek, Andros, Werner Peek, Der Isishymnus von Andros und verwandte
texte, Berlin, 1930.
Philae, Unpublished Greco-Roman texts from Philae quoted by Müller,
Isisareatalogien, 96.
Philae, Pylon, H. Junker, “Der grosse Pylon des Tempels der Isis zu Philae,”
DWA/ Sonderband, Wien, 1958 (Greco-Roman period).
RARG, Hans Bonnet, Reallexikon der Aegyptischen Religionsgeschichte,
Berlin, 1952.
RE, Pauly-Wissowa, Real-enzyklopadie der Altertumswissenschaften.
Rev. Belg., Revue Belguque.
Roussel, CE, Roussel, Les Cultes égyptiens de Délis, 1915-16.
to the Archaeology of the Western Desert IV,” Bulletin of the John Rylands
Library 39, 2, 1957.
Rusch, Nut, A. Rusch, Die Entwicklung der Himmelsgöttin Nut zu einer
Totengöttin, Leipzig, 1922.
S. The Saloniki Isisareatalogy, S. Pelekides, ἀπὸ τὴν πολτείαν καὶ τὴν
κοινωνίαν ἐπὶ τὰ ἕσσων ἠθικάς Θεοσωλοικής, Saloniki, 1934.
Ptolemaic Chronology, Alan E. Samuel, Ptolemaic Chronology, Munich,
1962.
SEG, Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum, Leyden, 1923-.
SPAW, Sitzungsberichte Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu
Berlin.
De P. Oxy., B. A. van Groningen, De Papyro Oxyrhynchita 1380, Diss.,
Groningen, 1921.
Vogliano, P. R., Achille Vogliano, Primo Rapporto degli scavi condotti dalla
Missione archeologica d’Egitto della R. Università di Milano nella zona di Medinet
Madi (Campagna inverno e primavera 1935-XIII) a cura di Achille Vogliano,
Milano, 1936-XIV.
Vogliano, S. R., Achille Vogliano, Secondo Rapporto degli scavi condotti
dalla Missione archeologica d’Egitto della R. Università di Milano nella zona di
Medinet Madi (Campagna inverno e primavera 1936-XIV) a cura di Achille Vogliano, Milano, 1937-XV.


Welles, RC, C. B. Welles, Royal Correspondence in the Hellenistic Period, New Haven, 1934.

WChr., Mitteis-Wilcken, Grundzüge und Chrestomathie der Papyr uskunde, Leipzig-Berlin, 1912.

YCS, Yale Classical Studies.

ZAS, Zeitschrift für Ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde.
COMPARATIVE TABLE OF EDITIONS AND COMMENTARY


THE FOUR GREEK HYMNS
OF ISIDORUS
AND THE CULT OF ISIS
INTRODUCTION

Roughly a dozen Greek Hymns to Isis are extant. The earliest of these are the Hymns by Isidorus of the Fayum, the first three of which he addresses to the goddess Isis using various titles for her. Each Hymn bears his name inscribed clearly at the end, although 'Isidorus' may well be an assumed, or cult, name. His four Hymns are, at the latest, early first century B.C. They were found inscribed, in 1935, in situ, at the south gate of a large Greco-Egyptian temple near a village in the extreme southern Fayum. The modern village is called Medinet Madi, but its ancient name is unknown. Nothing at all is known of the temple's history or that of the area surrounding it.

The development of the cult and characterization of Isis in Greco-Egypt, the Greek world and later the greco-Roman world, makes a fascinating study. Readers of Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* know Hellenistic Isis well. She appears in a somewhat earlier form in Isidorus' Hymns I-III, in which Isidorus gives her three main titles: Hermouthis, Demeter, and Agathe Tyche; but, like Apuleius, Isidorus also equates her to all the known goddesses of every race.

In an attempt to comprehend the meaning Isidorus' goddess has for him I have made a study of many of his Greek idioms, comparing them to important uses elsewhere. Fortunately a large number of his phrases are obviously epic-poetic and can be easily identified. I found, in fact, that many of his words, phrases, and sometimes whole lines, come from either the *Iliad* or the *Odyssey*. There is in what follows a particularly close study of the epithets and powers he assigns the goddess.

Epic words and phrases too, I find, are localized in his hexameters precisely as in Homer, Hesiod, and the older Homeric hymns. In other words, one must conclude that Isidorus knows, at least, the technical aspects of the older Greek hexameter. And so, although he does not belong to the direct literary descent of hexameter poets (who can be traced from Homer through Callimachus to Nonnus), his caesurae and localizations do qualify him as a writer of primitive hexameters, like, among others, the composers of Orphic hymns.

From the examination of the possible shades of meaning in Isidorus' words, interesting results began to accrue. From mounting scraps of information, interpretations would, at times, coalesce suddenly into patches of seeming significance. For example, the chance find of φόρταρος ἐνεκ in *Iliad* XXIV 67 suddenly illuminated what had seemed to be merely Isidorus' or the stonemason's
error. Immediately the phrase φιλατεστον ἔσκε (III, 12) leapt into life. Behind the narrative of Isis' love for the Egyptian King, I felt (or thought I felt) the poet's comparison with the yearning love of Zeus for the noble Hector. Another decisive discovery concerned ancient, and little known, Renenutet whom the Greeks called Thermuthis or (H)ermouthis. She was, I found, much more than a goddess of cereal grain in the form of a snake, as she is more usually portrayed. Long before the Hellenistic age, she had been paired with an unpersonified Power (called Shay, Shai, Psoi, etc.) and together they were considered to attend each individual from birth to death, controlling together the length of his life-span, and the quality of his life (that is, giving him happiness and prosperity). Hermouthis-Renenutet had, in fact, been (alone and with Shay) the Egyptian equivalent of both a Greek Kourotrophos and Moira Theon. She is shown to have been just such a goddess or power in the fine study of Professor Dieter Müller (Ägypten und die griechischen Isisaretiologien, 1961). One of Renenutet's two hieroglyphic determinatives, in fact, symbolizes the more sentimental side of her character, for it shows her as a nurse dandling an infant above her lap. Clearly, when Isis is equated to this goddess she is much more than a goddess of cereal grain. Further, there is evidence that Greek Agathe Tyche, in Greco-Egypt at least, and especially when she is paired with the Agathos Daimon (as Shay), is very like the ancient maternal Renenutet-Hermouthis.

The above interpretation of Isis-Hermouthis, and Isis-Tyche (Agathe), points to the underlying theme in Isidorus' Hymns, that of the divine nurse-mother and her beneficent feelings for all her human children throughout their life-span. Isis as Hermouthis and Agathe Tyche is the divine nurse and guardian of the child and man from birth to death, and a universal saviour god of the individual. She is shown, in fact, in Isidorus' Hymns to be both immanent and transcendent, a helper on earth and a divine judge, great mother, and creator-god, in the heavens.

Some expressions seemed to call for particular scrutiny. The terms ἐφίακω and ἐμπέτρω invited research. Dated much earlier than Isidorus' Hymns is an extant Hellenistic document from the Memphis Serapeum that must be contemporary with the introduction of Isis to the Greeks at that ancient centre of Egyptian theology, Memphis. In it Isis is called: ἐμπέτρεια καρπῶν, ἐμπέτρεια (UPZ 81, Sommium Nectanephi 9-10). That is the earliest extant Greek title for her and deliberately equates Isis (= Hermouthis?) with Demeter, the Greek 'discoverer' of cereal grain. In fact, by the first century B.C. ἐμπέτρεια has been dropped and some form of ἐφίακω is found in most of the aretiologies to Isis.

The Greek concept of a god who 'discovers,' that is, 'seeks and finds' for man (ἐφίακω) first occurs, as far as I am aware, in Xenophanes (11B 18 Diels). It signifies the creation by divine mental effort, or wits, of something new, be it a device, an invention, or a new skill. The thing discovered is, in its way, a kind of miracle and it causes a succession of good things to happen for man. Aeschylus' Prometheus is the cosmic deviser or saviour of men. Plato speaks of another 'discoverer,' Egyptian Thoth, calling him discoverer of the alphabet and writing.
Euripides knows Demeter and Dionysus as 'discoverers' of cereals and wine, respectively, and Demeter in the Marmor Parium of the third century B.C. is claimed as Athens' own 'discoverer' of cereals. The obvious attempt to cast certain gods in the rôle of discoverer for mankind may well stem from Eleusis.

The terms 'discover' and 'discoverer' as used above could have been given new prominence by the scientific thought of fifth-century Athens. Human invention or innovation was thought to release nature's δυνάμεις. The belief in a divine discoverer releasing innovations or miracles for man, that is, belief in a divine agent who worked intentionally for men, seems a kind of religious reaction to the scientific thought of the fifth century. Prometheus, the divine discoverer of τέχνα, is strangely outside nature (φύσις). Vastly powerful Tyche too must have continued as a Power in popular fifth-century religion, although men like Thucydides had deprived her of all personality (seeing her only as the author of the unpredictable and inexplicable). In fact, it may be that when fifth-century science and political thought ousted, or tried to oust, the old gods, it provided the challenge needed to create a new type of god. At any rate, the Discoverer-god appears conspicuous at this time.

In the first century B.C. Diodorus Siculus, as well as Isidorus of the Fayum, provides evidence that Egyptian Isis has now surely joined the Greek discoverer-gods. Diodorus associates her and Osiris with Prometheus, Demeter, Themis, and Hestia. Evidently, in the years from the fifth to the first centuries B.C. there had been a conscious attempt to promote the Eleusinian gods to the highest status (of Prometheus) and to add those two venerable goddesses, Themis and Hestia. They appear to have been looked on as a canon of saviours, and initiators of all progress in human civilization.

Isidorus, living on the fringe of the Greek world, echoes almost the same thinking. But to him, understandably, the royal goddess he adores is his Discoverer and he believes all other goddesses are but phases of her. And, while his goddess is like ancient Demeter (εὐρέτρια καρπῶν), she is really far greater, for she is εὐρέτρια ζωῆς. The phrase startles a scholar of classical Greek literature. A goddess who 'discovers' life, must also 'create' it; she must be the Creator who exists outside life, nature, and the cosmos. She, therefore, is essentially non-Greek, and, in fact, an Oriental creator-god.

But had not Plato implied he was giving a non-Greek, Egyptian, significance to the verb εὑρίσκω when he spoke of Thoth as 'discovering' the alphabet and writing? Müller considers that an Egyptian verb (ස') may well have contributed to this new extension of meaning in Greek εὑρίσκω: 'discover' = 'create out of nothing.' Isidorus says his goddess is one of the Olympians; at the same time he makes it clear that her power and range far surpass theirs.

On a somewhat lower plane, it should be noted that Egyptian Isis had always been associated with the literal meaning of εὑρίσκω (seek and find). In the legend, as known at least in Greek times, she 'searched for and found' the parts of murdered Osiris. The act seems to have survived as part of her sacred drama.
But to return to Isis eipétria ζωής, Most significantly, ancient Renenutet is Giver of Life in the hieroglyphic inscriptions on the walls of the small XIIth Dynasty temple within the larger Hellenistic complex at Medinet Madi. Very like the Isis of the later Greek aretalogies, she states in the first person: “I give all life and happiness eternally. I give all eternity eternally. I give all good fortune (health?) eternally.” This is the same Egyptian καυροτρόφος and μοίρα θεών I have mentioned above but here she is much earlier. This representation of Renenutet (known elsewhere as the Living One), had continued for some eighteen hundred years for all to see on the temple wall. Portrayed with Sebek, she extends the symbol of life (the ankh) to the king (ibid., 87-88). It is, therefore, no accident nor indeed the result of Greek association, that Isidorus has entitled his Isis-Hermouthis eipétria ζωής.

If we delve further into the past of this goddess, Renenet-Hermouthis, we see her associations widen. Turning to the Hebrew Psalm 103 (104), one reads of Hebrew Jahweh as a God of life, vegetation, and all nature, an all-powerful single heavenly deity, existing as the real power behind the visible sun. It is commonly thought that Akhnaten’s Hymn to the sun-god, Aton, had had profound religious influence not only in Egypt but in the neighbouring, more primitive lands including Palestine, and that this early Psalm, in fact, shows Jahweh almost like Akhnaten’s deity. Isidorus’ goddess in the first three Hymns is a close parallel. She could, for instance, be descended from Aton of the Amarna hymn. Incidentally, we note the importance of her son, the sun, in the cult. The concept of Renenutet (with Shay) as divine companion of the individual is thought also to have developed in the Amarna period.

Although the study of Isidorus’ Hymns leads to the conclusion that they date to the early first century B.C., their language, metre, grammar, syntax, and hymn style are not strongly influenced by the Koine of that era; rather their language harks back to the Greek epic-poetic tradition. Certain Greek Orphic terms seem peculiarly significant among the titles of the goddess: πλουτοδότης, παυκοκράτειρα and perhaps eipétria. Sokonopis’ titles, πλουτοδότης, παυκοκράτωρ, and κτίστης, are also Orphic. But, undoubtedly, the beginnings of the goddess (and her male partner, whatever his name) in reality go back to earliest Egyptian times. Behind Isidorus’ Hymns and thought lies a tradition that is semi-monothestic and very old. It is essentially concerned with one god behind the many forms of gods men worship. This is said to be the expression of an old Oriental concept of one divine Founder-Creator. Isidorus’ founder-creator is One, and demonstrably very old. She had been, when Isidorus wrote, the temple-goddess for at least eighteen hundred years. Her husband (for she is one of a family, or triad, in the typically Egyptian grouping of deities) is Sebek, and later ‘Sokonopis’ meaning ‘Sebek of the Nile.’ Their son is the sun-god, mentioned in very close association with his goddess-mother.

Isidorus is not a pure monotheist. In fact Suchos, the local Sokonopis, Anchoes, Apollo, Anubis, perhaps Ammon, surely certain royal divinities, and one
royal folk hero, undoubtedly were also worshiped in the temple. Yet amid all the synnaoi gods, Isidorus is emotionally attached only to the goddess. She alone, as a divine person, glows for him with warm motherly care and good will for men.

This is a study not so much of a cult as of the yearning of Hellenistic men for a divine helper. My examination of the Hymns of Isidorus has let me isolate and magnify, as it were, one local religious institution in a bi-cultural society, or rather it has let me isolate and magnify one of the believers. I find Isidorus’ divinity, the early Hellenistic Isis, constituted of many ancient elements, but emerging in his mind as one distinct, strong, and responsive, Person. In later Hellenistic representations she may still be a serpent with a human head (Plates XII-XIII); but she may also be a beautiful young mother with a child on her knee or at her side. Indeed, at the temple the dark-robed, erect, youthful figure of the universal merciful Mother is unmistakable (Plate XIV). By Isidorus, at least, she is worshiped as The Mother and Nurse of all, The One who forever listens to men’s prayers and exerts saving power in their behalf.
CHAPTER ONE
DATE OF THE HYMNS

Archaeological Evidence from the Site

Isidorus’ Hymns were found by an Italian excavation party in 1935 at Medinet Madi in the extreme south of the Fayum. The region had been superficially examined by several archaeological expeditions in the early twentieth century; and before 1935 Biblical texts (which later became part of the C. Beatty collection) and Manichae texts (which became part of the Berlin and London collections) had supposedly come from the same region. But the expedition from the University of Milan in 1935 was the first to undertake a thorough excavation of the temple site. They began work in a valley where aerial photographs showed in situ large, projecting, limestone blocks. The photograph of the completed excavations indicates a long series of buildings, constructed on a north-south axis with side-structures fanning out at the south end (Plate 1).

In 1935 the excavations began at what proved to be the southernmost portal, and revealed south of that portal an enclosed, rectangular court, almost divided in two by projecting cross-walls (Plates II-IV). I shall summarize Vogliano’s description of the whole temenos, with most emphasis on his account of the rectangular court, in which Isidorus’ Hymns were found.

The cross-walls, which are approximately the height of the south court’s outside walls, terminate in two attached columns or piers (which Vogliano consistently calls ‘pilastri’). On either side of the portal itself stand two lion statues. These and the whole rectangular court appear to be the προαστία and the λέωντες mentioned in the dedicatory inscriptions which appear on the south faces of each of the two piers in which the cross-walls terminate: ‘On behalf of King Ptolemy Theos Soter, Herakleodorus, son of Sostratos, and Isidora (sic), his wife, and their children, to Hermouthis Thea Megiste and Sokonopis Theos Megalos, the proasti(o)n and the lions. Year 12, Pachon (s) 2.’ The inscription on the east pier is the same as that on the west except that the σίγμα of Pachons and the final

1. Published by Vogliano, Primo, Secondo Rapporto, 1935-37; see B. Comparative Table of Editions and Commentary, p. iv. For the exact location of Medinet Madi, and Vogliano’s excavations, see Edda Bresciani, Rapporto Preliminarie delle Campagne di Scavo 1966 e 1967, Istituto di Papirologia dell’ Università degli Studi di Milano, Missione di Scavo a Medinet Madi (Fayum-Egitto), Cisalpino, 1968, p. 23. See also Plates I-XI and XIV.

2. Recent excavations at Medinet Madi are reported in E. Bresciani, op. cit.
beta of the date are missing (Plate V a and b). Damage to the right edge of the stone may account for the omission.

The same piers bear Isidorus’ four hymn-inscriptions each signed with his name. The Hymns are without dedication or date, but like the dedications mentioned above, Hymns I, II, and III are addressed to Hermouthis, while II, III, and IV also mention Sokonopis and a third θεὸς god, Anchoes, the latter addressed as the goddess’ son (Plates VI-IX). The fourth Hymn is not in honour of the goddess but of a local hero-god, Porramanes (probably Amenemhet III, a XIIth Dynasty Pharaoh) who ‘founded’ the temple.

The arrangement of the hymns on the surface of the piers is oddly asymmetrical. Hymns I and II are adjacent, on the left, west pillar (Plates VI, VII, and X); III and IV are on the right of the entrance (Plates VIII and IX). Hymn I, facing south, below the west dedicatory inscription, is on four courses of stone (two headers in courses one and three, and one stretcher in two and four). Hymn II faces east and is opposite Hymn III and immediately adjacent to Hymn I. It is on three courses of stone (the first and third formed of one stretcher, the second of two headers). Thus the first course in Hymn II begins at the first course of stones in Hymn I. Hymn III is also on three courses of stone (one and two consisting of one stretcher and three of two headers). The signature appears beneath it on another stretcher. Thus II and III are on the reveals.

Hymn IV is on four courses of stone (one stretcher in courses one and three, and two headers in two and four). Vogliano’s report that Hymn IV was on the east pier but ‘within the vestibule’ suggests that it faced north. Of the two dedicatory inscriptions on the top south face of each pier, that on the west is above Hymn I, and that on the east has no lettering below it (Plates V a and b respectively).

While excavation was proceeding in 1935, and before the rest of the site was uncovered in 1936, the original ‘pilastri’ bearing the hymns and dedicatory inscriptions were moved to the Greco-Roman Museum in Alexandria. Thus, reconstruction of the actual arrangement of the inscriptions depends upon interpretation of the excavation reports, and analysis of the facsimiles published by Vogliano.

Excavations undertaken south of the rectangular court revealed a Processional Way leading to the Temple from the south. On each side, set into tiers of seats, a sphinx and lion paired face a similar pair across the Way (Plates II-IV). Between the sphinx and lion on the east is an altar bearing an inscription of 12 B.C. (Plate III), dedicated to the goddess Hermouthis by a strategos, one Zoballos. The base below the east lion bore an undated dedication to Apollo by a ζωοδόκε, while an undated dedication to Anubis, also by a ζωοδόκε, was carried by

4. Professor L. Koenen of the Classics Department at the University of Cologne saw the stones in Alexandria in 1963 and reports the inscriptions are now largely illegible because of the continuous deterioration of the pillars’ surface.
the base of the east sphinx.\textsuperscript{5}

With the discovery of the altar of Zobalos the excavations of 1935 terminated. In 1936 work was directed north of the south portal. Here a larger court, walled like the south forecourt, was uncovered, along with a complex of buildings lying to the west and east.\textsuperscript{6} North again, on the main axis, were discovered a second portal and a second court. Vogliano dates both these portals and courts to centuries II/I B.C.\textsuperscript{7}

North of the second court lay two successive colonnades leading into the forecourt of a small shrine or chapel. The chapel entrance on the ground level was completely blocked by debris but an upper level was excavated. Here were found another portal, and beyond it three cellae all bearing incised representations of Renenutet, Sebek and Amenemhet III. On the walls were many hieroglyphic inscriptions explaining the pictured representation.\textsuperscript{8}

The 1936 excavations continued to the northern limits of the precinct, where another Ptolemaic temple was found dedicated to Renenutet, Sebek, and Anubis.\textsuperscript{9} Vogliano dates it to III/II B.C., about a century before the complex to the south (see Plate I).

In summary the excavations of 1935-1937 revealed:
1. A fore-court south of the southernmost portal, which Vogliano dates to 96 B.C. from the dedicatory inscriptions (plates II-IV);
2. north of the southern portal a court, with a western and eastern complex of buildings, and north again, a second portal and court, all dated II/I B.C.;
3. North of 2, two colonnades and a fore-court leading to a large, square doorway on an upper level, which opened on a shrine of three cellae. (The lower floor showed massive destruction and so could not be excavated.) The inner shrine was authentically Pharaonic and dated by the excavators to the end of the XIth Dynasty, that is, about 1800 B.C.;
4. Beyond the Pharaonic temple of 3, at the north extremity of the site’s north-south axis, a rather small Ptolemaic temple of III/II B.C. (but not before Ptolemy Epiphanes, i.e., about 204-180.\textsuperscript{10} See Plate I).

In the dedication to Soter on the piers at the southernmost portal, the fore-court was called πρασόστιμον.\textsuperscript{11} Herodotus (IV 78) uses εν τῷ πρασόστιμῳ to mean ‘in the suburb,’ or ‘close to the city.’ The present court stood before a ‘city’ which was, in fact, the whole walled temenos or temple-city. The actual πρασόστιμον, the enclosed ‘rectangular’ court south of the first portal (Plate II), was not quite a regular rectangle. Its two projecting cross-walls were each about 8 m. 85. Between

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5. The three dedications, Vogliano, P. R., pp. 54 and 55, are republished as SEG VIII 543, 544, and 545 respectively. Apollo could be Anchoes, and Anubis could be equated to Sokonopis. See Hymn II 9, and note.
6. Vogliano, op. cit., Tav. VIII.
8. For the chapel and its hieroglyphic inscriptions, cf. ibid., pp. 10 ff. and 22 ff., and Tav. XXVI-XXXIV.
9. Ibid., Tav. XXXVII.
11. Vogliano, P. R. II ff.
them (and the hymn inscriptions), on the central axis of the temple, was an opening or doorway, some 4 m. wide. It had no trace of a door. The terminating ‘pilastri d’ accesso’ were 2 m. high, and so only a little higher than the sidewalls of the court.\textsuperscript{12} Their materials and workmanship provide some clue to their history. Everything was constructed of limestone blocks, but the stone of the sidewalls was inferior and its workmanship hasty (the blocks being held in place by carelessly mixed dark mortar). The projecting walls, which terminated in the piers, were of much more accurate structure, and their external facade, toward the continuing Processional Way, was carefully smoothed.\textsuperscript{18} Also their limestone, although of the same dingy yellow colour as the rest, was of better quality than the side-walls, for here it was relatively free of salt-petre. Its mortar, less dark in colour than that of the side-walls, was finer and more carefully laid. The projecting walls were intended to be impressive.

The inscriptions of the four Hymns were applied sometime after the blocks of the piers were in place, for all the lettering shows that it was inscribed so as to avoid cracks, chipping, and the like, in the stone (Plates VI-IX). Some mortar applied after the inscribing covers or partially covers certain letters.

There were a number of stages of reconstruction of mortar and paving of the Processional Way and court, but not all is clear in Vogliano’s description.\textsuperscript{14} He dates them ‘from several periods, some of which are 1 B.C.’ Several distinct periods of repair seem to appear:

1. a reconstruction of the vestibule, after Augustus but contemporary with a mosaic found under the south portal;
2. a later, hasty reconstruction of the west wall of the fore-courts and Processional Way;
3. a last hasty, and still more careless, reconstruction possibly at the end of III or IV A.D. (possibly contemporary with 2).

The constant repair implies that the vestibule and fore-courts complex was particularly cherished, and so well worth preservation and defence. Obviously it was subjected to several attacks, and finally to deliberate destruction.

\textit{Summary and Conclusion from the External Evidence}

Since the Hymns were inscribed after the piers were erected, and the piers themselves would appear to have been constructed in year 22 of Ptolemy IX Soter II, or 96 B.C. because of the date of the dedication, it might seem on first consideration that 96 B.C. should be the \textit{terminus post quem} for the inscribing of the Hymns. However, Soter II was not in Egypt in 96 B.C., his 22nd year. After his accession under the name of Soter II in 115 B.C., reigning with his mother, Cleopatra III, he was expelled from the country three times (in 110, 108, and

\textsuperscript{13} Ibid., p. 16.
\textsuperscript{14} Ibid., pp. 16 ff.
DATE OF THE HYMNS

107), and reigned uninterruptedly only after 88 B.C.\textsuperscript{15} His 22nd year fell during his absence from Egypt in 107-88. A date in the 22nd year therefore must be retroactive, inscribed later to date a document or a monument to a year earlier than the time of the actual inscription. A number of such retroactive dates appear in the Ptolemaic period,\textsuperscript{16} and in the case of Soter II himself, after his return in 88 B.C. scribes in the Thebaid began dating his reign in the 30th year as if it had never been interrupted.

So, although the piers must have been constructed in 96 B.C., which would have been the 22nd year, the dedication itself could not have been put on the piers until Soter's actual return in 88 B.C. The Hymn inscriptions must then be dated in or after 88. The *terminus ante quem* for the inscriptions is almost surely before 80, the year in which Soter died, although we cannot be absolutely certain about this. Evidence from the mortar etc. suggests it is the first century and before 12 B.C., the date of the altar of Zobalus.\textsuperscript{17}

*Evidence from the Content of the Hymns*

There are but two passages in the four Hymns that could give any clue to their date, lines 16-18 of Hymn III, and the use of *αὐτῆς*, in Hymn I, 26.

Although allowance must be made for traditional expressions and generalities, III 16-18 states certain facts: that somewhere, contemporary with the King's rule, there are, or were, wars, massacres, etc.; but this king, in the face of his numerous, powerful foes, with a 'few' followers, has been protected by the goddess' power (*στῆνος, δικαυόμενος*, 17). That is, the King has narrowly won a victory. At least some of this is traditional language, such as the wars, massacres, and the goddess' defence of her favourite in the face of numerous foes. Previously (lines 12-15), in what could be an especially traditional description of the King and which, incidentally, could also be an older passage, Isidorus says: "This most beloved King rules Asia and Europe (13) bringing peace and other natural blessings to his people (14-15)." The above are but vague allusions at best, but they do agree generally with the history of Egypt during the reigns of Soter II, especially when he returned and ruled for the last time.

Dynastic quarrels within this royal family, chiefly between Soter II and his mother, Cleopatra III, are well known. Upon his expulsion in 107, she and his brother, Alexander I, began a new system of dating.\textsuperscript{18} After her death in 101, Alexander I continued to rule with his niece, Berenice III, as Queen. (She was, by the way, the daughter of Soter II.) But throughout his reign Alexander was at


\textsuperscript{16} Ibid., pp. 11 ff.

\textsuperscript{17} See note 5 above. The conclusions about dating here are in accord with the usage of certain late words discussed in my analysis of the texts, and fit the palaeography of the inscriptions themselves. Although it cannot be precise, the palaeography is generally considered to fit best a late Ptolemaic or early Roman date. Cf. Vogliano, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

\textsuperscript{18} A. E. Samuel, *op. cit.*, p. 151.
loggerheads with the Greek population, particularly in Alexandria,\(^19\) and in 90 they revolted.\(^20\) Finally, on Alexander’s death in his ‘26th year’ as King, Soter II returned from Cyprus as Ptolemy IX, as it was said, in his ‘30th year’.\(^21\) And if the names were loosely used, he might be said to rule ‘both Europe (= Cyprus) and Asia (= Egypt).’ Judging by Alexander’s unpopularity in Alexandria, a case could be made for that city’s support of Soter. Perhaps the Memphis priesthood also supported him. In fact, there is evidence that after his return in 88, Soter was generally a less unpopular monarch than his predecessor.\(^22\) But almost immediately a serious revolt broke out in the Thebaid.\(^23\) It continued from 88 until 85 when he finally put it down with great severity. Thereafter he ruled with Berenice III until his death in 80 B.C.

Thus at several periods in his career, it could be said that Soter II ‘with a few’ faced numerous enemies, but in the second decade of the first century B.C. he finally prevailed. Obviously he would be ‘victorious’ on his return from each of his three periods of exile; but it would be most appropriate (and safe) to hail his victory either on his last return in 88 when his predecessor was dead, or after his triumph over the Theban rebels in 84.\(^24\) The repeated references to loyalty in III 24-27 suggest that his ‘party’ still suspects disloyalty, and lines 16-18 especially could have been written between 88 and 84 B.C.

Soter II’s interest in temple building and restoration might have brought him popularity with the Egyptian priesthood, with the exception, of course, of the priests of Thebes.\(^25\) Isidorus, it is to be remembered, was a priest. Bevan sets Soter’s greatest building activity in the years of his earlier reigns, from 115 to 107. His policy would, therefore, be well known in the 80’s.

That the Hymns’ content cannot be much later than the 80’s of the first century B.C., that is, later than Soter’s final reign, is proved by the reference to Isis as Queen of the World. Surely soon after the savage destruction of cult-life on Delos in 88, and the western onrush of Mithridates’ forces, it would be clear to all that Isis was not Queen of the Aegean World. There is some evidence that Isis’ cult did, in fact, at this time flee to sites in south Italy.\(^26\) The content of Hymn III fits the years 88-84, or 88-80, but cannot well be later.\(^27\)

In Hymn I 26 the goddess is called σωτείρα. There is a hieroglyphic inscription which Otto-Bengtson dates to 88 B.C., or thereafter, in which the name ‘Soteira’ occurs. They judge it to be a retroactive reference by Soter II to

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27. See A. E. Samuel, *op. cit.*, pp. 153-5, for the dating of the death of Berenice III and Alexander II.
Cleopatra II, with the title σωτείρα with Cleopatra II, Soter's grandmother. Although they refer to Isidorus' Hymns as closer in date to the lifetime of Cleopatra III, his mother, they think that the title 'Soteira' connoting Cleopatra II, in all likelihood was restored by Soter II after he removed the damnatio memoriae imposed on his grandmother by her rival Cleopatra III. Necessarily this must have been not only after the death of Cleopatra III in 101, but also some time after his return.

Finally, one should heed A. D. Nock's remarks that the names Σωτείρα and Σωτήρ were 'a matter of royal policy,' that is, they are to be understood as directed primarily to the Greek element. In essence, they were propaganda; not a means one ruler took of offending another — although Cleopatra III's self-assertion against Cleopatra II is well attested.

Therefore, while the title σωτείρα of Hymn I may bear a subtle hint of the end of the struggle between Cleopatra III and her rival, the older Cleopatra II, it is more important to note that the Fayum Hymns were written expressly for Greeks who frequented the Temple, and for whom this title had especial significance. It echoes Soter's own title which appears immediately above Hymn I in the dedication on the west pier. By his assumed title, Soter, or Saviour, he undoubtedly associated himself particularly with the cult of Isis, which can, of course, be viewed as a political faction. The author of the Hymns is a member of the Isiac party, and supports Soter II; his Hymns are both strong political and religious statements of loyalty. This interpretation of their purpose seems clearly substantiated by the author's emphasis on 'loyalty' in III 24-27. This view also agrees with what we will see in Chapter III to be motivation for the spread of the cult of Isis under the early Ptolemies. It seems a little naive to rob 'Soteira' of contemporary partisan significance; these are not the Hymns of a starry-eyed, secluded visionary.

Summary and Conclusion from the Internal Evidence

The Hymns could not have been composed later than the 80's of the first century B.C., the last years of Soter's reign for, thereafter, they would have been foolishly anachronistic. Hints of disturbances in III 16-18, and stress on loyalty, fit Soter II's last years as King of Egypt, especially after the end of the revolt at Thebes. For a few brief years Isis might still be called Queen of the World; an Egyptian king, the traditional protégé of Isis, was still on the Egyptian throne; traditional policy and practices were probably still followed at the Court; and the Romans might still be ignored.

Another possibility, of course, is that none of these references may really

29. Ibid., p. 92, n. 1.
apply to Soter II's reign, and that only the actual inscriptions are to be so dated, with the Hymns being considered earlier. Yet the total evidence from the line-by-line commentary fits II/I B.C. and Soter II's reign; and, although one might argue that the Hymns could be older, and re-edited, their basic tendency toward monotheism, their Orphic association, and their strong relationship to the other Isiac aretalogies of the first century B.C. (and later), would be most remarkable in III/II B.C. No similar aretalogies are known before the first century B.C.
CHAPTER TWO
THE HYMNS: TEXTS, TRANSLATIONS AND COMMENTARIES

Hymn I (Plate VI)

πλουτοδότι βασιλέα θεῶν, Ἑρμοθέα ἅνασσα,
pantokrάτειρα, τύχη Ἄγαθή, μεγαλόπνευμε Ἰσι,
Δροι ὑψώτη, ξώθης εὐφέρτα πᾶσης,
pantων ἔργων ἐμέλησέ σου, δορ’ ἀνάδοιχς

5 ἀνθρώπουι βῶν τε καὶ εὐνομίαν τε ἀπαοι,
cαὶ θεαμοὺς κατέδειξας, ὥ’ εὐδωκία τις ὑπάρχῃ,
cαὶ τέχνας ἀνέδωκας, ὥ’ εὐσχῆμων βίος εἶη,
cαὶ πάντων τε φύσι εὐανθέα εὐρεος καρπῶν.
Σοὶ τε χάρω συνεύστηκ’ ὁ πόλος καὶ γαῖα ἄπασα

10 καὶ πνεύμα ἀνέμων καὶ ἱλας ὁ γλυκοφεγγής.
𝚫ή δυναμεὶ Νείλου ποταμού πληροῦνται ἄπαντες

15 ὡρὴ ὑπωρησί, καὶ λαβρότατον χείρ᾽ ὕδωρ
gαίαν πάσαν ἐπὶ, ὥ’ ἀνέγλυπτος καρπός ὑπάρχῃ.
ὡςοι δὲ ἐξούσι προτοὶ ἐπ’ ἀπειροῦ γαῖη.

Θηράκες καὶ Ἑλλήνες, καὶ ὅσοι βάρβαροι εἶσι,

20 οὐνομά σοι τὸ καλὸν, πολυτιμῶν παρὰ πάσιν,

25 διώναι φράζου” ἰδίαις, ἰδι’ ἐν πάρτῃ.

'Ἀστάρτην Ἀρτεμίν' σε Σύροι κλήσουσι Ναυάιν

20 καὶ Νεκταρίαν ἅγια’ Ἰαννίτην,

30 ἔλεγον δὲ ἀγάλματα θεῶν καὶ θρήκεις ἀνήρες,

Ἑλλήνες δ’ Ἅρην μεγαλόθρονον ἡ’ Ἀφροδίτην

καὶ Ἐστίαν ἅγαθήν, καὶ Ρείαν, καὶ Δήμητρα,

Ἀγάπτων δὲ Θεών, ὅτι μοῦν εἶ οὐ ἄπασαι

ὦςοι δ’ ἐμ’ ῥαιρας θανάτου συνέχουνται ἐν εἰρκητή,

καὶ ὅσι ἀγαπωπιας μέγαλας ὡράουν’ ὀδονταί,”

καὶ οἱ ἐν ἄλλοτρὶ χώρῃ πλανοῦμενοι ἀνήρες

καὶ ὅσι ἐμ’ πελάγη μεγαλὸς χειμὼν πλέουσι
O wealth-giver, Queen of the gods, Hermouthis, Lady, Omnipotent Agathe Tyche, greatly renowned Isis, Deo, highest Discoverer of all life, manifold miracles were Your care that You might bring livelihood to mankind and morality to all; (and) You taught customs that justice might in some measure prevail; You gave skills that men's life might be comfortable, and You discovered the blossoms that produce edible vegetation. Because of You heaven and the whole earth have their being; And the gusts of the winds and the sun with its sweet light. By Your power the channels of Nile are filled, every one, At the harvest season and its most turbulent water is poured On the whole land that produce may be unfailing. All mortals who live on the boundless earth, Thracians, Greeks and Barbarians, Express Your fair Name, a Name greatly honoured among all, (but) Each (speaks) in his own language, in his own land. The Syrians call You: Astarte, Artemis, Nanaia, The Lycian tribes call You: Leto, the Lady, The Thracians also name You as Mother of the gods, And the Greeks (call You) Hera of the Great Throne, Aphrodite, Hestia the goodly, Rhea and Demeter. But the Egyptians call You 'Thiouis' (because they knew) that You, being One, are all Other goddesses invoked by the races of men. Mighty One, I shall not cease to sing of Your great Power, Deathless Saviour, many-named, mightiest Isis, Saving from war, cities and all their citizens: Men, their wives, possessions, and children. As many as are bound fast in prison, in the power of death, As many as are in pain through long, anguishued, sleepless nights, All who are wanderers in a foreign land.
And as many as sail on the Great Sea in winter
When men may be destroyed and their ships wrecked and sunk . . .
All (these) are saved if they pray that You be present to help.

35 Hear my prayers, O One Whose Name has great Power;
Prove Yourself merciful to me and free me from all distress.

Isidorus
wrote (it)

Hymn I, set below the dedicatory inscription to Ptolemy Theos Soter on the south face of the west pillar, is the only Hymn of Isidorus to be so inscribed. It immediately faces those entering the south portal of the precinct from the Ceremonial Way.

1-3. Summary. Invocation of Isis Mighty in Name, as Egyptian Hermouthis, goddess of the Cereal Harvest, and the Greek goddesses, Tyche Agathe and Deo (Demeter).

Isidorus’ epithet appears to have Eleusinian association. Wealth-giving is also a traditional function of Egyptian royalty.

βασίλεια θεών: cf. βασιλεία, III 12. In the Orphic hymns βασίλεια and παρμακαλεία are common epithets. βασίλεια also is a title of Isis: A. I; D. S. I 27.4 (βασιλέως); H. Oxy. 36-37; 218; and App. Met. XI 4 (regina Isis).

Ἐρυμοῦθα: see Plates XI-XIV. Hermouthis or Thermouthis (with the definite article θ or τ) was the Greek transliteration of Rnn.wt.t or Rnn.t, the old Egyptian nurse-, or harvest-goddess.¹

The Determinative of the noun rnn.t (= The nurse, human or divine) is the figure of a seated woman holding a young child in her out-stretched arms. When that word signifies a goddess, that goddess is probably Hermouthis. Josephus speaks of a certain Thermouthis as a ‘nurse,’ and daughter of Pharaoh Amenophis; he associates her with Moses (quae Mosem educaverat).²

¹. The name, phonetically eren-wêrê, or ermite, may be transliterated as Renenutet or Renenet, derived from the verb rnn meaning bring up, nurse. The name belongs to the same word-stem as many other Egyptian words: 1. rnt: wet-nurse; 2. rnt: riches, fortune; 3. rnm: he who is brought up, a young man; 4. she who is brought up, a young woman; 5. rnt: cow, young bull-calf.
The verb-stem rnm is written in the Greco-Roman period as rnt and rnnntwtt (= the goddess Thermouthis) as rnt. It is interesting, in relation to Hymn I, to note that a similar word rnt (=pig?) is determined with the sign of a star and associated with Fate (S3w).
². Hermann, Das Kind und seine Hütterin, pp. 172 and 176 note 5, discusses this Hellenistic story and mentions its repetition by Epiphanius some three centuries later. Hermann associates Hermouthis closely with Horus (and Isis) and speculates that ‘Leto’ is in reality the goddess Hermouthis-Renenet (see Hdt. II 156, and Plu. de Is. c. 38). This indeed explains Artemis and Apollo as children of Isis = Hermouthis (Hdt. ibid.).
Thermuthis, Hermes, and Erenerut, etc., is the Egyptian cereal harvest
goddess frequently shown in snake form. She is a mother-goddess, mother of
Nephe or Nepet, and a fertility goddess. As here, she with her child is often
equated to Isis and the Horus Child. She is very prominent in the Amarna texts.3

Renenetet, nurse-goddess of the human infant and goddess of the cereal
harvest, is also the Egyptian goddess of human fate, and in this capacity
associated with Shay and Meschenet. Ancient Renenetet is shown in the relief
of the inner XIth Dynasty temple at Medinet Madi where, with Sebek, she gives the
king life, happiness, eternity and health (or safety), which, presumably, is his fate.
She is frequently the recipient of a table of food offerings. At least in the late
period, she is assimilated with Isis as 'Isermuthis.'

It may be of importance for Isis' later significance to note also that Renenet
as nurse of the living had a counterpart in the goddess Mert Seger, nurse of the
dead. These names seem, moreover, to represent two aspects of the same goddess,
for Renenet and Mert Seger have the same epithets.

Hermouthis may have had Mysteries in Egypt into which worshipers were
initiated. The ninth month, Pachon, saw the celebration of the birthday of the
corn-god, Nephe, her son. The previous month, Pharmuthi, bears her name. There
is evidence that a Synod of Thermouthis took place on July 13, A.D. 24-25;
Aelian refers to her here as worshiped in the form of a snake and closely
associated with Isis. We know she had been worshiped in the XIth Dynasty shrine
at Medinet Madi as a snake together with Sebek the crocodile god. See Plate XI.
Cf. XII a and b, XIII and XIV.

But Hermouthis' greatest significance by far seems to have been her
association with Shay as a symbol of man's life-span or human fate. Isis and her
family were said, like the other great gods in the late Egyptian period, to control
the two Powers. Shay may have some connection with Sebek, perhaps as the
Agathosdaimon. See Sokonopis II 9.4

3. Cf. e.g., N. de Garis Davies, "The King as
Priest of the Harvest," Bulletin of the Metropolitan
Museum of Art, The Egyptian Excavation 1920-29,
pp. 48-49, Tombs 48 and 57: "Within a shrine with
a Hat-Hor (literally, 'House of Horus,' i.e. 'Mother
of Horus') column, are two snake-goddesses, one,
Erenerutet, Lady of the Granary, human-bodied
and nursing the young king on her lap; the other a
crowned snake on the cushion-sign and within the
symbol of the upraised arms, with a figure of the
grown-up king standing under her chin, as if in her
care. Presumably this is only a second figure of the
same goddess, portrayed in a similar role to the
first. The picture of Erenerutet with the child in her
arms we know to represent the birth of Nephe, the
corn-god, which was celebrated on the first of the
ninth month; here the child bears the name of the
reigning king so that identification of the king with
the corn-god is made extremely clear . . .

Although the goddess was the recipient of
gifts at the popular Thanksgiving, the occasion of
harvest touched the nation's welfare and royal
functions too closely for any but a cosmogonic god
to suffice . . . The rite enacted by the king (in this
ceremony) seems quite simple as if we have to do
with a plain return of thanks to the Creator . . .

4. For Renenet's ancient name, see WB., vol.
II, pp. 435-7, and in the Greco-Roman period,
ibid., pp. 438-9. For Renenet in the XIth Dy
nasty, see A. Vogliano, S. R., pp. 22 ff. For
Hellenistic Renenet as Isermuthis, see SEG VIII
528 (Medinet Madi); ibid., 635 (Antinoopolis). cf.
ibid. 653. For the harvest festival in Pachon, see
Parker, The Calendars of Ancient Egypt, p. 38. For
Renenet-Hermouthis associated with Shay, see S.
Morenz and D. Müller, Schicksal, pp. 20 ff.;
δώσων: cf. 19, II 29, III 1, 19. It is used of Isis also in H. Oxy. 15; 19; 121 and Ankh. 9.

2. παντοκράτεια: this epithet is a title of Isis in H. Oxy. 20. Cf. its use in h. Orph. X of Physisis, and XXIX of Persephone. Suchos is παντοκράτωρ in IV 23, and Isis is παντοκράτωρ at Megalopolis (IG V 2, 472). For Ἰἀ (Isis) as παντοκράτεια see III 1 note.

τύχη ἀγαθή: cf. II 1, III 19. In H. Oxy. 51 Agathe Tyche is equated to Isis. A particularly early Hellenistic inscription from Miletus speaks of an Agathe Tyche that must in its association with Osiris be Isis. See Welles, RC 5, 22 = Pouilloux, Choix d'Inscr. Gr. 37. The inscription is dated 288/87 B.C.5 And the image of Isis-Tyche-Panthea appears on one side and the Mother of the gods on the obverse of a Roman coin of the first century B.C. (Alfeld, Isiscult.). τύχη ἀγαθή was inscribed on the Nilometer. See Danielle Bonneau, La Crue du Nil, Plate VI, p. 314.

μεγαλώσυμε: cf. II 1, III 2.

3. With this line compare III 2, IV 4.


ψωτη: cf. IV 4 where the epithet also qualifies Deo. This adjective may stand by itself as a title. See OGI 96-7; SIG 1181. ψωτος refers to Hebrew Jahweh in the Psalms: e.g., Lxx, ibid., 106 (107).11. See also Paus. 9.8.5.

ζωης πασος: cf. II 3, 8, 20, III 5, IV 25. ζωη includes meanings ranging from human livelihood to human existence. Life, Happiness, Eternity, and Health (or Safety) are grouped in a constant Egyptian formula; they are the chief gifts of Egyptian gods to man. The formula also occurs at Medinet Madi. For the expression, see Frankfort, Kingship, p. 56, also Hymn I, Hermouthis, 1, above.

eυρετρα: see also II 3, and 8, ευρεος. Cf. IV 6. The title eυρετρα seems to qualify Δηοι. This noun is not known before Isidorus’ Hymns where he relates it specifically to ζωη and καρποι. Cf. an analogous expression: ἄρχητων τῆς ζωῆς, Acts Ap. III 15; cf. ibid., V 31, and Heb. II 10.

Isis herself appeared in a cult for Greeks early in the Hellenistic era, bearing the title ευρηγεται καρπων, ευρηγετα (UPZ 81.9-10). The title portrays Isis in the rôles of Giver of Cereals, the staff of life, and therefore probably as Egyptian Isis-Hermouthis deliberately equated to Demeter. The equation Isis = Hermouthis must be understood, for Isis in more ancient times had not been a vegetation goddess; she had become such when she syncretized with the Egyptian cereal goddess. The equation Isis = Hermouthis lies behind Herodotus’ Greco-Egyptian equation: Isis = Demeter, for Demeter is, like Hermouthis, preeminently the Greek goddess of cereal grain.

By the first century B.C. ευρηγετα had been apparently replaced in Greek cult by πρωτη ευρισκειν and ευρετρα. In 1 B.C., after Isidorus, Diodorus is first to use ευρετρα (I 13 ff.) when he ranks Isis and Osiris with Greek Discoverer-gods (ibid. 62.2 ff.). Harder’s M. 3c (which may in part be first century B.C.) also uses ευρισκο and associates Hermes-Thoth with Isis: και γραμματα ευρον μετα Ερμου (see Plate XIV for the full M. text). M. 7 quotes Isis: ἐγώ εἰμι η πρωτη καρπων ἀνθρωπων ευροδου. Hermes-Thoth is associated as a Discoverer with Isis and Horus in the Song of the Kore Kosmou (Nock, Fr. XXIII 66 ff.). Again Kyr. uses ευρισκο (of Isis): αὐτη γὰρ εὑρων πάντα καὶ εἴλομην πονών; and H. Oxy. 81 and 185 calls her: εὐρετρα (πειρασω). It is interesting to find Apuleius translating ευρισκο etc. by Latin ‘repertus’ and ‘inventio’ (Met. XI 2). Cf. Horace Sat. I, III 104.

For Isis in statuary as ευρετρα καρπων, see Klaus Parlasca, Ein Isiskultrelief im Rom, Taff. 56-57.

Both Zetesis and Heuresis are words of central importance in the Eleusinian Mysteries. They express one phase and perhaps the chief one of Demeter’s saving power, her power to seek and find for mankind. In the Eleusinian legend, Demeter had searched for and found her daughter, and she discovered cereal grain. The doctrine of divine Discoverers seems well known by the first century B.C. when Diodorus gives what appears to be a canonical list: Prometheus, Demeter, Themis, Hestia, Isis and Osiris. His words, incidentally, are evidence that the two Egyptians have by now been accepted among Eleusinian Discoverers.
The doctrine of Discovery seems to be expounded first in Aeschylus’ Prometheus Bound where Prometheus discovers τέχνη for men. It is important to remember that Aeschylus was also a native of Eleusis. Aristophanes does not mention εἰρίσκω etc., but addresses the Eleusinian goddess as Saviour: (Ra. 382) άνώτερα καρποφόρος βασίλεια άγνώριστον ὠργίων διακοσμώνος while Euripides using εἰρίσκω refers to the Eleusinian pair, Demeter and Dionyus, as Discoverers (Ba. 275-9). Plato ignores Eleusinian Demeter, recognizing only Greek Prometheus and Egyptian Hermes-Thoth as Discoverers (Protagoras 321 ff.; Phdr. 274 ff.). But the Marmor Parium officially proclaims Eleusinian Demeter’s Discovery (for Athens).6

Greek εἰρίσκω, meaning be the first to discover, invent, devise, that is, create out of nothing, is essentially a Greek concept. It may be the Greek translation of Egyptian ṣ “, which means begin, be the first (WB IV, pp. 406-7). Cf. D. Müller, Isisaretalogien, pp. 33 ff. This verb describes the activity of many Egyptian major gods, among them Thoth (see Edfu II, 80; Dendera II, 17e) and Isis (see Edfu I, 149, 151). Cf. RARG, pp. 699 ff. Plato’s selection of Hermes-Thoth as a Discoverer-Creator may indicate specific knowledge of Egyptian cult language and perhaps of this verb. And Isidorus’ and Diodorus’ references to Isis as a Discoverer noticeably agree with, for instance, the Edfu inscription.

4.8. Summary. Isis’ works (ἐργα) bring men the basic gifts of civilized life: morality, laws and technology. The great Discoverer of cereals, Isis, has brought men justice for, after the discovery of cereal food, they need no longer practise barbarism, that is, cannibalism. Cereal grain henceforth also provides men with their first capital for it ensures them safety and stability within an orderly community.

4. ἐργαν: ἐργα is a characteristic term in Hellenistic hymns indicating works, deeds, miracles, the evidence of a god’s δύναμις or, less frequently, his ἀρετή. ἀρεταὶ (plural) is sometimes used as a synonym for ἐργα.

ἀναδοτις: the verb is used of Persephone: ἀναδοτὸς συχάσας πάλιν (Plu. Fr. 133.3). It is also used of Ge ‘yielding’ καρπῶν (Plu. Cam. 15). Cf. II 21 below: πλοῦτω...ἀνέδωκας. Quite possibly it is Eleusinian terminology.

5. βίων: βίος is ‘sustenance’ (H. Cer. 451): φερέασθων. (Hes. O. 42), κρύφωνες γὰρ ἔχουσιν θεοὶ βίου ἀφαρωποί (ibid., 232), φέρει... γαῖα πολὺν βίων, (and K. K. 65) οὐν (Isis and Osiris) βίων τὸν βίων ἐπιθρώσων. Cf. h. Cer. 306: ὁδὲ τὶ γαῖα στερμ’ ἀνέει· κρύπτετω γὰρ εὐστέφανος Δημήτριη.

εἰνομίης: εἰνομίη is one of the daughters of Themis in Hesiod’s Theogony (902): ἡ τέκεν Ἐνομιῆς εἰνομίην τε δίκαια τε καὶ εἰρήνην. Cf. Pi. O. 13:β. h. Orph. XLI 2, etc. In Orphic hymn XL 18-20 Eleusinian Demeter is asked for

6. Not all poets refer to this aspect of Demeter; for instance, Callimachus and Theocritus know the Eleusinian goddess as goddess of cereal grain but they do not use εἰρίσκω (cf. Call. Cer. 2; Theocritus X 42). Nevertheless, the doctrine of Discovery-Creation (and the divine Instructor) was well established, and Diodorus, as we have seen, defined it: πρῶτην...συγκοσμεῖα καὶ τὴν καταγωγιὰν οὐκότι καὶ φυλακὴν ἐπισωθήσαται καὶ σπείραν καταθείαι (V 68.1. Cf. ibid., 114).


The goddess had put an end to immorality, that is, cannibalism, by providing men with cereal food. In D. S. I 14.1 this explanation is made: πρώτων μὲν γάρ πάνοι τῆς ἀλληλοφαγίας τῷ τῶν ἄνθρωπων γενός εὑρούσης μὲν Ἰαδός τῶν τε τοῦ πυρός καὶ τῆς κρύπτης καρπῶν ... ἡδέως μεταθέσθαι πάντας τὰς τροφὰς διὰ τε τὴν ἡδόνην τῆς φύσεως τῶν εὐφεστῶν καὶ διὰ τὸ φαντάσαι συμφέρον ἔπαρχειν ἀπέχεισθαι τῆς κατ’ ἀλλήλους ὑμότητος. Cf. ibid., 2 ff. and V 68.3: θέναι δὲ φασί καὶ νόμος τῆν ἴων. M. repeats the same theme (21; Isis speaks): ἐγὼ μετὰ τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ Ὅσιριδος τὰς ἄνθρωποφαγίας ἔσωσα, and (52): ἐγὼ εἰμί ἡ θεομορφός καλούμενη. Hermetic literature knows Isis and Osiris as the teachers of ἐνσωματίζοντας, see Εἰρήν, 3 above. The title is often used referring to Eleusinian goddesses. See Jane Harrison, Prolegomena, pp. 136 ff.

In M. 54 and H. Oxy. 119-120, Isis bears the title which she probably took from Demeter (cf. Müller, Isisaretalogien, p. 43, note 8). In H. Oxy. 83 Isis is θεομορφός and in A. 20 she is θεομορφή.

κατεδείξαν: cf. ἐδείξε ἤ 14, below. The verb is used of Demeter in, for example, D. S. V 68.1 (see 3, εἰρήν, above). Cf. the use of this verb to predicate a living god in h. Orph. LXXVIII 3 (Themis), and LXXVI (the Muses: ἀνεδείξατε).

eὐδόκει: Isis is closely associated with δικαιωσύνη, δίκη, δίκαιος, etc. On Delos she is, for instance, Ἰσις Δικαιωσύνη (Délos V 2079 and note = Roussel, CE, p. 147; and Dél. op. cit., 2103 = Roussel, CE, p. 122 = Ditt., SIG 1131, 114/13 B.C.) and Ἰσις Ἀφροδίτη δυκαία (Délos V, 2158 = Roussel, CE, p. 162, 92/91 (?)) B.C.). Isis is also Δικαίωσις at Hermopolis (Plu. de Is. C. 3, 352b). Diodorus (I 14.3) associates Isis with nomoi and to dikaioumen: θέναι δὲ φασὶ καὶ νόμος τῆν ἴων καθ’ οὐδὲ ἀλλήλους διώνυσιν τοὺς ἄνθρωπους τῷ δίκαιῳ καὶ βέβερως πανοσσαθ. Cf. also Chalkis 8 and Harder’s note (ibid., Karpokrates, p. 14). The concept of νόμος and δίκη as a god’s gifts to men is Greek. It is found first in Hesiod (Op., 276 ff.) where Zeus gives these gifts only to men. For the concept of law and order among the Egyptians as symbolized in Μα’at, see RARG, pp. 430 ff.: Egyptian Μα’at came into being fully perfected at the time of Creation. Cf. Müller, Isisaretalogien, pp. 42 ff.


7. τέχνης: in K. K. 68 Isis and Osiris become τεχνῶν ... εἰσηγητα τις ἀνθρώπων. Cf. ibid., 64. In the preceding passage on Creation and Civilization, i.e. Discovery (lines 3-7), it is to be noted that not only the creation of animals, fish, birds, etc., but also the creation of men is condensed in line 3. Cf. Hymn II 3. It would seem really to be a hymn about progressive development or civilization after the creation of mankind.
The word has the meaning of well to do, comfortable, in *Acts Ap.* XVII: 12 and XIII 50.

8. (φύσις) εὐσινεθία: cf. II 19: εὐσινεθεὶ ... καρπός, εὐσινεθής is a poetic adjective used with, for example, ἄγροι (Th. 1200). It occurs in the initial hymn (to Demeter) in Aristophanes' *Frogs* (373): ἐς τοὺς εὐσινεθείς κόλπους. It may be Eleusinian for it is closely associated with the cult of Demeter (Ge) and Persephone. Cf. Hes. *Th.* 878: κατὰ γαῖαν ἀπείρου ἄνθρωπον. The phraseology refers to the flowering nature of all vegetation; like Plato's Demiourgos, the creator-discoverer goddess of Isidorus is the artificer of the whole physical universe.

εὐφρεὸς: see εὐφρείτης, 3 above and note.

καρπῶν: cf. 12, II 3, 19, III 14, 15. In *h. Cer.* 4 Demeter is ἀγγλακόρπος, and *ibid.,* 471 it is said of Demeter: καρπὸν ἄνθικεν. The term καρπός is closely associated with the Eleusinian circle of gods: (Demeter) Hdt. I 1193; Ar. *Ra.* 384; Ar. *Pl.* 515; Ar. *Ec.* 14; Paus. 8.53.7; CIG 4082; IG 12.5.226; SIG 820.5; *h. Orph. ad Musaeum* 6; *ibid.,* XI 18; (Bacchus) *ibid.,* L 10, LIII 8; and (Persephone) *ibid.,* XXIX 10, 17.

Herodotus' equation of Isis to Demeter indicates that by the sixth/fifth century B.C. at the latest, Isis must have usurped something of the character of Hermouthis, in her capacity as goddess of harvest (see 1 above). Cf. Müller, *Isisaretalogion*, p. 3, notes 9, 10; and p. 31, notes 3 ff. By early Hellenistic times Isis was officially presented to Greeks at the Memphis Serapeum as THE goddess of karpous (UPZ 81). Isidorus is apparently following Memphite doctrine, fully equating her to Demeter, discoverer of cereals. He also adds Hermouthis and Tyche Agathe to the equation. For Isis as (Ceres) *alma frugum pares originalis,* see *App. Met.* XI 2.

9-13. Summary. Isis is the creator of the physical universe, and therefore giver of the Nile flood. The Nile flood (= the Egyptian New Year) and the birthday of the world are dated Thoth 1.

9. συνεστὶ: the verb in the *Timaeus* predicates the Demiourgos (Pl. *Ti.* 32b): συνεστὶστοι τοὺς ὀφρανούς. συνεστὶ can be used of the 'settling' of an inert mass or mixture, as in *K. K.* 30, 50, 52. Cf. Ovid, *Meta.* I 54: consistere 'take their place in creation.' Isis here is the creator of the world (like Sokonopis, *Hymn II 11*). Cf. M. 12 ff., *App. Met.* XI 5, IV 30 (Venus-Isis), and Plu., *de Is.* 77. Both Isis and Osiris are said to be creators of the physical cosmos in *PGM* V.98-101, 460 (τῶν κτίσματα). In the Oath of the Mystae of Isis (lines 10-12), *PSI* 1290, the following oath was sworn by the creator, ἰὼν τῶν κατὰ τὸν ὀχάσαντος καὶ κρῶν [τὸν ὄρος τὴν γῆν ἀπ’ ὀφρανοῦ καὶ οὐκοῦν] ἀπὸ φωτός καὶ ἡμέραν ἐκ νυμφήδας κτείς. Cf. *PSI* 1162.1-3.

ὁ πόλος: the polos is the dome over the atmosphere (αἴθρην and ἀήρ). Cf. *Stob.* 1.41.45.

10. πνεοι τον άνέμων: cf. IV 13, III 22: Εὐρων πνειάς. Isis is often said to be goddess of the winds, rivers, and sea. Cf. M. 39: ἐγὼ πτωμών καὶ άνέμων καὶ

Isis herself is the goddess of the sun and light in H. Oxy. 246-9: σὺ καὶ [στὸ] φως καὶ [τὸ] ἔργα ὑπετάσματος κυρία: ibid., 295: σὺ καὶ (ἐστι) τὸ φῶς, the Song of Mesomedes 14 (= Powell, Collectanea Alexandrina 197 = Peck, Andros, 145): τὸ ρέλεν ἄρρητον and (ibid., 9) πῦρ Αἴγως. In the last, as in Apuleius, Isis is in the underworld.

11. δυνάμει: cf. 25 (below), Hymn II 17, and IV 9, 40. The word is used specifically for the miraculous power of a god. See C. B. Welles, RC, note 38. Divine power, δυνάμες, is equivalent to ἀριστήρ, as in Plu. de Is. II 360e. Cf. Lxx Ps. 20.2a; Ev. Matt. XI 21; Ev. Marc. V 30; Ev. Lu. VIII 46, VI 19.

Νεῖδος ποταμοὶ πληροῦνται ἀπαντής: cf. II 17-20. From the time of the Pyramid Texts, Isis had been associated with Sothis, who was Greek Sirius or the Dog Star. Sothis’ heliacal rising (δυνάμει, 11) coincided approximately with the rise of the Nile flood. See R. Merkelbach, Isisfeste, p. 28. Numerous passages from Egyptian texts testify to Isis’ close astrological association with the rise of the Nile. Plutarch (de Is. 21) explains the star Sothis as the ψευκή of Isis and says the Egyptians think Sothis is her star precisely because it ‘causes’ the Nile flood (ibid., 38).

The aretalogies speak in the same way. Cf. M. 9: ἐγὼ ἐμοὶ ἢ ἐν τῷ τοῦ κυνὸς ἀστρῷ ἐπετέλεσα, D. S. I 27.4: ἐν τῷ ἄστρῳ τῷ κυνῷ, and H. Oxy. 140: ἵππος. See also PGM II 23, RARG, p. 329, illustration 84, and Müller, Isisaretalogien, p. 33, note 10. The ποταμοὶ of the line may be the Nile’s numerous canals, or the plural may occur metri gratia. In H. Oxy. Isis controls the Nile, the Eleutheros, and the Ganges. See also M. 39, and Luc., D. deor. 3, where, as in 10 above, she is goddess of rivers generally.

12. ὀπώρη: ὀπώρη is that part of the Greek year which occurs between the risings of Sirius and Arcturus, that is, the last days of July, all of August, and part of September. In Greece, as in the temperate zone generally, it is the ripening and harvest season, and from early times the Greeks associated it with Demeter and the constellation of Orion. See Hes., Op. 597-9; A. Fr. 304.7. Greek Sirius is the star of ὀπώρη (II. XXII 27 ff.). Furthermore, the Nile flood in July is also
associated with Sirius (and Orion). Isidorus is obviously misusing the Greek ὑπώρη, for in Egypt, July to September was not the period of the harvest season, but rather the time of the Nile flood and subsequent planting. Isidorus is using a Greek epic formula which refers to a period of the year in Greece which is quite a different part of the agricultural year in Egypt. Cf. II. XVI 385 (of Zeus): ἡμαρ’ ὑπώρη ὑπελαμμέναν χέει ὑδῷρ. This line refers, of course, to the destruction of the harvest. Cf. too Hes., Op. 676-7: ὅτ’ ἔρως ἀλαμοὼν ομαρίςας Δώς ἀμφρώ πολλὰ ὑπώρη.

The Greek harvest season ὑπώρη is also associated with Persephone’s marriage, and its symbolic equation to ζωή καὶ θάνατος . . . θηρικής. Cf. h. Orph. XXIX 14: λέγει μετόπωρα νυμφέειόν. Isidorus may really have this in mind for the Egyptian new year, which began theoretically with the coming of the Nile flood, was also celebrated as the marriage of Isis. His apparent confusion may be merely a conflation of the two marriage festivals at ὑπώρη.

Isidorus’ epic localization of ὑπώρη is to be noted.

13. ἀνέγλασις: an hapax legomenon, meaning continuing without end, unfailing, that is, annual. The metre of the line is faulty; the last syllable by position is long, but must be scanned as short.

14-24. Summary. The names given Isis Polyonymos by the different races of men are: Astarte, Artemis, Nanaia, Leto, Mother of the gods, Hera, Aphrodite, Hestia, Rheia, Demeter. Only the Egyptians know her true name which is simply Thioi, meaning The One.

With Isis Polyonymos (18-22) should be compared Zeus Polyonymos of h. Ceres 18. Lists of different names for divinities are not unparalleled in Greek hymns. Isidorus says the same goddess’ true name, known only to the Egyptians, is not ‘Isis’ but ‘The One’.


The Thracian element, after the Macedonian, was the largest national group in Ptolemaic armies, a fact shown by Alexandrian epitaphs. (Cf. Archiv 6, p. 385; Otto-Bengston, Geschichte, p. 83, note 1; Rostovtzeff, The Social and Economic History of the Hellenistic World, Vol. 1, p. 146; and Bevan, Ptolemaic Egypt, p. 107, note 1). Under the third and fourth Ptolemies Thrace had been part of the Egyptian empire.


Dianam, Siculi trilingues Syriam Proserpinam, Eleusini vetustam seum Cererem, Iunonem alii, Bellonam alii, Hecatom isti, Rhamnianus illi, et qui nascentis dei solis inchoantibus illustrantur radiis Aethiopes utrique priscaque doctrina pollenles Aegyptii, caestimonios me propriis pecorinentes, appellant vero nomine reginae Isisem.”
16. οὖνομα ὅν τὸ καλὸν: cf. H. Oxy. 126-7: τὸ καλὸν ἄνων. The true name of Isis has immense magic virtue. See Θεόω, 23.
πολυπτηρός: the adjective refers to Demeter and Persephone (Hes. Th. 594), Rhea (h. Orph. XIV 5) and Persephone (ibid., XXIX 3).
In M. 31 Isis claims to have caused the differences in languages. See 15 above and note.
18. Ἀστάρτη: Isis was assimilated to Astarte = Aphrodite/Atargatis on Delos (before 167 B.C., by a Delian citizen): Σοφίτα Σωτερίοι Άσταρτη Άφροδίτη (Dittenberger, SIG III 1132 = Roussel, CE 194 = Délos V 2132) and the mother of the gods/Astarte by a Sidonian (ca. 130/129): Ιαίδα Μητρί θεοῦ Ἀστάρτη. See CE 82 = Délos V 2101. Long before, there had been an Astarte cult at the Great Serapeum at Memphis (Hdt. II 112, Strabo XXVII 907c, RARG, pp. 55 ff.); and in the second century B.C. there was a shrine at Memphis to Astarte (UPZ 119.21; 120.6. By the time of the Oxyrhynchus hymn (H. Oxy. 116) Isis is ἐν Σειώδῳ Ἀστάρτη. Cf. H. Oxy. 95-6. An inscription found in Rome repeats Isis’ equation to the mother of the gods and Astarte (Vermaseren, Corpus Inscriptionum et Monumentorum Religionis Mithriaeae, vol. I, p. 634, and pp. 635-9). In it Mithras has joined the cult.
Ἀρείμων: Artemis and Apollo are called children of Demeter and Dionysus by Herodotus (II 156). He must be equating Leto with Demeter (cf. line 1, Hermourhis, pages 19-20). Within Egypt Herodotus also equates Artemis to Egyptian Boubastos and says the latter’s festival at Boubastis is the largest festival of a goddess in Egypt (II 59). But in the Greek world generally Artemis is often equated to Hecate who, in turn, as Hecate-Isis is paired with Sarapis (IG XII 1, 742): Ἐκάτα Σαραπίδι χαρατήρων σωθείς. Cf. H. Oxy. 83-4: Ἀρείμων [- -] ἐν τοῖς κυκλάθικη νήσους τριψίφων Ἀρείμων. The same pair Isis-Sarapis appear in CIL iii 7771: Serapidi Iovi Soli Isidi Lunae Dianae dis deabusque conservatoribus; Artemis here is the moon = Isis. Statues of both Isis(-Tyche) and Hecate (Artemis?) were found in a Mithraeum on the Esquiline (Vermaseren, op. cit., p. 356).

The metre is faulty. The initial syllable of Artemis, although long, is scanned short.

Nana(ia) is a very ancient goddess of the Near East, who incidentally is often equated to Artemis (cf. above). Nana is known at Alexandria (Wilcken, Grundzüge, pp. 129 f. Cf. M. Vandoni, Il Tempio di Madinet Madi e gli inni di Isidoro, 1953, p. 122, note 12). ‘Anat’ seems to have been another, possibly more ancient, form of Nana(ia). RARG, pp. 37-8.

19. Αγγείον: the goddess Leto to whom Isidorus here refers is, as he says, the great Lycian (and Carian) goddess. Cf. Nilsson, GGR 2(1), pp. 500, 562. The same goddess, in h. Orph. XXV, seems to be called Λυκίη ‘Λφροδίη. Isidorus makes no mention of Leto of Buto. 8

In the great Oxyrhynchus Hymn (H. Oxy.) Isis is identified with two Letothes, i.e. Leto of Buto (H. Oxy. 27 in van Groningen’s restoration) and Leto of Lycia (H. Oxy. 78).

20. μητέρα… θεῶν… Θηρίκες: a Delian inscription (SIG III 1138, before 166 B.C.) states: κατά πρόστασιν οσείριδος Δί τίγοντων κρατούντι καὶ Μητρὶ μεγάλη τίς πάντων κρατούσι ‘Αριστοκράτης Δημαρήτη καὶ ‘Αρτέμις Πεθέων. The Magna Mater here is probably equated to Isis; Dis is probably Sarapis/Osiris. In IG XI 4, 1233, the same dedicant presents a gift to Osiris and Isis. Cf. Roussel, Mélanges Holleaux, p. 237. Otto-Bengtson speculate that ca. the mid-third century B.C. Isis had been completely assimilated in Thrace to the μητέρα θεῶν, and thence as ‘Ιους Μητήρ θεῶν she had been brought to Delos. From there she eventually returned to Egypt as Meter Theon. Isis Meter Theon was, Otto-Bengtson think, the same syncretic goddess whose title Berenike II bore: Ιους μεγάλη μητέρα θεῶν. Cf. OGIS 739. 1: Ἰεροῦ πῶλ[ον Ιαυδός] [θέας] μεγαλῆς μητρός θεῶν. See also Nilsson, GGR 2 (2), pp. 164 ff. There is evidence for the assimilation of Isis to the Meter Theon on Delos, 130/129 B.C. See rote on Astarte, 18, above. For the Thracians, cf. 15 above. The similarity of Isis-worship in Thrace and Delos seems implied in H. Oxy. 101-2: ἐν ἀρχέτερ κάτω Ἰδαιοντον Δήλῳ πολυάλαμῳ. Finally in Rome, Isis-Panthea is equated to Cybele, Mater

8. And yet he must have known of Leto of Buto and her close association with Isis. Leto of Buto is Egyptian W d.t. that is ‘Wadjet,’ the cobra-goddess. She may have been equated also to the goddess Renenet-Hermouthis. Herodotus equates her to Uto-Buto (of Buto), II 27, 156), and to Demeter. This Leto had a temple and oracle at Buto near Chemnis, a floating island which itself is associated with the birth of Isis’ child (Her. II 155, and 83, 111, 133, 152). For Leto’s temple and oracle (at Buto), see also Hecataeus Milesius Periódos γῆς, Frtg. apud Stephan. Byzant. = Herod. I. I. IV, pag. 86, 26 = FHG, Frtg. 284 = Hofmeir, Fontes 5: Χέμως, ιόλος Αλγέστου… ἤστι καὶ Χέμως ἤστι καὶ τὸ β’ ἐν βάτων, ὡς ἡ ἑκατάκτα εἰς περατισμὸν Αλγέστου: ἐν βάτων περι τὸ ἱππὸ τῆς Ἀλγής ἔστι καὶ Χέμως οὔσα, ὡς τῶν Ἀπόλλων. ἔστι δὲ η ήθος μεταφορὰ καὶ περαπλεῖς καὶ κατέτατ ἐπὶ τοῖς ἦλαοι. Cf. Hdt. II 156. See too Strabo, Geog. XVII (802) = Hoffmeir, Fontes 156. For a recent article on Pe and Dep = classical Buto(s), see AJA 19, 1966, pp. 208-13. Plutarch also refers to Greek Leto as Uto the nurse of Horus (de Is. 38): ‘Τῶν δὲ καὶ ἑκάτερον περὶ βοών ἐπὶ θνητὸς τραυμάζεται. Obviously the Greeks believed Greek Leto had her origin in Egypt.

The hieroglyphic inscriptions and reliefs from the most ancient temple at Medinet Madi portray the ‘Uto as goddess of ‘Buto and Depet’ (Vogliano, S. K.). Here she is not Renenet but together with her Uto symbolizes the whole of Egypt. These two protect the King exactly as Uto in serpent form is said by Plutarch to protect the infant Horus (and Isis). It is easy to see how she (Buto-Uto) and Renenet became confused.
Deorum, about 55 B.C.\textsuperscript{9}

21. Ἡρην: for Isis as Hera, see A. 7: χρυσόθρωνος Ἡηαι. Cf. II. I 611: χρυσόθρωνος Ἡηη. Isis is equated to Hera in H. Oxy. 26: Ἡηηη, 32 Ἡηη Σαι Ἡηη ἁνασενη, 34 ἐν Σεβεννη; Ἡηη ἁτη, 59-60 ἐν Τανη Ἡηηη, 68 ἐν Ταισαφη Ἡηηη, 110 ἐν Σαμω Ἡηηη. Perhaps significantly, in H. Oxy. 22-27, Isis-Hera is grouped with almost the same goddesses as those to whom she is equated here, Leto (of Bouto), Aphrodite and Hestia. In h. Orph. XVI, Hera is like Isidorus’ universal Isis: (Ἡηη) παγανολευα Δώκ συλλεκτρε μάκαιρα (lines 4-10). Throughout this Orphic hymn, Hera is remarkably consistent with the characterization of Isis-Hermouthis in Isidorus’ Hymns (see Δωφατει, 11 above, and note). With ἡς ὁς φῶς, h. Orph. XVI 5, compare especially 18. Syncretism involving Isis-Hera, a royal throne, and nature, underlies all the above references. This is Greco-Egyptian and not Eleusinian.

In App. Met. XI 5, Isis equates herself to Latin Juno: Junonem alii (me appellant).

μεγαλοθρωνον: a hapax legomenon. Cf. Ἡηηη above and note. Forms of μεγάλη are commonly used of the goddess; at the Medinet Madi temple she is simply θευ μεγάλη or θευ μεγιστη.

As to θρήνος, Isis always had a literal and close association with the King’s throne in Egypt. Originally she may have been a personification of either the throne or its cushion. The throne itself, appearing as a high-seated chair, is the hieroglyphic determinative for her name. See RARG, Isis, p. 326, fig. 83; and H. Kees, Götterglauke, pp. 98, 101 and note 5. She is always the mother of Horus who is equated with the King. See H. Frankfort, Kingship, pp. 32, 41 ff. Isidorus must at least have known the determinative, a throne, for the name of Isis, and he would have been steeped in temple lore. The term ‘throne,’ moreover, appears in other Egyptian religious expressions; compare the Great Throne as meaning ‘Memphis’ (in Memphite theology), and ‘Pe’ = (Greek) Buto. See Frankfort, Kingship, p. 43.

Αφροδίτην: cf. II 15-16, 30. See also Ἀστάρτην, 18 above and note. It is known from epigraphical evidence that Aphrodite was worshiped at Naucratis before the Ptolemaic era (SB 187-194; 353; 1696-7). She appears on coins from Naucratis dating from the era of the tyrant Cleomenes. (Poole, Coins of Alexandria in Brit. Mus. 38, p. 349). Like Aphrodite, Isis is a goddess of love. Cf. M. 6, 10, 17, 20, 27, 30; A. 36; G. 12. She is equated to Aphrodite in H. Oxy. 9, 35, 45, 67, and App. Met. XI 2 (Venus Caelestis) and 5 (Venus of Paphos).

22. Ἐστιά: cf. H. Oxy. 23 (Pephermis) Του ἄνασσων Ἐστιάν [[ἀνάσσων]] [κυρείαν πάσης χώρας, and 73 (Plinthine) Ἐστιάν; IG XIV 433 (in a temple of

\textsuperscript{9} Cf. A. Alford, Isikhv. Cf. also Tertullian, Apolog. 5 = Hopfner, Fontes 379: Serapid et Isidem et Arpocratem cum suo cynocephalo Capitolio prohibitis, id est curia deorum pulbos, Piso et Gabinus consules non utique Christiani everisiam aris eorum abdicaverunt turpium et otiosarum superstitionum vitia colibentes. His vos restitutis summam maiestatem contulisti ... Serapidi iam Romano aras restituis.
Sarapis at Taormina) Ἐστιάι ἁγνών βομών. For the temple of Sarapis and Isis at Taormina see CIL X 6989: Ὠσείρι δὲ ἐπηκὼ Ἐστία κουροτρόφῳ. Diodorus knows Hestia to be a Greek Heuretria and groups her with Themis and Demeter (and Isis and Osiris), τοῖσι δὲ λέγεσαι τὴν μὲν Ἐστίαν τὴν τῶν οἰκίων κατακεκυμένην ἐνεχῶν κτῆ, in 67.4-5 (Themis) and 68.1-3 (Demeter). Hestia, does not occur in App. Met. XI 5.

With 21-22 compare Hes. Th. 453-4: Ρεῖα δὲ διμήθησα Κρόνῳ τέκε φαίδωμα τέκνα. Ἡ τοιά Νήμητα καὶ Ἡ ἥρη χρυσότεροι.

Ῥεῖαν: see the reference to Hes. Th. 453-4 above (Ἐστία). In the Hymn of Mesomedes (Peek, Andros, 145, lines 15 ff.) Rhea's Kouretes dance for Isis: οἱ Ῥεῖας κούρητες ... πάντα δὲ ἀνακτόρων θοῦ χορεύοντα.

Δήμητρα: see Δημήτ, 3 above and note. Cf. III 2, IV 4.

23. Θεών: the name Θεών = Coptic TI-OY = Egyptian T,w:T. This is Latin 'unica' and English 'the one.' Cf. SEG VIII 548, p. 98 (Hondius); CIL X 3800 = Dessau 4362: Τε τίβι υνα quae es omnia dea Isis. See Vogliano, P. R. pp. 42-43 (Kuentz). H. Oxy. 6 also names Isis τὴν μιὰν. App. Met. XI 4 refers to her Nomen unicum, and the Cyrenaean arатology (Peek, Andros 129.5) calls her Εἰδών ... μοῖρ. According to Apuleius it is, as here, the Egyptians alone who know the truth about her verum nomen. See App. Met. XI 5 (quoted above at line 15). As the verum nomen had immense magic virtue, the Egyptians had an ineffable advantage over others, for Isis was the great goddess of magic. The mere mention of her name could cast a spell.10

24. ὄρμαζομεναι: cf. App. Met. XI 2: quoque nomine, quoque ritu, quaqua facie te fas est invocare; ibid., 4: nomine multiuigo totus veneratur orbis; also ibid., 'appellant.' All three verbs are ὄρμαζον.

25-28. Summary. Isis is saviour of 'devout' (= loyal) people in time of war. Even against great odds she can and will aid the divine king (= the King of Egypt) and through him bring peace and plenty (III 12-15, 16-18).


λήξω: cf. II. IX 191: διποτε λήξεων ἄειδων; Od. VIII 87: λήγω ... ἄειδων. This is another epic formula. Cf. h. Hymn III 177-8 (to Apollo): οὐ λήξω ἐκήδηλον / Ἀπόλλωνα ἴμφιων.

26. σωτεύρι: σωτεύρα is a frequent Greek epithet for any goddess who is

10. Such a name as the One, however, is commonplace in characterizations of Egyptian gods. Cf. H. Junker, Die Standeswürden in den Osiris-Mysterien, Denkschr. Akad. Wien, 1910, p. 54, hora sexta: 'Apud Aegyptios ut unus' dicitur quisque deus identidem 'uniusmus unus,' sic Isis 'una' et alicui in hac sententia: 'Ego (praefica quae Isis habet partes) una sum, magnificis viribus praedita, usor coniugis mei'; and ibid., p. 97 (to Aton): 'Tu innumerabilis formas per te ipsum creas, et si solus es'; again "Solus es, tamem per te innumerabilis vivunt." An Edfu inscription says of Harbor: "One whose equal is neither in heaven nor on earth," Cf. M. Vandioni, Prolegomena II, 1953, Il tempio di Madinet-Madi e Gli Inni di Isidoro, p. 116 note 23. μοῖρα (which follows) is the Greek equivalent for Θεών; it therefore is a title. 

σωτεύρα 26, is a more conventional epithet for the idea contained in Θεών and μοῖρας.
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protectress of men, e.g., Hdt. II 156: Ἀτραώς; Pj., O. 12.2: Τύχα; Pj. O. 8.21: Θέμις; Pj. O. 9.16: Εὔφορία; E. Med. 628: Κύρης; Ar. Ra. 379: Δημήτηρ; IG II 1343.24.40; h. Orph. XXXVI 13: Ἀρτέμις; CIG 3827: Ἕκατη; CIG 4695 (Egypt) and h. Orph. XIV 8: Ρέα; SI 1158.5: Κορή; h. Orph. II 3, 14: Προθυραία; ibid., XXVII 12: θεῶν Μήτηρ. Most of the above goddesses designated Σωτειρα are found equated to Isis in Isidorus' first Hymn. Frequently Σωτειρα occurs of Isis herself in inscriptions of the second century B.C.11

Both Σωτηρ and Σωτειρα appear to have many synonyms. Cf. βοηθοὶ ἱσαυ (of Isis and Osiris, Stob. 1.41.44; 978). Cleopatra II assumed the title (Ἰοίς) θεᾶ φιλομήτηρ Σωτείρα; while her rival, Cleopatra III, was entitled: Ἰοὶς μεγάλη μήτηρ θεῶν. For a discussion of Σωτήρ and Σωτείρα as titles, see A. D. Nock, "Soter and Euergetes," Studies in Honour of F. J. Grant, pp. 127-148. Σωτείρα seems not generally to be used as a title before the second century B.C.

πολυώνυμος: see οὐάμα, 16 above and note. Also θεῶν...μοίης, 23 above and note. πολυώνυμος occurs frequently of Isis: H. Oxy. 97 (Sinope), 101-2 (Thrake and Delos); Pap. Lond. 1.I.121.503: Ιοίς Ἀδράστεια Νέμεσις Πολυώνυμος πολυώνυμος and App. Met. XI 4: Sunt contra multae eiusdem imaginibus quas varia specie et mutato nomine aliis loco vererentur. Numerous magic papyri, moreover, testify to the power inherent in a god's verum nomen. A synonym, μυρωύνυμος also often occurs of Isis: see Plu. 2.3724, OGIS 695 (Philae), SEG VIII 657 (Thebaid, A.D. 160).


πόλεις, πολίταις: both words signify peculiarly Greek concepts, but they do not belong to the Greek formulaic, epic-poetic language of the line. Cf. M. 51: ἐγὼ περιβόλους πόλεως ἐκτισα, A. 158-60: Ἰοῖς ἐγὼ πολέμῳ κρεναῖον νέφος ἐρκευ ἑομήθων ομφαλίων κλήξουιο πολυκένων βασιλείων θεομορφῶν, and Kyr. 1.13-14: πόλεις τε σεμονικών περιβόλων ἐπείγουσα βρότος τ' ἐνεμα τὰ σῶμα τραγωδός εἰδέναι. For the formulaic language of the line, however, see ll. IV 238: ἤδεις αὖτ' ἀλόχους τε φίλας καὶ νήπια τέκνα. With κτήματα as used by Isidorus (28), compare: σιδηρὸς κτήτερος of h. Orph. XIV 13, and LXXII 7. (For the opposite meaning in a similar formula, see ibid., XXVIII 16.)

The concept of Isis as goddess of victory contained in this line is found often elsewhere: Roussel, CE p. 121, 114/3 B.C., Νύψη Ίδη; IG XIV 2413.5 (Rome);

11. E.g., SIG III 1192, Delos (before 167 B.C.); Ἀνωτέρα Ὑγμάτια Σωτήρα Σωτηραίνεται; SIG III 1132 before 167): Τοι τοῖς Σωτηραίοις Ἀνωτέρα Ὑγμάτια Φανεροῦ; Pj. O. 8.21: Θέμις; Pj. O. 9.16: Εὔφορία; E. Med. 628: Κύρης; Ar. Ra. 379: Δημήτηρ; IG II 1343.24.40; h. Orph. XXXVI 13: Ἀρτέμις; CIG 3827: Ἕκατη; CIG 4695 (Egypt) and h. Orph. XIV 8: Ρέα; SI 1158.5: Κορή; h. Orph. II 3, 14: Προθυραία; ibid., XXVII 12: θεῶν Μήτηρ. Most of the above goddesses designated Σωτειρα are found equated to Isis in Isidorus' first Hymn. Frequently Σωτειρα occurs of Isis herself in inscriptions of the second century B.C.11

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CIL IX 3144; 5179; and (I}sis) Saviour in war with Sarapis, UPZ 20: τῷ μεγάστω θεῷ Σαράπει ... δὲ δοθῆ σοι μετὰ τῆς Τους νίκην κράτους τῆς οἰκουμένης ἀπάσις; see also M. 21: ἐγὼ εἰμι πολέμου κυρία; Archiv IV 182 (Rome): Isidii Vinctici, Isis invicta; and H. Oxy. 83: ἐν Ρώμη στρατιῶν; 102-3: Ἀμοῖνος στρατιῶν; 30: ἐν τῷ Σαρατή νικήταιρων Ἀθηναίᾳ; 239: Σῶ στρατεύει καὶ ἕγερνον κυρία; 48: ἐν Χορασώ νεκταρίαν; 71: ἐν Μεινοφί στρατιῶν; 69: ἐν τῇ Νήσῳ ταχυπηχησαίης; 78: ἐν τῇ [Νῆς]ω ἐρωμοκοσμεῖσαν.

Iṣis is a goddess of victory in Egyptian texts. Cf. Philae, 470, Photo 54 (re Cleopatra and Ptolemy IX Soter II): Fill your heart with Iṣis for she is as useful as a vast number of soldiers. Cf. Müller, Isisaretalogien, p. 72, note 4. The ancient war between the Iṣis-family and Seth is well known; Iṣis and Horus are the traditional victors in that ancient struggle (a struggle which could, moreover, be repeated whenever the King of Egypt fought a battle).

29-34. Summary. Iṣis can be a Saviour in other human calamities if men but call on her, in imprisonment, illness, a journey or exile, and seafaring. These saving acts are her aretae, or erga, that is, her miracles which, generally, are the theme of her aretaolgies.

29. ἐμ μοίρας ἐλεήμονε: for μοίραι:μοίρα = Fate, Heimarmenon, Ananke, see Morenz-Müller, Schicksals. Cf. M. 55-56 (Iṣis): ἐγὼ τὸ ἐμαρμέρευν νυκώ, ἐμοί τὸ εἰμαρμέρυν ἀκούει; 46-47: ὃ ἂν ἐμοὶ δόξη, τούτο καὶ τελεῖται. ἐμοὶ πάντ᾽ ἐπείκει; Kyr. 15: ἐμοὶ δὲ χωρὶς γεώτερον οὐδὲν πόστησε; A. 144-5: δεσμῶν δ᾽ ἀδεικνοῦν ἀινάγκων ἀπλώος; Harder, Karpokrates, p 3 (Karpokrates the son of Iṣis): πᾶς καιρὸς εἰμι ἐγὼ.

Moira here means death, the end of Ἰω/βίως, that is, the termination of man's decreed life-span or lot. Iṣis as Tyche Agathe wards off, or saves, from an untimely termination of Ἰω, for she can prolong life. Cf. II 8. In App. Met. 6, she says: Scies ultra statuta fato tuo spatia vitam quoque tibi prorogare mihi tantum licere. That is, conversely, exactly as here, she can save a suppliant from death (μοίρα or μοίρα ἐλεήμονε).

ἐν εἰρήκτη: for Iṣis as Saviour of prisoners, see M. 48: ἐγὼ τούς ἐν δεσμοῖς ἄνω. The thought occurs often in the magic papyri. It is not the cliché 'bonds of death.'

30. See II 7-8, A. 24, and K. 10, for Iṣis' power to heal. Sarapis and Iṣis were both healing gods. Sarapis is thought to have acquired his power from her. See D. S. I 25.2 and (of Horus) ibid., 7; H. Oxy. 177, and C. 11. Cf. RE Iṣis IX, p. 2119 (Roeder); Harder, Karpokrates, p. 16; Brady, Reception, p. 12, note 7; BCH 6, 1882, 339, 423: Ἰσίως Ἰσίως.

32. πέλαγος μέγα: for Iṣis πελαγία, an epithet Iṣis shared with Aphrodite, see Paus. II 4.7. Iṣis 'Pelagia' is contrasted with 'Egyptian' Iṣis (at Corinth): ὡν τὴν μὲν Πελαγίαν τὴν δὲ Αἰγυπτίαν ἐπωνομάζουσαν. For the similar title, (Iṣis) Εὐπλοια, see Roussel, CE, p. 147, 107/6 B.C. This, incidentally, is the first evidence for Εὐπλοια as a title of Iṣis. But compare M. 15: ἐγὼ βαλάσσια ἐργα εὑρον; 39: ἐγὼ ποτηρίων καὶ ἰαμάκων καὶ βαλάσσης εἰμι κυρία; 43: ἐγὼ πραῖνω

33. This line is almost identical with Od. X 123: ἄνδρον τ’ ἀλλιμένων νησῶν θ’ ἀμα ἄγνυμενών. Cf. Il. XVI 769. Isidorus omits the epic τε and substitutes κατὰ (τ’ ἀμα). His κατὰ is best understood as an attempt at epic tmesis.

34. σοῦ αὐτοῦ: cf. σώτευρα 26 above and note. cf. H. Ὀσυ. 76: ὑπὸ σοῦ σώτευραν.


Although lines 27-33 are syntactically not one sentence, together they portray five successive typical calamities from which Isis can save: war, 27-28; prison, 29; illness, 30; exile, 31; the stormy sea and shipwreck, 32-33. Miracles were wrought by Isis and Sarapis for suppliants who prayed to them. The quality of εἰσαβεία (= loyalty) is stressed as a prerequisite in Il. 6, III 4, 27, but not in I. The saving acts of the goddess are ἀρετητέλεα. For a somewhat similar grouping of human disasters see Hes. Op. 240-47; and a close parallel, Lxx Ps. CVI 4-7, 10-14, 18 ff., and 23 ff. For pertinent commentary on this Psalm see Kraus, Psalmen, pp. 738-41. Cf. also Lxx Ps. CXLV 7-9; CXLIV 14, LXVII 6a. It would seem these are the ‘topoi’ of a common Near Eastern literature.

35-36. Concluding prayer: be merciful; bring me happiness.

35. μεγαλοκοποῦ: see οὐδεμισ 16 above and note. The adjective is used of Horus, Κ. Κ. 64. Cf. πολυκοποῦ, 26.


**Hymn II (Plate VII)**

χαῖρε, Τόξη Ἀγαθή, μεγαλάτων μαι γεγούσθη, Ἐρμοίῳ ἐπὶ οἱ πόλεις ἐγήθησαν πόλεις, ζωῆς καὶ καρπῶν εὐρετρία, οὐδὲ τὰ πάντες τέρπονται τε βροτοὶ σῶν χαρίστων ἔνεκα. 5 ὅσοι οἱ εὑροῦνται ἐπί ἐμπορίαν τε παρεκλητε.
πλούτου· εἰσεβεβής εἰς τὸν ἀπαντὰ χρόνον· καὶ όσοι ἐν νοῦς αἰ παντᾶδοκεί μοιρή ἔχουν· αἱ οἱ εὐάμενοι παχέως σής ἱερής ἐπιχωαν. 

'Ως ἔτημος ὁ ἄγαθος ἄγαμος, Σωκράτεως κρατάτος· σύννονας ναίει πλούτον ὁ ἄγαθος· κτιστὴς καὶ γαῖς τε καὶ οὐρανοῦ ἀστερεύστως· καὶ ποταμῶν πάντων κώκυτάτων τα ῥοῦν· καὶ Ἀγχός ὁ οὐς νός, ὃς οὐρανοῦ αἰθέρα ναίει· ἥλιος ἀντέλλων ἐσθ', ὃς ἐδείξε τὸ φῶς. 

δύσος δὴ ἐθέλουσι γονὴν παιδῶν τε παῖσαι, εὐδαμενοι ἦμας ἐπεκτετῆς ἐπιχωαν. 

Νεῦλων χρυσορρόουσι πεθώνω· ἀνάγεις κατὰ [κ]αὶ[ρ]ὸν Ἀγίπτου ἐπὶ γῆν ἀνθρώπων εὐεργήσιν. 

Εἰσαθεῖ τότε καρπὸς ἄπαν καὶ πᾶσα μερίζεισι· οἵ τε θέλεις, ξοῦν παρτοῦτα ὁ ἄγαθος. 

Σὺ δὲ ποιῶν μνημαθήτες, όσοι πλούτων τα ἀνέδοκας καὶ χάριτας μεγάλας σὰς τε ἔχων δι' ὅλου, τοῦτων οὐ μοῦραν δεκάτην ἀνέθεμαν ἄνοιστης, χαίροντες κατ' ἔτος, σὴν τε πανηγυρίαν. 

ἐιτα ἐκδηροῦσι περιτελλομένου ἐπιαυτόν· αὐτοῖς μὴν Παχών πᾶσαν ἐς εὐφροσύνην. 

tερφθέιστες δ' ἐκ οἰκῶν τε πανηγυρίσαστε ἐπὶ σάρης εὐθήμων πληρεῖς τῆς παρὰ οὐ τε τροφῆς. 

Σὺ δὲ ποιῶν κάροι μετάδος, Ἔρωθεῦ ἀνασσα, σὺς ιετήτης δῆλον καὶ ἀμα εὐεκτετῆς. 

Ἰαίδωρος ἔγραψε. 

Εὐχῶν ἥδ' ὑμῶν τε θεοὶ κλώστες ἐμείο, ἀνταπέδωκαν ἑμοὶ εὐθυμιῶν χάριτα.


Hail, Agathetyche, greatly renowned Isis, mightiest Hermonthis, in you every city rejoices; O Discoverer of Life and Cereal food wherein all mortals delight because of your blessing(s). 

5 All who pray to you to assist their commerce, prosper in their piety forever; all who are bound in mortal illnesses in the grip of death,
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if they (but) pray to you, quickly attain your (renewal of) Life.
How truly the Agathosdaimon, mighty Sokonopsis,
dwells as your temple-mate, that goodly Bestower of wealth,
Creator of both earth and the starry heaven,
and of all rivers, and very swift streams;
and Anchoes your Son, who inhabits the height of heaven,
is the rising Sun who shows forth the light.

All indeed who wish to beget offspring,
if they (but) pray to you, attain fruitfulness.
Persuading the gold-flowing Nile, you lead it in season
over the land of Egypt as a blessing for men.

Then all vegetation flourishes and you apportion to all
whom you favour, a life of unspeakable blessing(s).

Remembering your gifts, men to whom you have granted wealth
and great blessings (which you give them to possess all their lives),
all duly set aside for you one tenth of these blessings
rejoicing each year at the time of your Panegyrie.

Thereafter you allow them, as the year rolls round (again),
everyone to rejoice in the month of Pachon.
Joyful after your festival, they return home
reverently (and are) filled with the sense of blessedness that comes
only from you.

Grant a share of your gifts also to me, Lady Hermouthis,
Your suppliant, happiness and especially the blessing of children.
Isidorus
wrote (it).

Hearing my prayers and hymns, the gods
have rewarded me with the blessing of great happiness.

1-2. Summary. Invocation to Isis as Greek Tyche Agathe and Egyptian Hermouthis.
2-8. 15-16. Summary. All should worship Isis, the creator of life and cereal food. She can enrich merchants engaged in commerce; she can heal the sick though they seem about to die, and with her synnai gods, Sokonopsis her partner, and her son, Anchoes, she can grant a child to those who pray to her for offspring.

2. Ἐρωτήθη: cf. 11 and notes above.
πᾶσα πάλης: cf. D. S. I 27.4: ἐγώ Ἡσίας ἐϊμὶ ἡ βασιλεία πάσης χώρας; M. 3a: Εἶναι ἐγὼ ἐϊμὶ ἡ τύραννος πάσης χώρας; Chalkis (to Karpokrates): πάσαν ἑκάστηρα γῆν; H. Oxy. 219: πάσαν χώραν; 244: πάση χώρα; 125-6: ἐπὶ πάσαν χώραν and App. Met. XI.5: Totus... orbis. Isis is a universal god.

γένεθε: for joy in the Isis-hymns see also εὐφροσύνη 28. Cf. H. Oxy. 31-2: ἐν
Καωῇ εἰφροσύνῃ. For joy associated with the Isis-circle of the gods, see D. S. I 18.4: ὦσιμαφιλογέλοσα. Cf. too the epithet of Ῥρώς: ‘Joy of the heart’ (Vogliano, S. R. p. 23). For gaiety at the Egyptian Panegyris of Isis-Demeter, see Hdt. II 58.

3-4. With these two lines cf. I 3 above and notes.

eἰφρότριῶ: see εἰφρότρια ζωῆς I 3 above and note. In this Hymn it may well be closely associated with 15-16, and 32-33. See notes below.


ἐνεκα: an Attic and Koine word.


παρέω: see also I 34. Cf. III 28. The verb means to present, come (to help), appear.

6. πλουτόνιο: merchants going into foreign lands to trade may pray to Isis for wealth. If they are pious, that is, loyal to Isis the royal goddess and the King, (= εἰναβεῖς), she will reward them with riches. There are affinities here with the third Hymn, where by miracles she rewards her devout and loyal followers (see III 26 κατοπτρεῖον and note). Ploutos’ was an Eleusinian god and in Hellenistic Egypt he was equated with Sarapis, Isis’ husband (cf. 10). See also Ps. Kallisthenes I 33; H. Oxy. 209; Athenagoras 22.6; and PGM 13.71; 4.1170 equate Sarapis to Aion Ploutonius. Hermouthis-Renenet’s own name in Egyptian means ‘riches’ and ‘good luck.’ Erman-Grapow, WBS II, p. 436, 17 ff.

εἰναβεῖς: the adjective means godly, pious, devout, blessed by the gods, and (in Egypt) loyal. See note above. The Egyptian gods expected such all-encompassing ‘piety’ of men. See D. S. I 49.3. A state of material blessedness followed men’s devotion to King, god, and country (and the deity’s consequent benevolence). Isidorus implies that a man’s response to his Creator (and her mediator, the King) should be emotional and whole-hearted. Only then do the goddess and her people experience reciprocal ‘love.’ The hymns imply, of course, that the King is the mediator between Isis and men.

Early Greek authors also state that men must be εἰναβεῖς to prosper, but they do not have that same sense. Cf. Solon, Fr. 13; h. Hom. XXX 7, 11-17. Greek gods always are said to honour pious folk, but loyalty to King and country is not stressed.

7. θανατοῦσσαι: indicating death.

μοῖρα: cf. ἐμὸιρας I 29. It is a cliché meaning ‘in the grip of death’; μοῖρα
appears to be in strong contrast with ἤγαθος, 8, below.

8. σῆς ἤγαθὸς ἔτιχων: see note on εὐφέρτρια ἤγαθης, 3, above. For a somewhat similar expression cf. C. C. Edgar, Selected Papyri from the Archives of Zenon. Annales du Service des Antiquités de l'Égypte, Vol. XXIV, no. 94. τιχεῖ ς εἰς πάντων τῶν καλῶν. Like other Egyptian gods, Isis has the power to lengthen a man's life. Here she extends to those who pray to her a renewal of her basic gift of life. On 'to make alive' = 'to heal' in Semitic thought see W. W. von Baudiszin, Adonis und Esmon, pp. 397 ff.; σῆς appears to be emphatic. See Müller, Isisarsenalogen, p. 83, and notes. For Isis Ὄνυμα see I 30 above and note.

9. ὁ ἤγαθος δαίμων: ὁ ἤγαθος is to be read ἤγαθος, with the first syllable scanned as short. The article is unpoetic.

The Agathos Daimon is Σωκονώπης. Cf. IV 5. Δαίμων is often used for θεός.

For a full discussion of ὁ ἤγαθος δαίμων, see M. Nilsson, GGR 2(2), pp. 202 ff. This god is often equated to Egyptian Ṣ j (= Shai, Psai, Psol, Shay, etc.). The Agathos Daimon is, of course, equivalent to the second of the Egyptian pair Renenutet and Shay, that is, equated to Sokonopis as Agathe Tyche is to Hermouthis his wife. For Shay, see Kees, Götterglaube, pp. 57, 294, 440, etc., and for τύχη, I 2 above and note. The basic theology appears to be Isis-Renenet-Hermouthis or Agathe Tyche, and the Agathos Daimon, are the personal divine spirits attending men, and outlasting them. The Greeks associated τύχη ἤγαθην and ὁ ἤγαθος δαίμων as a pair (Plate XI). Cf. Aes. 3 III; Lys. 13.16; Ar. Av. 544. See also Nilsson, GGR 2(2), p. 470. Under these names in the Fayum surely are adumbrated certain vague but continuing concepts of ancient Egyptian theology, which are intimately associated with each man's human destiny. 12

Σωκονώπης: cf. III 33, 35, IV 5, and SEG VIII 566-7. See Plate XIV. Sokonopis, as the Agathos Daimon, is here the temple dweller (ὑπονοος) and male counterpart of Isermuthis (= Agathe Tyche). He is mentioned as 'synnoai' also with Anchoes, the sun-god. Sokonopis and Hermouthis are the divine pair worshiped in the temple, just as Sebek (Sbk) and Renenutet (Rnn.t) had been in the XIlth Dynasty (Plate XII). The hieroglyphic inscriptions in the temple's inmost shrine name that ancient pair. See Vogliano, S. R., pp. 22-28. The

12. Relevant is the phrase in H. Oxy. 164.5: οι τῶν ἤγαθων τύχης ζωής... (Paul) τῷ φύρατρας. Isis is specifically associated with ὁ ἤγαθος δαίμων in H. Oxy. 189. οὗ τῶν ἤγαθων δαίμων... x. x. B. V. Groningen mentions a cult of the Agathos Daimon and (Ὑ)hermuthis as synnoai gods in Alexandria.

One might conjecture that the serpent form of the Greek Agathos Daimon came from his association with Hermouthis. But Nilsson (GGR I, p. 214 re Zeus Meilichios) thinks otherwise. At Medinet Madi, in fact, the Agathos Daimon (Sokonopis) was represented in crocodile form (Sebek). See Vogliano, S. R. Tav. XXIII, and P. R. Tav. XI 2. Hermouthis was represented by a serpent (Plates XXI-XII). For evidence of a snake-cult at the temple, see Vogliano, S. R., Tav. XLIV. There is also strong (pictorial) evidence from this temple that she was known as a young, attractive mother-goddess shown seated with her child on her lap (Plate XIII = Vogliano, P. R., Tav. XI b).
dedication of the Hellenistic temple’s latest forecourt is to Sokonopis and Hermuthis (SEG VIII, 566-7). And Suchos (Hymn IV 23 ff.) grouped with Ammon (= Zeus) is said to be one of the greatest gods of Egypt. Presumably both Suchos and Sokonopis are in some way assimilated to Osiris-Sarapis = the Nile.

Σοκονόπεις is, of course, really a local name of Suchos, the ancient crocodile god Sbk, variously called in Greek Sobk, Sebek, Souchos, Suchos, etc. 13

Almost certainly the latter half of the word, Σοκονόπεις, is related to Osiris and probably, in general, the name means ‘Suchos of the Nile.’ Cf. Sok (nepos), Sok (neptunis). Suchos in very early times was associated with the Isis-family especially in the Delta. In Greco-Roman times and afterwards he was the crocodile who represented the Nile. See ZAS 61/2, and Plate IX a. The name Sokonopis is not known from any other sources as that of a god, but is found as a private name. See Preiser-Kirk, NB p. 390, and P. Petr. II 140, 141. The genitive is Σοκονόπειος, the dative Σοκονόπη.

The cult of Suchos, like that of Isis (and Sarapis), shows continuous spiritual development. In one of his latest forms, at the late Egyptian temple of Ombos, he is shown as Sobek-Re, founder of temple-worship, creator of the various languages, father of the gods, lord of the sea, saviour of sailors, and thus a god of universal power. He is finally both a fertility god and a god of light.

Herodotus (II 148) gives Crocodilopolis as the chief city in the Fayum. After the mid-second century B.C., great numbers of Greeks in the Fayum seem to have resorted to the worship of Suchos. His native temples had acquired a considerable amount of land (P. Teb. 62.5-6). He and Isis were healing gods (P. Amh. 35). In 118 Euergetes accorded Suchos’ native temples greater privileges and immunities (P. Teb. 5 = Wchr. 65). Papyrological evidence shows in detail the religious life of Kerkeosiris, a small village of about one thousand inhabitants (of which one-fifth were Greek), lying some twenty miles southwest of Arsinoe (Crocodilopolis). There were, rather oddly, neither Greek nor first class Egyptian temples; Isis, for instance, had two third-rate temples. There may have been a shrine to the Dioscuri; and some think there was a temple to Zeus (P. Teb. 14.18.39). Suchos

13. The name Σοκονόπεις is Σοκ (ού) - ονόματι - ές, (ού) being the genitive particle ‘of’, and (ο) a Greek ending. ονόματι is either (1) ὠνόματι (Wp-Wwt), i.e. Egyptian Upwaut (Upwaut)/Wepwawet, for which see RARG p. 842; or (2) ὂνομα (Hpy), i.e. Egyptian Hapi/Apis (see RARG, pp. 46 ff.). The former is shown with the head of a wolf or a dog (see A. H. Gardiner, Egyptian Grammar). Both, however, can be considered forms of Osiris, and so of the Nile. Upaut being originally a wolf or jackal-god is very like Anubis, with whom he is associated and even confused. He is thought to have been a war-god, or defender-god, associated with Horus and the Pharaoh. (See Frankfort, Kingship, p. 26.) And in all periods he was closely related to Osiris. From the time of the Middle Kingdom he also had close affinity with the sun-god Re, and was a κόμπος. See 10 note, below.

In his connection with Osiris, Upaut or Ophis is known also to have been associated with Isis. Apis-hapi, on the other hand, was a Memphite vegetation god but was also equated, at least in the late period, with Osiris and the Nile. Cf. D. S. I 85; Plu. de Is. 209, 43. Apis too, like Ophis, has some association with the sun-god, and with Horus and the Pharaoh. However, Egyptian Hapi/Apis is always elsewhere transliterated into Greek as οπυς or οψις and never ὀσίς. Cf. Ὀμμοθύς (RARG, p. 23) and βοχαυτάς (SB 756).
had no temple there but most of the land (at Kerkeosirus) was owned by the temples of Suchos of Arsinoe, and Soknebtunis of Tebtunis. These lands, incidentally, seem to have been water-logged (P. Teb. 82; 88).

Generally, Greeks belonged to what were called the ‘Synods,’ that is, ‘congregations,’ of major Egyptian gods (P. Teb. 119). For instance, in 98 and 95 B.C., groups of Greeks dedicated their places of meeting to Suchos (WChr. 141; 142). In fact, under Ptolemy X Alexander I, at the beginning of the first century B.C., native temples flourished (OGIS 175; 177; 178; SB 1269; 4623; P. Teb. 59, temple of Soknebtunis). See also ἐθνων III 31 and note below. The worship of Suchos in the Fayum surpassed in importance that of any other god or goddess.14 The present Hymn belongs to an old temple establishment of Sokonopis, i.e., Suchos of the Nile, and of the heavens (equated to the Agathos Daimon) and of Isis-Hermouthis, harvest-goddess and Pantocrateira (equated to Agathe Tyche). They dwell with ‘Anchoes,’ a god of light (the sun-god), their son.

The last syllable of Sokonopis is scanned as short in spite of the following consonants.

κραταίος: cf. ὁ μέγατος κραταίος θεὸς Σοκονοπαίος WChr. 122.1, first century A.D.).


The Synnaos concept was possibly an ancient one in Egypt. Synnaoi gods need not be a divine pair or family, but they could be. Here Sokonopis apparently is the husband of the goddess. Cf. the dedicatory inscriptions at the temple (SEG VIII 536-7). Furthermore Isidorus in Hymns II-IV speaks of the divine ‘family,’ Isermoothis, Sokonopis, and the child Anchoes. Sokonopis is undoubtedly assimilated to Osiris-Sarapis (see II 9 and note); and Anchoes to Horus (cf. II 14 and note, below). Further, it is almost certain that, at this temple, as in other Ptolemaic Fayum temples, there were additional cults and statues of the early Ptolemies and their queens (Ptolemy Euergetes, Berenice, and their daughter Berenice, Ptolemy Philopator and Arsinoe, and Ptolemy Epiphanes and Cleopatra, his wife). European medieval cathedrals show the same profusion of high altars, chapels and side-chapels.

πλουτοδότης: cf. πλουτοδότης, I 1, and πλουτοδότη, 6 above and notes. For the wealth-giving Nile (= Osiris) see χρυσορρόω, 17 below.

11. κτίστης: see εἰρέτρια I 3, and 3 above. PGM 5.98-101 states (of

14. For Suchos, see RE (H. Kees); H. Kees, Götergläube; RARG, pp. 755-59; C. Kuentz, "Soknobraisis," Eph 4, 1938, 206-11 (for the local cult names of Sbk); E. Gilliam, "The Archives of the Temple of Soknobraisis," YCS X, 1947, p. 182, n. 5 (bibliography of Sbk); J. A. S. Evans, "The Temple of Soknobraisis," YCS XVII, 1961, pp. 142 ff. (Egyptian temple organization); ibid., p. 76 (brief bibliography of Sbk); Müller, Isisarvatlogen, pp. 51-71 (Suchos at Ombos).

οὐρανοῦ ἀστερόφορος is a well known Greek formula, especially associated with γῆν. In K. K., Isis herself is made to explain a cosmic system composed of four parts: (1) οὐρανός abode of the gods, controlled by the δημοφόρος; (2) αἰθήρ, the upper air and abode of the stars, controlled by the sun; (3) ἄηρ, abode of the ψυχαὶ δαιμόνια, controlled by the moon; (4) γῆ, the abode of men and other living creatures, controlled by ‘one who from time to time becomes king’ (meaning one who has the finest ψυχή). In this system of Isis, ψυχαὶ are sent downwards to ἄηρ and γῆ. Indeed, all these elements except ἄηρ are mentioned in Isidorus’ Hymns: οὐρανός is the creation of a κτίστης (= the Agathos Daimon); αἰθήρ (13) is inhabited by ἡλιος; and γῆ is the realm of men; οὐρανός, above ἄηρ, is an immaterial realm. The κτίστης of Isidorus has many Egyptian precedents: Ptah, Schu, Atum, Osiris-Ptah-Sokaris (the last a form of Sebek), Haroeris-Schhu, and Wepwawet (cf. II 9 above). See RARG, pp. 71-74, 270-272, 568-576, 614-619, 685-689, 723-727, 842-844. As to the starry heavens, certain Egyptian deities are known as Lord, or Mistress, of the Stars, for example Hathor, Satis, Sothis, Isis, Re, Amun, Amun-Re, and Chnum. Cf. Müller, Isisareatalogien, p. 39, notes 13-15.

12. σταμῶν... κοικυτάτων τε ῥοῶν. Of course, after καὶ the following τε is redundant. Sokonapis, related to Sbk, is god of the Bahr Yussuf, and Lake Moiris.

But in the aretalogies from Cyme (K.), Ios (J.), and Saloniki (S.) (=M.), Isis, not Sokonapis, is the Creator (cf. K. 12, J. 9 = M. 12): ἐγὼ ἑκοίρισα γῆν ἀπ’ οὐρανοῦ; (K. 13, J. 10 = M. 13): ἐγὼ ἀστρῶν δοῖς ὠδεῖα; (K. 14, J. 11 = M. 14): ἐγὼ ἠλιος καὶ σελήνης πολεῖαν συνεταξάμην. She is the same in H. Oxy. 183-185: σὺ πάντων ἑγγών καὶ ξηρῶν καὶ ψυχηρῶν; εξ ὀπίς ἀπαντὰ συνέστηκεν [τί], εὐφραίνα πάλτρον εὐγενῆς. Isidorus I 3, 8-9 and II 3 also speaks of Isis-Hermouthes as Creator of all. Obviously, however, in Hymns II-IV it does not matter to him whether the goddess, or her mate, is Creator. It seems otherwise in his Hymn I which, like the aretalogies from Cyme, Ios, and the Oxyrhynchus Hymn, praises only the goddess.

13. Ἀγγέλης: cf. 32-33, III 33, 35, IV 5. See Plate XIV. This god is unknown. Ἀγγέλη is, however, a Greek transliteration of ‘νή, Egyptian ‘νή means ‘The Living One.’ See Erman-Grapow, NABAS I, p. 201. Of course, words beginning with ἀγγί, i.e. ‘νή, are common. For example, a god Ἀγγόρων (dative) is associated with Isis: οὐδὲ θεά μεγάλη καὶ Σαράπινα καὶ Μουρω καὶ Ἀγγόρων καὶ τῶν οὐρανίων [θεών] πάση καὶ πάσης κτλ. (Archiv 2, 1902, pp. 552 ff.). Perhaps, by analogy with Ἀγγορίφος, Ἀγγόρης is equivalent to ‘νή-της = His name lives (Vogliano, P. R., p. 44 note 2); or it may be a short form of Ἀγγόρης[κ = Isis lives. Cf. ‘νή-ἐωτ = The goddess Mut lives. A derivation from an adjective, ankhi,
The living) would also be a suitable name for Isis' son and the sun-god. In fact, 'The living' is a known title of Horus; cf. RARG, Horus, p. 308. Whatever its exact meaning, it seems certain that Ἄγχως is related to the root ankh ('νή) i.e. Ἄγχως = Life. See 3, ζωή and note. Cf. Vogliano, P. R., pp. 87-8. In any case, Anchoes stands here for the son who is always an essential part of the Isis myth.

To recapitulate, Isidorus states of Anchoes that he is Isermuthis' son, his dwelling-place is the aether, he is the rising sun 'that brings the day.' In other words, he is either Re or very like that god, i.e. probably the son-child, associated with Horus. See σύνναος above.

αἰθέρα ναίς[1]: for a similar phrase, similarly localized, see II, II 412: Ζεύ . . . αἰθέρα ναιῶν. Here αἰθήρ is contained by οἰδρανός (but in II XV 192 οἰδρανός is ἐν αἰθέρι). For the later system of οἰδρανός, αἰθήρ, ὀξύρ, γῆ, see οἰδρανόν, 11 above and note (quoting Stob. 1.41.45) and πολος 1 9 above. Cf. h. Orph. XXXIV (to Apollo) 11 ff.: οὔ γάρ λείσσεις τὸν . . . αἰθέρα γαῖαν τε . . . ἐν' αἰθέρι . . . ἡχίες δὲ τε πειρήτα κόσμου παντός. Isidorus' cosmos agrees in detail with the later system.

14. ἡλιος ἀντέλλων: for ἡλιος see I 10, III 13, 32. For Isis' association with ἡλιος see M. 14: ἐγώ ἡλιος και θελήμας πορειαν συνετάξωμην; 44: ἐγώ ἐν τοῖς τοῦ ἡλιος αἰγίας οἰμί; 45: ἐγώ παρεδρεύω τῇ τοῦ ἡλιος πορείᾳ; H. Oxy. 112: ἐν Τ[ε]μέδω ἡλιος ὅνομα; 157: ἡλιος ἀπ' ἀναπόλης μέχρι δύσεως συν ἐπιφέρει[άς]; 233: Ἡλιος εἰς ἡλιος. The terms ἡλιος, φῶς, etc., when used of Isis and her son, have strong associations with early Egyptian myths of Re. Plutarch (de Is. 52) equates ἡλιος with ὄμμα . . . φῶς Ἱλλον. Isis' son was, in fact, considered both the physical and the true sun. As part of this theology, the rising sun could be portrayed as the Sun — a child standing or sitting. See RARG, Horus = Sonne 731-2; J. Schubart and S. Morenz, Der Gott auf der Blume, and B. v. Groningen, de P. Oxy., pp. 112, 157-9. There are many Egyptian legends concerning the infant Sun-god rising from the primeval sea, sometimes as a lotus flower (καρπὸς ?), sometimes as a crocodile (Σκῆκ?). Always he is a symbol of emerging life and light. The various legends of Re appear to have become assimilated to several young gods and especially to Horus who, at least with his nurse-mother, seems always to have been largely an anthropomorphic god. He is both the King and the sun. The Egyptian verb for the rising of the sun (ẖi) is depicted by a hieroglyph showing the sun rising over the primeval hill. It is a verb used to mean also the rise of the stars, and, what is important here, the appearance of Pharaoh at his accession, at festivals, and on the throne. See Frankfort, Kingship, pp. 57, 150.

As usual, Isis here is shown to be one of a triad of gods, a member of the family by whom she was always attended. It is claimed that she was, in fact, inseparable from them, and that the holy family moved with her wherever she went. 15

15. See S. Morenz, "Ägyptische National-religion und sogenannte Isismission," Zeitschrift
èdeixê: see 1 6 and notes above. Cf. kataxeirai (used of Demeter), D. S. V 68.1; (of Orpheus, Museaus, Hesiod, Homer), Ar. Ra. 1032; and ἱμαῖρα (of Hestia) h. Orph. LXXXIV 3. Showing-teaching is a rôle of the Greek Heuretes-god.

ϕῶς is frequently associated with Isis. Cf. M. 18, 53; Ank. 7; H. Oxy. 148.

These lines are a continuation of 5-8 above.

15. γνωηρ...ποιησαν. γνωηρ is an epic noun. Cf. II. XXIV 539. Also Aeschin. 3 III: κατὰ φῶς γνωηργεῖα, and h. Orph. II (13, to Prothyraia): δόδω δὲ γνωηρ κτλ.

16. εὐτεκνής. For a similar expression, see h. Hom. XXX 5 ff. (είς γῆν): (ἄνθρωποι) εἰς οὖν δὲ εὐτεκνὲς τε καὶ εὐκαρποὶ τε θέλουν, πότνια Cf. h. Orph., XXX 8: εὐτεκτικός. Plutarch (de Is. 52 E) equates Isis to Venus Caellestis. Cf. App. Met. XI 2,5 (= Venus Paphia). If a man and wife in Egypt had no children, they might resort to a temple of Isis and pray for offspring; and by the miraculous power of Isis the wife might bear a child. The reference is again, as in I 27-34, to an Isis-miracle. Of course any Egyptian family of gods (here the triad Isermuthis, Sokonopsis, and the child Anchoes) is the prototype of the families of men; just as Isis bore her husband a son, so by analogy might any Egyptian (or Greco-Egyptian) wife.

17-20. Summary. The chief Isis-miracle is the rise of the Nile flood which marks the Egyptian religious New Year. It is an annual miracle, repeating the one-time primeval creation of the world and symbolizing the ancient legend of Isis’ resurrection of Osiris. Here, by the help of the Nile, Isis is shown to create forever cereal food for her creature, man. The lines appear to state basic Isisic theology.

17. χρυσορρόας: cf. IV 12. The double rho is common in poetry, only one being scanned.

χρυσορρόας is a poetic adjective, commonly used of the Nile. Cf. Athenaeus V 203, C: μόνος γὰρ ὦς ἀληθῶς ὃ χρυσορρόας καλοὶ χρυσορρόας καλοὶ χρυσορρόας καλοὶ χρυσορρόας καλοὶ χρυσορρόας καλοὶ χρυσορρόας καλοὶ χρυσορρόας καλοὶ χρυσορρόας καλοὶ χρυσορρόας καλοὶ χρυσορρόας καλοὶ. See also Joann. Antioch, FHG IV 541, Fr. 2: τὸν Νεῖλον τὸν λεγόμενον Χρυσορρόαν. Cf. Joann. Lyd., de Mens. IV 68, Grg. Naz. = Migne 21, p. 1116. A canal, or branch, of the Nile in the Delta probably was called Χρυσορρόας; the word is preserved in its Coptic name. See Sethe, Géogr. de l’Ég., p. 303. Recurring references to

*der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, 1961, p. 434, note 6. Morenz refers to a portrayal of the Christian Holy Family of the third century A.D. in the Priscilla Catacomb (ibid., p. 435, note 10). It shows figures in a posture strongly reminiscent of the Isis family. Cf. Hermann, Das Kind. For the Isis family at the Medinet Madi temple, see Plate XIV = Vogliano, P. R., Tav. Xib. Isis suckling Harpokrates is a well known type. The same mother-child type is well known in early Christian times especially from the Maria Galaktophoroussa or Maria Lactans of Coptic art. See Klaus Wessel, Coptic Art, p. 17, and plates 5-6; also Nilsson, GGR 2(2), Plate 2. Müller believes that the close family relationship of Isis was emphasized in Greece (liturgiologie, p. 29). Sokonopsis, the father, and Anchoes, the son, are Isis’ temple-partners in Isidorus’ Hymns II-IV. M. names Osiris her brother and husband, and Horus her son. The latter work was for the Greek world outside Egypt.
πλοῦτος = wealth seem part of the underlying theme of Hymn II (cf. 6, 10, 21). If Soknopis' name means Sebek of the Nile, it too is closely associated with Osiris-Sarapis, god of the Nile and giver of wealth (see II 9). χρυσορρόις, a traditional epithet for the Nile, therefore is part of the theme of wealth, that is, the Nile's 'gold,' or the fertile earth, source of all riches. This Athenaeus explains (see above).

ἀνάγεις... ἐπὶ τῆν. In Thgn. 1347 ἀνάγω means lead up, lead back. The verb may also mean bring (up) to life again, i.e. cause to awaken, revive, resurrect (cf. Hes. Th. 626). ἀγω and ἀνάγω are used frequently of Isis (and the Nile). Cf. the following: Lucian, dial. deor. 3 (referring to Isis-lo): καὶ τὸν Νεῖλον ἀναγέτω καὶ τούτῳ ἄνεμους ἐπιστεπέτω καὶ σωζένω τὸν πλέωντας; H. Orch. 126 (referring to Isis): τὴν καὶ τῶν Νείλων ἐπὶ πλῆθον νεών ἐπανέγοιασεν; 187 (of Isis): σὺ τῶν ἀδελφῶν σοι ἐπαλήης γεφεισάς μάλις κτλ.; and 222 ff. (of Isis): σὺ τῆς τῆς κύρια ἀρ[...]. . . . . πλη[μ]μυρών ποταμῶν τ[-]... [. . . .] ἂν γεικ. Isis' power over the Nile was manifested in the cult by the sistrum and pitcher, both traditionally associated with her Hellenistic cult.16

References to Isis 'bringing back' the Nile, causing the Nile to rise, were related both to her own resurrection of Osiris and, later, generally to Greek resurrection legends relating to Demeter and Persephone.17 ἀνάγω, ἀγω, καρποδέτειρα, etc., when first applied to Isis, might have been a deliberate adaptation from Eleusinian language.

κατὰ (ὁρας; the restoration of Hondius in SEG VIII 549. Cf. κατὰ γαλαν of Vogliano and κατὰ (καλαν) of M. Vandoni, Prolegomena, II, 1953, Il Tempio di Madinet-Madi e Gli Inni di Isidoro. With κατὰ (ὁρας) ('according to seasons,' that is, 'yearly') compare h. Hom. XXVI 12: ἐς ὁρας. Also κατὰ ὁραν would be suitable (meaning 'at the right time'). κατὰ καιρόν is similar to the last.


The scansion is faulty: a mute followed by a liquid may produce a short syllable; a liquid followed by a mute, as here, may not.

19. ἐπινεῖ: cf. επινεθα 18. Isidorus considers Isis to be the cause of both the blooming of vegetation (καρποῖ) and man's flourishing (19-20). ἀνδρός becomes καρπός and by analogy πλοῦτος produces human ἀρετή. These are the outward evidence of healthy growth in the natural realms, that is, the realms that partake of generation. Cf. Plutarch, de Is. 33 ff. Like Plutarch later, Isidorus sees the union of Soknopis-Isis and Hermouthis-Isis (or the union of fertile land


17. ἀνάγεσσ occurs also of resurrection in
and the Nile) as ultimately producing all human well-being. At least, the human and vegetable worlds are related.

καρπός: see ἵως παῖ καρπῶν, 3 above and I 8. See also εὐαγεῖ, and note above. καρπός is, of course, intimately associated with ἱως. Cf. ἵως παντοδατῶν ἀγαθῶν 20. It is part of the progression ἄνθος = καρπός = πλοῦς = ἀρετή.


παντοδατῶν ἀγαθῶν: cf. III 15. This is formulaic language. Egyptian Sarapis, for instance, is ‘giver of all good things’ (Aelius Aristides 45.17, a Hymn to Sarapis).

21-28. Summary. These four couples concern the Thanksgiving festival in Isis-Hermouthis’ honour, held annually in the month of Pachon. The farmers of the district gather at the temple to celebrate a Thanksgiving festival for the harvest of the past year (21-22), and to pay their annual tax to the temple (22-24). The following year the goddess rewards them for their piety with a similar harvest (25-26) and they again celebrate her festival (in the succeeding year, 27-28). The process is unending. Lines 21 ff., addressed to the goddess in the name of the local citizen-farmers, are in fact a reminder at the temple gate to those farmers who honour the goddess to set aside their tax; only thus will their prosperity be unending. The Hymn was undoubtedly written for the harvest festival of Isis-Hermouthis in the month of Pachon.

With the language, compare the Hebrew harvest festival in Lxx Ex. 23.16; 34.22a; Lev. 23.17, and Num. 28.16. See also H. Hom. XXVI 11-13: καὶ οἷς μὲν οὕτω χάρις πολυτάφιλ’ ὥ Διὸνος δός δ’ ἡμᾶς χαιροῦσας ἐς Ἰωρᾶς αὐτῆς ἰκέοθαι ἐκ δ’ αὖθ’ ὡρᾶς εἰς τοὺς πολλοὺς ἐναυτούς.

21. πλοῦτος: the whole hymn presents a picture of plenty enjoyed in rural peace. The enjoyment of the annual temple festivities and the goddess’ gifts is part of such a picture.

ἀνάδωκας: for the same form see I 7. The compound ἀνάδοκωμι occurs three times as predicate to Isidorus’ goddess. It could be Eleusinian, associated especially with Πῆ and καρπός. Cf. Plu. Cam. 15.

Undoubtedly the same harvest festival is mentioned in the dedication inscriptions. Compare too the opening lines of the present Hymn.

22. χάριτας: see 4 above.

A divine grant making for proper possession is an old Greek theme. Cf. Hesiod, Op. 320 ff.: wealth is properly god-given, and not to be seized. When it is obtained by violence, it cannot be kept.

The infinitive depending on δίωμι, while classical, may have become more common in the Koine. See Mayser, Grammatik 2(1), p. 151, sec. 2a: die Konsekutiv-finaled und explikativen Infinitiv. Cf. for example h. Cer. 372.

di' διωμι: meaning ‘always.’ For the spelling διωμι see J. Powell and E. Barber, New Chapters in the History of Greek Literature, p. 8, note 1; and p. 11, note 2.

23. τούχων: the genitive case carries on the genitive of αὐτων δώρων 21.

οἱ μοίραι ... ἀπένειμα: for the portion ‘set aside’ for a god by Egyptians, cf. Hdt. II 4: Αἰγυπτίων ... βομβώτε τε καὶ ἄγαλματα καὶ νηρός θεοῦ ἀπονεῖμα. See also Pl. Prt. 341e, and SIG 708.33.

The portion of produce was set aside at the time of the harvest and was, from our more secular point of view, a church-state tax. See below.

μοίραι δεκάτη: this due tenth must be the so-called ‘apomoria.’ See especially C. Préaux, L'Economie Royale des Lagides, pp. 171-187, and J. A. S. Evans, YCS 12, 1961, pp. 217 ff. The apomoria was a national levy on orchards and vineyards of a prescribed portion of the harvest, to be paid to certain temples. After 264 B.C., and probably before, the portion was generally one-sixth of the produce or one-tenth on less fertile land. The tenth, therefore, which was paid at Medinet Madi, indicates almost certainly that the area was thought less fertile than others. And indeed, when excavated, the temple lay immediately on the edge of the desert. See Vogliano, P. R. and S. R. and E. Bresciani, Rapporto Preliminare. All the towns, in fact, on the edge of the Fayum are really in the desert. Their fertile land lay in the portion irrigated. Irrigation projects of the early Ptolemies are known to have temporarily rendered the region fertile. Undoubtedly XIIth Dynasty irrigation had done the same. Cf. IV 35-6.

24. χαίρουτε: in the worship of Isis Doteira, a man ‘joices’ to give back to the goddess a tenth part of her gifts to him. The setting aside, or giving, of this thank offering, in reality the apomoria or produce-tax, belongs to one Panegyris, but is thought to contribute to the success of the next year’s crop. It is to be given willingly, even gladly. Our aretologist appears interested in assuring local support for the temple.

οἡ τε πανηγυρίς: πανηγυρίς is a hapax legomenon for Panegyris. The festival was a social gathering for the exchange of wares, Herodotus tells us. For the Panegyris in Egypt, see Hdt. II 58-63, and 171. He tells of the frequency of such festivals in Egypt and names the chief centres: Boubastis (a festival to Artemis); Busiris (to Isis, a lamentation and feast); Sais (to Athena); Heliopolis (to the Sun-god); Buto (to Leto); Papremis (to Ares). Obviously they are all held at cult centres. Herodotus also associates the Egyptian Panegyris with the Mysteries of Demeter at Eleusis (II 171). In his view, the Egyptian Panegyris included δεώτηλα, i.e. μυστήρια, which were the enactment of the god’s sufferings (II 171,
and πομπαί καὶ προσαγωγαί (II 58). Cf. the Rosetta inscription (OGIS 90.42): ἐξοδεύεσθε ἐν ταῖς μεγάλαις πανηγύρεσι τῶν ναὸν γίνονται and the Canopus decree (OGIS 56.60): ὅταν αἱ ἐξοδεύεις καὶ πανηγύρεις τῶν λουκών θεῶν γίνονται. The above references, however, make no mention of the paying of the produce-tax.

The Panegyris, then, or ‘Panegyric’ (if they are the same) was a religious procession from the temple and back, during some part of which the populace joined in the celebrations.18

The whole festival is understood to include the gift of the tenth in produce (21-4) which will ensure a successful harvest the following year (25-26). Presumably the sacrificial rites (incense and first-fruits) mentioned in III 29 are performed at the temple. There is an altar at the Medinet Madi temple only a few feet before the south portal (see above, page 10, and Plate II, right). Next, in all probability, a procession from or about the temple area takes place, but it is not mentioned by Isidorus. The Heorte or feast finally is held and the crowd returns home tired but happy (27-8). For the site of the Festival see 27, πανηγυρίανες, below. For the feast as a ‘common meal,’ see 28.

For another Panegyris in honour of Isis in Egypt, see H. Oxy. 133-4: τὴν ἐν ταῖς πανηγύρεσι βοήθειαν. Cf. v. Groningen, de P. Oxy., notes on lines 132-5.

25. ἐδωρήσω: the verb δωρέω is used especially to predicate benefactor-gods. With the language of 21-25 cf. h. Hom. XXVI 11-13 (to Dionysos) quoted 21-28 above.

περιτελλομένων ἐναὐτῶν: cf. II. II 550-1: περιτελλομένων ἐναὐτῶν. The process goes on eternally.

26. μετὰ Παχών: cf. III 32 below. Pachon is also the month given for the dedication of the πρόσωπον of the Medinet Madi complex. The dedicatory inscription on the west, furthermore, gives the day β, the second, of Pachon. In the other, that of the east, the sigma after Pachon and the β have either been broken off or were never inscribed. Both month and day of the dedication of the forecourt and lions, therefore, are approximately the date of the Egyptian Harvest Festival to Hermouthis which Isidorus’ Hymns II and III celebrate.19 See Plates

18. For the festival at Edfu, see W. H. Fairman, “Worship and Festivals in an Egyptian Temple,” Bulletin of the John Rylands Library 37, 1954-55, pp. 165 ff., especially pp. 182 ff. For the Sacer Ludus or Mystery Play, see Hdt. II 59, 63, 171; RARG, pp. 494 ff.; B. v. Groningen, de P. Oxy., I. p. 133; and Müller, Isisaretalogen, p. 49, and note 5. From III 32-33 we learn that the festival referred to by Isidorus perhaps also had a feast or θυσία. This could be the reference in II 27-28, a sort of cult common meal.

19. Several of the Egyptian months were closely related to festivals and thence had got their names, for example, Pharmouthi = ‘The one of Rn.n.’ See ’Ερμουθέων Ι 1, and note. Whether the Harvest Festival of Rn.n. originally fell not in Pachon but in Pharmouthi, the Harvest goddess’ own month, does not concern us here. Eventually this festival presumably had become fixed, in the civil calendar, on Pachon 1 (= I Swnw 1, the first month of the third season, the first day), or perhaps it was late on Pharmouthi 30, really on the eve of Pachon 1, and was followed by a Harvest Festival the next day. See R. A. Parker, The Calendars of Ancient Egypt, p. 39, and Merkelbach, Isisfestes, pp. 42-44. The Harvest Festival of Hermouthis was the third great festival of the ecclesiastical year of the Isis cult.
IVa, and Va and b.

It will be noted that in Hymn II no day in Pachon is mentioned. In III 32, on the other hand, Pachon 20 = Thoth is given as the date of the Harvest Festival. See III 32 and note.

ἐν ἐνθροσύνη: a common phrase in LXX: Ge. XXXI 27; Si. 34.28; Ps. XX 11; Ps. Sal. X 8, and particularly Deut. XVI 10-15. Cf. Act. Ap. 2.28.

27. εἰς οἰκὼν: possibly Isidorus wrote metrically: τερεθέντες δ' οἰκών; later the stonemason substituted the unmetrical, but poetic, εἰς οἰκών. See A. Wilhelm, *Wintr Studies* 61/62, 1943/7, p. 175.

πανηγυρισάω: the festival may have been held in the spacious environs of the temple. Various outer temples, or temple-buildings, were the scene of festivities at Edfu. See W. H. Fairman, "Worship and Festivals in an Egyptian Temple," *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 37, 1954-55, pp. 165-203. For the temple-complex at Medinet Madi as an ἀντοπ, see Plate IV; the forecourt is called προάστυ.

28. εὐφήμως: piously, reverently, as in A. Eu. 287. Cf. Pl. Phdr. 265c, Ar. N. 263, and S. Aj. 362, where it means respectfully and silently. It is tempting to see in the line some implication of the effect of μισάς or δεικτηλα (see 23-4 above and note). But the celebrants may have merely partaken of a festive 'common meal.' Cf. ἐστίν III 33.

τρυφή: the common poetic use of τρυφή ranges from 'daintiness,' 'lightness' (E. Ph. 1491), and 'fastidiousness' (Ar. Pl. 818), to 'licentiousness' (Ar. Ra. 21). But under the Ptolemies, τρυφή apparently attained a specific meaning, the ideal type of abundant life those monarchs lived (ideally) at court, or a peculiarly blessed or lucky life. It appeared, euphemistically, in royal surnames. See Alfredo Passerini, "La τρυφή," *Storiografia ellenistica, Studi Ital. di Filol. Class. N. S. 11*, 1934, pp. 35-6; Otto-Bengtson, *Geschichte*, pp. 5, 47-51; and J. Tondriaud, *La Tryphè, Philosophie royale Ptolémaïque*, 1948.

Isidorus' τρυφή echoes a little the above Ptolemaic meaning of the word. It implies a feeling of special favour arising from the celebration of the Panegyric and the feeling that the god was satisfied, a state of peculiar harmony fostered perhaps by the cult meal and the Mysteries. The festival celebrated, undoubtedly, the mutual regard or love of the deity and her worshipers.

It is impossible to read lines 21-28 of this Hymn without seeing its close similarity, in language at least, to Lxx Deut. XVI 10-15.

29-30, 32-33. Summary. The second hymn concludes with a request to the goddess to continue to share her gifts with her suppliant, and to grant him in particular the gift of a child. After the signature there appears a postscript, undoubtedly written some time later, stating that Isis and her Synnaoi gods heard the poet's prayer and granted him his heart's desire.

29. ἅν δοῦρων... μετάδος: μετάδος means 'give a share.' Cf. Thgn. 104, 925; and h. Hom. XXX (to Ge) 6-9: τευ δ' ἐχέστα τοῦρων δίον... φερεσάμοι. The whole line, and 18: βιοτωθ διμήρε δοσάζε, is not unlike the concluding prayers of
Orphic hymns. Cf. especially XXXII 15: κλαθ' μου εἰχομένου, δός δ' εἰρήνην πολύολοβον.

30. ἢκέτη: cf. M. 36. ‘Suppliants’ in Greek hymns are simply those who pray to the deity.

δόλον: see III 6. Cf. h. Hom. XV 9 and XX 8: δόλον δ' ἀφετήρν τε καὶ δόλον.

33. ἀνταπέδωκαν: Isidorus’ meaning is theological, concerning the relationship between a man and the divine. The ‘gift’ is a divine reward in return for proper worship. The goddess and her σύνεσις gods at Medinet Madi judge of a man’s actions, and bestow their rewards in his lifetime. Lines 32-33 are obviously personal. It could be that the goddess has given the poet the child he sought. Cf. 15-16, and 3. The postscript reveals many qualities in the writer, awe, humility, faith and spontaneous personal thankfulness. His feelings seem to well up and pour forth in his praises or aretalogies; cf. εὐθυμίαι below. His response to the goddess is very close to Lucius’ emotion in App. Met. XI 25: Nec mihi vocis ubertas ad dicenda quae de tua maiestate sentio sufficit, nec ora mille linguaque totidem vel indefessi sermonis acernea series.

εὐθυμίαι: gladness, happiness, as in Pl. I. 1.63; and Pl. Pae. 1.2. Cf. Ep. Jac. 5.13; and P. Amh. 133.4. εὐθυμίαι, as a cult term, refers to the emotion inspired by that cult’s deepest mysteries. See R. Merkelbach, Roman und Mysterium, p. 110, note 2, and p. 333, note 2.

Hymn III (Plate VIII)

Ὑψίστων μεθένουσα θεῶν, Ἑρμοῦθε ἀνασσά, Ἰου αγνή, ἀγία, μεγάλη, μεγαλόφωμε Δηοί, σευμονάτη δύντερ᾽ ἄγαθών μερόπεσοι ἀπαί έιερεβέσω μεγάλας χάριτας καὶ πλοῦτον δόκοικας, καὶ ζωήν γλυκερήν τε ἔχει καὶ τέρψιν ἄριστην Ὀλβον, εὐτυχίαν καὶ σωφροσύνην τε ἁλύσων. δόσοι δὲ ξώονοι μακάρτατοι, ἄδρες ἄριστοι, σκαπτροφόροι βασιλεῖσι τε καὶ δόσοι κοιράνοι εἰσι, οὗτοι οὐτό ἐπέχοστε ἀνάσσουσοι᾽ ἁχρι τε γήρως, λαμπρῶν καὶ λυπαρῶν καταλείποντες πολῶν δόλων νῦσαι θ᾽ υπωνούι καὶ ἀνάφοι τοίη μεταβάτε. ὅν δὲ κε φιλτατὸν ἐτύχει ἀνάκτων ἡ βασιλεία οὗτος καὶ Ἀιάς τε καὶ Εὐρώπης τε ἂν καθίσθη, εἰρήνητο τε ἄγων, καρποὶ βρώθουσαν ἐπ᾽ αὐτῷ παντῶν ἀγαθών, καρπῶν τε φέροντες ἄρ(ω)η[ω]. ὡποῖο δὲ πόλεμοι τε ἀνδροκταιαί τε μάλα ἡμιαῖοι μεταῖκνον ἄχλων τε τὸ σῶν σθένος, ἡ δυναμικὴ ἕνπε, πλέφθος ἀπημαίρωσε, ὀλέγοιαι δὲ θάρσους ἐπὶ δικέ.
O Ruler of the Highest Gods, Hermouthis, Lady, Isis, pure, most sacred, mighty, of might Name, Deo, O most hallowed Bestower of good things, to all men who are righteous, You grant great blessings: to possess wealth, a life that is pleasant, and most serene happiness: material gain, good fortune, and happy soundness of understanding. All who live lives of greatest bliss, the best of men: sceptre-bearing kings and those who are rulers, if they depend on You, rule until old age, leaving shining and splendid wealth in abundance to their sons, and sons’ sons, and men who come after. But the one whom the heavenly Queen has held the most dear of princes, rules both Asia and Europe, keeping the peace; the harvests grow heavy for him.
15 with all kinds of good things, bearing fruit . . .
and where indeed there are wars and slaughter
of countless throngs, Your strength, and godly power
annihilates the multitude (against him); but to the few (with him) it gives
courage.

Hear me, Agathetyche, when I pray to You, Lady,

whether You have journeyed into Libya or to the south wind,
or whether You are dwelling in the outermost regions of the north wind ever
sweetly blowing,
or whether You dwell in the blasts of the east wind where are the risings of
the sun,
or whether You have gone to Olympos where the Olympian gods dwell,
or whether You are in heaven above, a judge with the immortal gods,
or whether having mounted the chariot of the swift-driving sun,
You are directing the world of men, looking down on the manifold deeds of the wicked and gazing down on those of the just.
If You are present here too, You witness (men’s) individual virtue,
 delighting in the sacrifices, libations and offerings,

30 of the men who dwell in the Nome of Suchos, the Arsinoites,
men of mixed races who all, yearly, are present
on the twentieth of the month of Pachon and Thoth, bringing a tenth for You
and for Anchoes, and Sokonopis, most sacred (of) gods, at Your feast.
O Hearer of prayers, black-robed Isis, the Merciful,
and You Great Gods who share the temple with Her,
send Paean to me, healer of all ills.

Isidorus
wrote (it)

1-6. Summary. The invocation is to the great and holy Isis as goddess of the
Harvest, that is, as both Hermoutis, goddess of cereal grain and the human infant
(Egyptian) and as Greek Deo, Giver of all good things (= Agathe Tyche). Isidorus’
royal goddess is complex.

1. ψύστως μειδέωνα θεώ: with ψύστως cf. I 3 and IV 4. The title means
Ruler of the Greatest Gods. Cf. the elaborately superlative expression in IV 23
qualifying Suchos: μεγάλου μεγάλου τε μεγάλου, and Osiris (App., Met. XI 30):
deus deum magnum potior et maiorum summus et summorum maximus et
maximorum regnator. In A. 45, μειδέωνa also refers to Isis. Cf. Anthol. Palat. VI
231: Αἰγύπτων μειδέωνα μελαμβάλου λυώτεπλε, and PGM 4.2774: Ἡω
πασικράτεια καὶ Ἡω πασιμειδέωνα Ἡω παντρεφέουνα (Io = Isis).

Ερμοθῆ: see I 1, II 2, and Plates IX-XIII.

2. ἄγια: cf. IV 1 ἄγιαν . . . ἱερῶν.

ἄγια: cf. Paus. X 32.13: ἱερῶν ἴδωκα ἄγιωταρον; also IG XII 694.14, and
SIG 3.768: τῶν ἑρῶν τῶν ἁγιωτάτων. For the use of ἁγιός with Egyptian and Syrian gods in the Hellenistic period, see OGIS 620.2: Δὶ ἁγιόι, OGIS 590.1 ff.: θεοὶ ἁγióς ἀλλ. Both ἁγιός and ἁγιός signify taboo and veneration; ἁγιός, in particular, is thought basically to be a Semitic word (Kittel, Theologisches Wörterbuch zum neuen Testament, vols. I-VI, 88). ἁγία is used of Isis etc. in H. Oxy. 34-5: Ἡμᾶς ἁγίαν; 35-6: Ἀφροδιτίες ἁγίας ὑπὲρ τῶν ἁγίων; 89: εἰ̇ν τῇ Χαλκιδὴ ἁγία, 256: καὶ ἁγίαν; and IG VII 3426 (Charoneia): τῆς ἁγίας Ἑλλάδος.

μεγάλη: cf. IV 23 and note.

μεγαλώνυμε: cf. I 2 and note.

Δηνό: cf. I 3 and IV 4.

3. σεμνότητα: Demeter especially is qualified by σεμνή. See h. Cer. I 486 (cf. 478). Isis' battlements are σεμνοὶ (Kyr. 13): πόλεις τε σεμνοὶ περιβόλους ἑτείρια.

δώτειρα: the title is used of Isis in H. Oxy. 68, and 13 (δώτειρα), and possibly Ankh. 10. The δώτειρα ἁγιαθῶν is almost equivalent to Ἀγαθὴ Τύχη.


4. εὐσεβέσσω: cf 27 below, and II 6; εὔσεβέσσω may contrast with ἀπασί. In line 3 all men receive gifts from Isis-Tyche, but in line 4 there are special rewards for the righteous, meaning those who are loyal (both to Isis and the King):


ἐδώκασ: cf. I 7, and II 21. The meaning probably is: you grant (gnomic aorist).

5. ᾙψόν: Vogliano, P. R., p. 37 reads: ᾲψόν; SEG VIII 550.5 reads: ἀψών. The facsimile shows a blurred letter that could be Σ or Ξ (see Plate VIII = Vogliano, P. R., Tav. XVI).

ἐγεῖ: see II 22, above and note.

τέρψιν ἀρίστην: cf. τέρπονται II 4, τερπόδεντες ibid. 27, and εὔτερπήν ibid.

6. ἀλβοῦ: happiness based on substantial wealth. See II 30; πλοῦτος too is high among the goddess' special favours for the righteous. See 4 above. For the same thought, cf. H. Hom, XXX 12, and Hes. Op. 312-21.

ἐὔμνη: sent by τύχη ἁγιαθῇ; τροφή is a most desirable kind of ἐυτυχία. Cf. II 28. The present Hymn concerns the ἐυτυχία of royalty, or their τροφή. See 7 ff. ὀφρόσυνην: a peculiarly Greek word showing that Isidorus' goddess is Hellenized.

7-18. Summary. Isis is special protectress of kings; she grants them more blessings than other men: prosperity, length of days, and, most important, children to succeed them. And to one great King, the Egyptian Pharaoh who is King of Kings, she gives her highest favours. Indeed, through her, (through his traditional power over nature and the Nile) he can bring his people peace and a bountiful harvest. He has foes and his own forces are less numerous than theirs,
but the goddess will protect him in battle and bring him victory as she has always done. For the possible reference here to Soter II see Chapter I.

8. οκαπτροφοροὶ βασιλέως: οκαπτροφόρος is Doric, here simply poetic colouring. The whole Andros Hymn (A.) is in the Doric dialect.

9. ἐπέχωντες: relying on, depending on (with the dative). In Plato, ἐπέχω means set one’s mind on (Lg. 926b; cf. Plu. Aem. 8), yield oneself to (R. 399b). The participle, as used here, has religious significance.

ἀρχή ... γῆρω[ς]: Isis, as protector of the King, grants him a long life and reign, that is, she prolongs his days.

λαμπρόν καὶ λυπαρόν: the alliterative use of these common epithets seems peculiar to Isidorus.

καταλείποντες: leaving behind (of the dying), bequeathing.


τοῖοι μεταίχης: the Ionic form μεταίχης is restored in preference to the Attic μεταίχης.

12. φυλαττόν εσκε: the facsimile shows ἐσκε. Cf. Il. XXIV 67: φυλαττός ἐσκε θεοί βροτών ὦ Ἡλώ εἰσι. The line from the Iliad speaks of Hector, whom Zeus could not save though he loved him most of all mortals. Isidorus may be thinking that the King of Egypt is as beloved of Isis as Hector was of Zeus. The error may, however, be that of the stonemason for surely the poet cannot mean the goddess can only grieve for her favourite.

ἐσκε, the iterative form of ἐσκ, as in the Homeric line, is obviously misused here.

(φυλαττόν) ... ἀνάκτων: if ἀνάκτων has its epic significance, it means of princes, of kings. φυλαττόν ... ἀνάκτων must be similar to βασιλεῖς βασιλέως, an epithet of the King of Egypt (who here is the ruler of ‘Asia and Europe,’ 13).

ἀναξ: in the plural, the noun is defined (Arist. Fr. 536): νικε τού βασιλέως καὶ οἱ ἀδελφοὶ καλοῦνται ἀνακτείς. Cf. Od. I 397. ἀναξ is also a well known title of gods, for example Zeus, Apollo, Poseidon, the Dioscuri.

13. Ἀσίας τε καὶ Ἐιρώνης τε ἀνάγοναι: the sweeping exaggeration of this statement is reminiscent of the formulaic ending of petitions to a Ptolemaic king, for example: θεοὶ δούν σοι βασιλέως πάνης χώρας ἔστω ἢ ἂν ἔστω εἰσορῷ. It is the language of an imagined universal monarchy.

14. καρποί: the interesting suggestion is made by R. Merkelbach that Isidorus wrote κάρποι (= gardens, Doric) and that the reading καρποί, echoing line 15, is the stonemason’s error. See “Note Critiche e Filologiche, Osservazioni Critico-Testuali Agli Inni Isiaci di Isidoro, La Parola del Passato,” Rivista di Studi Antichi, Fas. CIII, Napoli, 165, pp. 298-9.

βρυώον: βρωλὸ is used of fruit trees, vines, etc., meaning be heavy, be heavily laden, bend down. The verb is epic-poetic. Cf. Il. XVI 384, Od. XIX 112, Hes. Op. 465-6. See also I 12 on ἔπωρῳ.

ἐπὶ αὐτῶι: cf. 9 and II 2. ἐπί (with the dative) may mean because of. See Il.
XXI 585; X. HG. 3.11; Pl. Plt. 342. It implies strong affection.


ἀρ[ω]ρ[ε] is the reading in SEG VIII 550; ἀρ[ω]ρ[ε] is that of Vogliano, P. R.

Lines 11-15 assume a mystic relationship between the moral quality of the King and the bounty of the harvest. It is more than the fact that a bountiful harvest is the probable result of good government or sound leadership. Cf. Od. XIX 109-14. It seems odd, incidentally, that lines 12-15 speak of the goddess in the third person while 1-11 and 19-36 directly address her (and her synnaoi gods). The lines show other peculiarities, harshness, lack of coordination (14), extraordinarily naïve repetition (14-15), and the solecism ἀκε = ἐκεῖ (12).

16. αὐθρακασία: means ‘carnage.’

17. μυρίάδων: the thought that one king is more than thousands of men has many Egyptian parallels.20

ὀχλῶν: ὁχλοι are vast crowds. It is much like πλῆθος, 18. Cf. Th. IV 126, and Plot. 6.6.12, of a multitude at a festival: ὁχλοι καὶ ἑορτή καὶ οἰκτραπός καὶ πλῆθος. For the genitive ὁχλων, see Goodwin and Gulick, Greek Grammar, section 1133 ff.

τὸ ὀν ὑθέον: ὑθέος is an unusual word for a goddess’ power; it is followed immediately by the more usual δινάμει.

δινάμει: see I 11, δυνάμει.

18. πλῆθος: signifies a nameless crowd.


For Isis as Destroyer-Avenger see M. 25, 41, 46-7; A. 158-160, and H. Oxy. 239-42. Lines 16-18 of the present Hymn re-assert more strongly than 4-15 the royal goddess’ protection of her favourite, the Pharaoh. The poet supports the ‘rightful’ King and his goddess. A reader might well surmise from lines 16-18 that massacres are being carried out by, or in the name of, some ‘pretender’ (12-15). The rightful King is seriously threatened and (in traditional language) is supported only by the ‘few’ (18). Yet he is ‘most dear’ to the powerful goddess (12) and therefore he, not his opponent, can bring the country prosperity (14-15). The

language is vague but perhaps intentionally so. It could date to the early years of the restoration of Ptolemy IX, when his success was in doubt. From other sources we know his position was doubtful until 84 B.C. The completeness of his subsequent destruction of Thebes betrays to us his fear of the Theban priests who had led the revolt. Lines 16-18 could well have been written between 88 and 84.

19-33. Summary. The second half of Hymn III begins with a new invocation of Isis-Hermouthis as Agathetheche, Giver of all good things. It reflects the era of peace succeeding the rebellion and strife of 16-18, and seems to continue lines 12-15. Here one cannot but catch the stress on Isis’ observance of the citizens’ morals; the ‘good,’ those loyal to the King, she easily distinguishes from the ‘bad.’ Moreover, she will perhaps attend the Thanksgiving festival when she can watch men’s behaviour at close hand, and rejoice with them in their Panegyric on ‘the twentieth of Pachon and Thoth.’ At this time they will pay their ‘tenth’ to the goddess and her family (and by implication their homage to the King).


20. ἀμφιβεβηκάς: cf. I. I 37: ἀργυρότος ὀς Χρόσην ἀμφιβεβηκάς. Isidorus’ meaning of ἀμφιβεβηκάς, of course, is different. In the Iliad it is ‘bestride,’ meaning ‘protect;’ here it means ‘go,’ or ‘move about.’

20-22. ἦ ... ἦ ... ἦ ... ἦ and 23-25: ἦ καί ... ἦ καί ... ἦ καί. For ἦ repeated, see II. I 138, 145, and Od. XV 84-5. Cf. also H. Hom. Apollo 208: ἦ, 211: ἦ ... ἦ ..., 212: ἦ ..., 214: ἦ ...; Sappho Fr. 35: ἦ δὲ Κύπρος ἦ Πάφος ἦ Πάνορμος (an invocation to Aphrodite); H. Orph. XLIX 5 ff.; and especially H. Orph. XII 5 ff. (to Mise a ‘daughter’ of Isis), and H. Orph. LV 15 ff. See too Horace Carm. III 21. Such formulae are epic-poetic and found very often in invocations. See 23 and note, end.

21. βορέω ... ἡώπινων: the adjective means sweet-smelling. The description of the ‘pleasant’ north wind betrays the Egyptian provenance of Isidorus’ Hymn. Cf. I. 12. Incidentally, the north wind blows all year long in Egypt and is cooling. For instance, an Egyptian inscription from Edfu asks Renenuter (Hermouthis) to come in a ‘good north wind (Edfu, VII 243b). The annual northern or esetian winds in Egypt were thought to cause the Nile flood. The Etesians are equated here to ‘Boreas.’

πέρατα: ‘outermost regions.’

22. πνοιάς: see πνοιαί I 10 above.


23. Ὀλύμπων: cf. IV 3 below.

For Isis’ association with the mountain Olympus, the traditional home of the Greek gods, see A. 26-27: Εἰς ὧν ἐγὼ πολύβουλος ἔχω | ἡραῖα τέρμασ• Ὀλύμπῳ κεὶ ὑδάτων μυδαλέων σκοτείνωσα, H. Oxy. 129-30: τὴν ἐν Ὀλύμπῳ θεῶν εἰσ[π]ετήν and Anth. 8: προβολήν μακάρων ἐν Ὀλύμπῳ. σκόπητρον ἔχονον. Cf. too M. 5: ἔγω εἰμι Κρόνου θυγάτηρ πρεσβύτατη and D. S. I 27.3: ἔγω εἰμι ἥ τοῦ νεωτατοῦ Κρόνου θεοῦ θυγάτηρ πρεσβύτατη.
aiρίν ἰκάνει οὐρανόν. See too Od. XVIII 217, XIX 532. The imperfect tense is
odd.

Lines 20-22, introduced by ἦ, refer in rather whimsical order to the west,
Ros, north, and east. A new series of three introduced by ἦ καὶ seems to begin,
23: Ὀλυμπῶν, 24: ἐν οὐρανῷ, . . . μετ’ ἄθανάτου (δικαίου), and 25: ἡλι
ἀρματα (ῥάος). The purely Greek side of the goddess’ mythology is apparent. The
lines sound formulaic; cf. Ovid, Metamorphoses, I 61-68, for a similar topos.

24. οὐρανῶι. The whereabouts of Olympos, Uranos, and the Uraniones (23)
is unimportant. All that matters is that the goddess can go anywhere, passing
freely over all cosmic boundaries.

ὑπὲ: an epic adverb. See e.g. II. XX 155: Ζεβες δ’ ἱμενος ὑπη. Cf. II. XIII 140,

μετ’ ἄθανάτου: it would seem that Isidorus has in mind some cosmic system
such as that described in Stob. I 41.45. See II 11, οὐρανῶι ἀστερίσκους and note
above. In his Hymns certain άθανάτοι, among whom is Isis, judge in οὐρανῶι,
Πλως, Isis’ son, is expressly located in αἰθήρ (II 14) through which he daily
journeys (with his mother) and which he can be said to control (cf. 25 below). All
the living creatures of Isis-Heuretria (I 3, II 3) live on Ge, where men are
controlled by a King whose soul is partly divine, and therefore closely associated
(9) with the goddess-Heuretria who appears both on earth and in the
supra-terrestrial realms (20 ff). It may well be that Isis is actually thought of as a
Greek, motherly, Demiourgos controlling the whole system from without and
encountering men especially through the King and his ψυχῆ (12-15). Cf. Stob. I
41.45; Pl. Tt. 40c; Pl. R. 530a.

24. δικαίου: see I 6, εἰδικία. In Isidorus’ Hymns, Isis-Hermouthis-
Agathetheche-Deo, as the One, has entirely usurped the functions of the old Greek
deities traditionally concerned with δική. She created justice (I 6); she presides
over it from her place among the Olympians (III 24); during her daily
journey with the sun, she constantly watches over and judges human actions, that
is, she judges their δική and εἰσάγεια (iii 27). In fact, she has become the heavenly
judge. Her earthly house, her temple, incidentally is called ὄμος δικαίωτος IV
6.

With the foregoing cf. M. 16: τὸ δίκαιον ἱσχύον ἐπισόφηα; 35: ἐγὼ τὸς ἰδία
πρασσούσαι τεμπερία ἐπιτιθήμη, 37: ἐγὼ τοὺς δικαίως διμομοένους τεμίω; 38:
παρ’ ἐμοὶ τὸ δίκαιον ἰσχεῖ; and H. Oxy. 50: ἐν κυνός] πόλει τοῦ βου[σε[πέ]έτοι
πρε[ξ][δ][κ][κηη]. See too H. Oxy. 34.

In 24-27, Isis watches from heaven over men’s δική, that is, their relationship
to other men, and their εἰσάγεια, or their relationship to the gods. See 27 and
note below. This is a judgement of the living. But in Egyptian mythology Isis had
always been associated with a last judgement of men’s souls after death. And
indeed she appears sometimes in Greek and Latin hymns also in her Egyptian role
strange that in her homeland, in Isidorus’ Hymns, her interest throughout is in life and the living, in men’s welfare and their behaviour. She judges them like a parent, and a King, watching over them from above (24, 26); she rejoices with them, in person, participating in their festivals (28), and, most important, she comes instantly and in person to each whenever he calls on her in his human emergencies (134). The only condition is that they must be loyal to her and the King, her ‘son.’ Constantly she listens and answers prayers (I 35; II 29-30, 32-33, and III 35-36). She can, and does, prolong life for she can ward off death by helping the sick (I 29-34; II 7-8). But nothing at all is said by Isidorus about her power over, or judgement of men after, death.

25. ἥλιον . . . ἀρματα βάσα: Plutarch, commenting on the sun’s journey by chariot, contrasts Egyptian tales of the sun’s journey by boat (de Is. 34): ἥλιον δὲ καὶ σελήνην οἴχ ἀρμαν ἀλλὰ πλοῖοι ἐχάμαισο χρομένους περιπλεύον ψαφών. Relying chiefly on Plutarch’s quotation, Müller (Isisretalogien, p. 73 and notes, and p. 39, note 8) takes Isidorus’ line (25) to be purely Greek. Evidence for the belief in a daily journey of the Egyptian sun-god by boat is well attested; and it is also well attested (especially in late texts) that Isis, as here, accompanied him in his daily journey. Isidorus’ expression, therefore, is only partly Greek.

In the other aretalogies, Isis is similarly associated with the sun: M. 45: ἑγὼ παρεδρέων τῇ τοῦ ἥλιον πορείᾳ. Cf. Harder Ἐκροκράτες, p. 27 on III 25. See also A. 137-9: Ἀλέω βασιλήν ονα εἰς τοὺς λαµπροὺς ομάζονται καὶ με καλέονται παρεθέντων διὰ τὸν γυροῖς συμφέρον ἀκτέινον καὶ ωρανοῦ αἰὴλάντα. H. Oxy. 248: οὐ καὶ ἄγατος καὶ ὕλη ἐγχώμαιτο και πολὺς πολύς ἐπάπτεις καὶ σαράντα ὑποτιθείες αὐτοῦ ἐφαρμόσαν ὁ θεῖος.

Isis is said to be car-borne in G. 17 (διοχλάται). Delatte refers to coins of the Roman Empire which show her in a chariot. See Roscher, Lexikon II, p. 424. Cf. A. 30-32: καὶ περιενερων Ἀλέων πολλῶν ἀγήτθρια φαίνοντα κύκλων ἐκ πολύν εἰθώνεσκον. Apuleius has a more cosmic, less visual, image of her (Met. XI 14): tu rotas orbem, luminas solem.

26. κόσμον: κόσμων, τό (cf. ἄπαν) is not found elsewhere. The late meaning of κόσμος (the whole inhabited world of men) is meant here. Cf. OGIS 458, 40; IGrom. IV 982; Ev. Matt. 16.26. Men, not the physical world, are the goddess’ real concern.

κατοστείνουσα: the sun is frequently mentioned as watching men’s acts from above. See ἐφορώσα, 28 below. Zeus also keeps a like watch. In the aretalogies Isis has replaced Zeus. See δικαίωσις, 24.

Isis watches men from above: M. 44-45: ἑγὼ ἐν ταῖς ἁλίον αἰγαί εἶμι, ἑγὼ παρεδρεύω τῇ τοῦ ἁλίον πορείᾳ. In M. 16-30, 32-38, and 52, she is essentially a goddess of men’s moral life, over which she can watch as she journeys daily in the sky. See H. Oxy. 87-8 for similar titles: ἐν Σαλαμείν κατοίκων (cf. v. Groningen, De P. Oxy. on 87-8); 93: ἐν Πριμοδότων παντόπτων; 129: τῶν πολιοδοκηθείσων; Anh. 10: πανερφικτάσι, and Kaibel, Epigrammata 985, 3-4 (Philaec): ἐν θεᾶ παντοπτείνουσα . . . Εἰσον ἐνολο σῷς ἑωσί κόσμου ἐπισταμένη.
The traditional formula in Egypt for the rebel against the (divine) King, was ἀσεβὴς...θεοῦ ἐχθρός. See L. Koenen, “Ein Einheimischer Gegenkönig in Aegypten,” Chronique 34, 1959, pp. 110 ff., and C. B. Welles, JRS 28, 1938, pp. 41-9, P. Yale Inv. 1528. Impiety and treason always had been considered synonymous in Egypt. Conversely, loyalty to the King was ‘piety’: εὐσεβεία. Cf. ἀρετῆ, line 28. There is not the precise distinction between δίκη and εὐσεβεία in Egyptian thought that there is in Greek. See 24, δικαίωσις above. When Isidorus speaks of men’s εὐσεβεία, he is probably speaking as an Egyptian subject and means both loyalty to the King and to the royal goddess, Isis; δίκη to him may be much the same.

καθορίσεις: cf. κατοπτεύουσα 26, above. Isis’ watch from above over men’s morals is stressed in lines 24, 26, 27. See M. Vandoni, Prolegomena II, 1953, Il Tempio di Madinet-Madi e Gli Inni di Isidoro, p. 118 notes 26-27. One strongly suspects that what Isidorus really means is that Isis watches to see who is loyal and who is not. For her watch also at close hand, see line 28.

28. ὥθε: ‘in this place.’

πέρεi: cf. I 3 above and note. It is an epic term for a god’s presence at feasts, etc. See II. X 217. Cf. II. II 458. It has the additional meaning, of course, of ‘be present and help.’ Cf. II. XVIII 472; Od. XIII 393; A. Pers. 235; E. Or. 1159, etc.

δικαίωσις: individual virtue, individual goodness, i.e. loyalty to the King.

The expression is very strange if it refers to the goddess’ own ἀρετή (= vis divina). If it does, she observes her own ‘virtue’ as she attends the festival. This (to us) is mysterious language following what is singularly clear. Conceivably it could mean the annual ‘miracle’ of the harvest as evidence for her arête. At that time there was tangible evidence of a power at work, producing men’s prosperity and good luck (μέγαλα χάριτες, πλοῦτος). Cf. 4-6. Apuleius also refers to the ‘miracle’ of prosperity bestowed on adherents of the Egyptian cult, Met. XI 30: liberalis... providentia.

The phrase, however, is much more simply taken as ‘individual goodness’ or ‘virtue.’ This meaning is also entirely appropriate to the context where it echoes lines 24 and 27. In the first century B.C. ἰδιὸς most frequently means ‘belonging to an individual’ as opposed to κοινὸς; and the usual meaning of ἀρετή (of an individual) is ‘moral excellence, virtue’ (see Arndt and Gingrich, Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, 1949-1952). ἀρετή here is probably equivalent to εὐσεβεία and possibly δίκαιον υἱόν.
29. τερπομένη: cf. τερψίν, τερψάντος Π 27, and notes.

θυμλαῖς: the θυμλαί were probably not blood sacrifices. At Thebes, in the New Kingdom, participants of Thermouthis’ cult erected altars and sacrificed harvest offerings at fixed festivals (Kees, Ἱστοριαὶ, pp. 56 ff.). The ‘Greek’ θυμλαί here, in which Isis-Hermouthis delights, probably therefore are first-fruits and incense, that is, the customary sacrifice to Renenet-Hermouthis, goddess of the cereal harvest. Cf. Macrobius, Satr. 1.7.15, and V. Tran Tam Tinh, Le Culte d’Isis à Pompéï, Plate XXIII. The moira dekâtai (II 23) and dekâtai (32), in reality a tax and not a sacrifice, would have been presented at the first of the Panegyris and paid probably directly to the temple (see II 24 and note). The λαβαίνει τε καὶ θυμλαῖς (29) were a later part of the Thanksgiving rites. The words are an archaic Greek formula; the dekâtai (32) is noticeably not part of it. The offering of the tenth (as stated above) was delivered directly to the temple granaries. See II 23 and note.

This is the only mention in Isiac Greek hymns of libations and, in fact, of any offerings. Even prayer to Isis is not mentioned in the other aretalogies, although we know from Apuleius that it was a natural response of the initiated. Apuleius, however, does not mention offerings; rather Lucius’ gifts seem to prepare him for the goddess’ service and for the trappings and general show of his initiation. There is, however, evidence for sacrifices to Isermouthis at Medinet Madi in the large altar of the first century B.C., situated south of the latest portal. And V. Tran Tam Tinh, Le Culte d’Isis à Pompéï Plate XXIII, shows a priest attending a large altar in the foreground. It is garlanded and bears what appears to be flaming incense and fruit. Plate XII(4) shows another altar of burning incense, and Plate XXIV shows another large altar in the midst of worshipers. Something is heaped thereon, but it is difficult to make out.

30. Σωίου: see IV 23, II 9, Σωκοῦντις. There is much evidence to show Suchos’ continued association with the area about the town of Arsinoe. In Greek accounts, the Fayum is η λίμνη and ο λιμνίτης (νομίς). The term ‘Fayum’ is Coptic: Phiom’ means sea; the district was considered to be the site of the great primeval sea. (Cf. Kees, Ancient Egypt, pp. 214 ff.). Herodotus says its chief city was Κροκοδελαῖον πόλις, which is shown in Egyptian texts to be famous for its very ancient sanctuary of the crocodile god Sbk. (See H. Gauthier, Nomen, n. 7, and references; D. S. I 89; and Str. XVII 1, 35.)

Crocodilopolis was renamed ‘Arsinoe’ by Ptolemy II. (See H. Gauthier, Nomens, n. 7, Brady, Reception, quoting U. Wilcken, Zeits. Gesells. für Erdkunde,
22, p. 85, and Otto, Priester und Tempel, 1.2, n. 2.) At Arsinoe F. Petrie found frequent references to Sebek and a cemetry of innumerable mummified crocodiles. (See Petrie, Hawara, Biahmu, and Arsinoe, pp. 9 ff.) Not one but numerous crocodile cults existed. In the Hymns of Isidorus, Sokonopus is more or less a local form of the great god Suchos. These cults must have also flourished throughout the whole Delta region (particularly in the west), but the centre of Sbk's worship seems always to have been in the Fayum.

'Αραμωσιτών: the city, Crocodilopolis, although re-named Arsinoe by Ptolemy II for his second wife, continued to be known by its ancient name as well. Cf. Pliny, H. N. V 61. One of the greatest national projects of the Ptolemies was the second Ptolemy’s reclaiming of the Fayum, which had reverted by Hellenistic times to a large marsh called Lake Moeris. See Bell, JEA 29, 1943, pp. 37-50. Under Philadelphus’ influence, many new Greek towns were built and settled throughout the enlarged Fayum, and its periphery which was chiefly desert. See Σούχου, 30. The Medinet Madi Hellenistic temple-complex stands in the remote south, and is later than Philadelphus. The ancient name of the immediate south area and its history are unknown.

This whole district was not originally independent, but part of the 21st Nome of Upper Egypt. And it is not known if, when it was re-organized by Ptolemy II, the newly enlarged area became a separate Lake District or remained part of the old Nome XXI of the Pharaohs. Probably some change occurred for δ Λάμη (or δ Λαμώτης νομός) disappeared completely in the last years of Ptolemy II Philadelphus (ca. 246 B.C.) and became instead (b) 'Αραμωσίτης νομός or, as here, Σούχου νομός 'Αραμωσιτών. See H. Gauthier, Nomes, n. 7.

31. ποιμένων ἑθνῶν: mingled, or mixed, tribes or races. For the ἑθνη of the Arsinoite Nome after 148 B.C., see J. F. Oates, YCS 18, 1963, pp. 72 ff. By the first century B.C. it is abundantly clear that few families would be of unmixed descent. Intermarriage had been taking place; probably an entirely new ethnic group and culture was emerging in the Fayum. See below, ἑθνῶν.

ἑθνῶν: Ptolemy II had colonized the cities of his newly reclaimed Arsinoite Nome with soldiers. When Egyptian natives settled with them, the institutions of the two peoples flourished side by side. Foreigners and natives entering the newly reclaimed land of the Fayum together (cf. Brady, Reception, pp. 13 ff. and 30) did not face, as in the rest of Egypt, an old established civilization. The effort to preserve a XIith Dynasty chapel within the Hellenistic temple at Medinet Madi undoubtedly betrays the newcomers’ efforts to associate themselves with authentic relics of Egypt’s remote past. And, of course, at or near Crocodilopolis a native settlement with an elaborate temple had also endured.

After the middle of the second century B.C., large, prosperous temple establishments, as in the rest of Egypt, became in the Fayum religious focal points for all inhabitants. By 145-30 B.C. Greeks seem generally to have accepted the native deities (see Brady, Reception, p. 16). That is (by implication), the foreign population and their descendants in this area resorted to the worship of the
crocodile god, Souchos, Hermouthis the harvest goddess, and hero-gods like Pemarres and Amenophis. (See Brady, Reception, p. 34 quoting Aegyptus 7, 1926, pp. 113-38, and Festschrift Ebers, pp. 107-116. For Pemarres, see Archiv 4 p. 211). There was emerging with the new, mixed ethnic group, a religious culture that drew from both Greek and Egyptian cults.

32. εἰκάδις μηνὶ Παχών καὶ Θεώδσ: for μηνὶ Παχών see II 26, above.
εἰκάδις: for the 20th of a month in the Greek calendar as a great, or lucky, day, see Hes. Op. 792-3. This, however, may have had little or nothing to do with the fixing in the Fayum of Pachon 20 as a festival.

Pachon 20 and Thoth are to be taken here as one fixed date. Cf. II 26, above, where only the month is given. Isidorus states there that tithes are paid and the harvest Panegyrie is celebrated in Pachon. For another reference to Pachon 20 at Medinet Madi see Vogliano, Mostra delle Antichita, Tav. 27, quoted by M. Vandoni, Prolegomena II, 1953, Il Tempio di Madinet-Madi e Gli Inni di Isidoro, p. 118, n. 32.

We know from the dedications on the pillars at the south portal that the proastin and its lions were dedicated on Pachon 2. Thoth, traditionally the first month of the Egyptian year, is joined here to Pachon by καί; like Isidorus' nouns joined in this way, it is probably in the same case as Pachon. It is therefore equated to Pachon 20 and to be translated: on the 20th of the month of Pachon and Thoth. The date in Thoth is not given; μηνὶ almost surely goes with both month-names.

Isidorus must be following a practice elsewhere attested in references to calendars and religious events – designating a day of observation in terms both of the civil and religious calendars. With both an old temple lunar calendar and a lunar schematic calendar as possibilities for one aspect of the double date, and the civil calendar the probable designee in the other, it is difficult to make firm determinations.

The date of the harvest festival of Hermouthis seems to have been Pachon 1 (of the civil calendar; see also M. Vandoni, Prolegomena II, 1953, Il Tempio di Madinet-Madi e Gli Inni di Isidoro, p. 118, n. 32, quoting Alliot, Les Cults d’Horus à Edfou, p. 227), but Isidorus, contrary to what we might expect, does not mention either this traditional date, Pachons 1, or even 2, the date on which the proastin and lions were dedicated to Hermouthis and Sokonopis. Yet his ‘Pachon 20 and Thoth’ must be related to that well known date, Pachon 1 (or 2), for one can hardly suppose the ‘Pachon’ of Hymn II and ‘Pachon 20’ of II are festivals not connected with the well known ancient Harvest and Thanksgiving event.

As to Thoth, the first day was traditionally the Egyptian New Year and associated with all sorts of Isisic celebrations: the heliacal rise of Sothis-Isis, the coming of the Nile flood (Osiris), and Isis' marriage. Hymns II and III are, however, not at all concerned with any of these. Rather, they were written specifically for the goddess' Harvest Festival eight months later and the
presentation to her at that time of the apomoira tax. See II 23 and note. Reference to the New Year when the Nile flood had just arrived at the Fayum Lake would be quite inappropriate. Therefore, Thoth must be not a Thoth-festival but merely a date which is equated to the given date in Pachon.

δεκάτην: cannot be taken with Θωθ. It would have to be δεκάτην. It must refer to the (μείραν) δεκάτην of II 23. Here it is the direct object of ἀγων[]τες (32). See below.

ἀγων[]τες: see δεκάτην above. For the meaning, ‘celebrate a festival,’ i.e. ἀρτήριον or ἄρτηριον (33) ἄγων, see Hdt. I 147, 150. (Cf. ἄρτηριον ποιεῖν of LXX Ex. 23.16.) The participle probably governs both nouns. It is an instance of zeugma: bring (their) tenth and celebrate the festival. Literally, the tenth itself and the Feast may both be thought of as offerings to the goddess and her synnoi gods.

33. Ἀγγέλιον Σοκονόπι: cf. II 8-14, 32-33, IV 5-6. The goddess’ festivals, like the temple cult, are shared by Anchoes and Sokonopis, her ‘family’ of gods. The local forms of Suchos were frequently associated with the harvest-goddess, Hermouthis (see II 9 and note); and Anchoes may represent Hermouthis’ son, commonly called Napre, the corn-god (see II 13 and note). The great goddess Isis is, in fact, equated here to three goddesses, Hermouthis, Demeter, and Agathe Tyche, and Isis’ ancient association with Osiris is hidden in Sokonopis’ name, (See Sokonopis, II 9). Anchoes — The Living One — is undoubtedly related more closely to Horus than Napre. (See II 13.)

34-36. Summary. In the conclusion to Hymn III, Isis-Hermouthis and her family of gods are asked to send Paean, the divine Healer, to Isidorus.

34. μελανηφόρος: the same epithet is used to describe Isis’ priests at Delos who dedicate gifts to her and her family (second century B.C.). See SIG 977a.2; IG XI 4 1249, 1250 = SIG 1134 (cf. IG XI 4 1226); and Bull Inst. 1874, p. 105. μελανηφόρος Ἡδία occurs in h. Orph. XVII 9 (to Mise, a daughter of Isis). Apuleius translating and elaborating on μελανηφόρος says: pallia nigerima splendescens atro nitore (Met. XI 3-4). Cf. Janus 1, 1896-97, pp. 194 ff., 205, “Das Gewand der Isis.” In the last, her robe is said to be ‘Egyptian.’ Ismuthis wears a dark robe, Plate XIV.

ἐλάμαν: cf. I 36, ἐσελάμαν. The adjective seems to be a synonym for ἅλας, which is frequent in Orphic hymns. See h. Orph. XVIII 9; XVIII 19.

35. ἀώνας: cf. II 10.

36. Παῖας: Παῖας is Homer’s physician of the Olympian gods.

For ‘Paiwön’ as a healing deity in Linear B, see Ventris and Chadwick, Documents in Mycenean Greek, p. 126; and J. Chadwick, The Decipherment of Linear B, p. 124. Mycenean Paijowon is obviously Paieon or Paian of later Greek; and Apollo’s antecedent, or ‘son.’ Cf. E. Alc. 121-126 and 220-225. Later, Paieon could be a title of other gods and meant generally ‘Healer.’ But in Egypt, Paean himself seems still to be a god and is addressed as Giver of the Nile; or he is Apollo as at Ptolemis, in a hymn to Asklepios (see Powell, Collectanea Alexandrina, p. 138. In the present passage, he is probably the Greco-Egyptian
Hymn IV (Plate IX)

tis tode agVN evdei ierN 'Emvovthi megavthi;
poi theos evmipsth panipopo makapos;
'Ωs aipwv kai 'adunwv enipwsoa 'Olymov
Δevo ipsiasth 'Iothis theomoforoi,
5 kai 'AgkhNi uiwv kai 'avmovv agavwv Sokovoι,1
'advavapos órmon edre dikmovtaton.
AguvNou tvA faso evnevsthai thewv ánavka,
dev paoi kxwras kúrivos ejetánh,
ploidavor, eisexéa, evdámei paoi te megavthi;
10 dev kléos kai dretèr éxher ioparánov,
toutoi yáv kai yáv upikos òn te ãlalos
kai potamwv pánwv námat kalipróvn,
kai pnuai ánemov kai õllos, dev xlyki fýngov
ántelwv fawei paoi atrottewv.
15 kai ptnwv te génh õmowmádov ékelven autóv
kai tás épisteláwv pánta épíkho òn.
Déllon touti' étow òti órrea ékelven autóv
wos oi touti ierónor grámu' analexámenoi
fáskovn wv pote toutov épistelávnta koróvn,
20 sou te épistolwv õhol fésous fásou;
ov yáv ény õbetov anph, obb' õk betovv õn anavktos,
avlla theo megálon ékxovn aevov,
Sóikoú patrónoros megálon megálwv te megáton
'daimwv touti agavwv õwv õnax éfánh.
25 Mýrropatwv toutov õl étow õwv õmeriásth, 
'Amwv, dev kai Zeik 'Elládoi hov 'Asias,
toúvka kai touti pánw évjkova, doo' épi và svmi
érrpeta kai ptnwv óphovn to te génh,
oinoa õl õn patavwv toutwv, kai tis touti õthke
koíranw õ basilewv hov tis avnavtov;
30 õthke xeropoi ó oíranoi õsther, õphvktai,
oino ou õthke kalwv õlloí evsfegésov.
'Erpnwvnavmenoi õl 'AguvNou oinoa toutov.
Who built this holy temple to greatest Hermouthis?
What god remembered the All-Holy One of the Immortals?
He marked out the sacred shrine as a high Olympus.
For Deo Highest, Isis Thesmophorus,
for Anchoes the Son, and the Agathosdaimon, Sokonopis,
Immortals (all), he created a most fitting (or most just) haven.
A certain one, they say, was born a divine King of Egypt;
he appeared on earth as Lord of all the World,
rich, righteous, and omnipotent;
he had fame, yes, and virtue that rivaled the gods' for to him the earth and sea were obedient,
(and) the streams of all the beautiful-flowing rivers,
(and) the breath of the winds, and the sun which shows sweet light,
(and) on his rising (is) visible to all.
The races of winged creatures with one accord would listen to him and he instructed all who heard his voice.
The fact is clear that the birds obeyed him as those who have read the Sacred Scriptures speak of this king once entrusting a written message to a crow and she flew off with the letter, bearing his utterance (?) [or: she returned bearing a verbal message together with a written reply].
(It is so) for he was not a mortal man, nor was he son of a mortal man but as offspring of a god, great, and eternal, (even) of Souchos, all powerful, very great, omnipotent, and the Agathosdaimon, he the son appeared on earth as a King.
The maternal grandfather of this god is the Distributor of Life, Ammon, who is Zeus of Hellas and Asia.
For this reason all things heard his voice, all things that move on earth and the races of winged heavenly creatures.
What was the name of this one? What ruler, what king, or who of the Immortals, determined it?

(Why) the one who nurtured him, Sesooisis, he who has gone to the Western Heaven,
gave him a fair name, ‘Son of the Golden Sun.’
When the Egyptians say his name (in their language) they call (him)
Porramanes, the Great, Deathless.’

I have heard from others a miracle that is a riddle:
how he ‘navigated on the desert by wheels and sail.’
Reliably learning these facts from men who study history,
myself have set them all up on inscribed pillars
and translated (into Greek) for Greeks the power of a Prince who was a god,
power such as no other mortal has possessed.

Isidorus wrote (it).

Hymn IV is a sacred story from Egyptian scriptures retold by Isidorus to enlighten the Greeks.

1-6. Summary. Who founded the temple to the goddess and her two synnaoi gods? In answer Isidorus tells his story of the god-king, Porramanes, who founded the temple-community (7-36).

1. ἔδεεμ’: an epic-poetic verb for constructing large projects.

ἱερὸν: the temple-complex, manifestly Greco-Egyptian in origin, is referred to as Olympos (3) and as an anchorage or haven (6). It included a XIIth Dynasty chapel, several large Hellenistic temples, and a priestly community engaged in the cults of at least three gods (5) as well as of the divine founder. τὸ ἱερὸν here means the temple-community rather than merely the material structure.

‘Ερμοῖθε: see I 1; II 2, 29; III 1, above; also Plates IX-XIII. For her Thanksgiving festival at the temple, see II 21-28 and III 28-33.

2. ποῖς: a puzzling reading, possibly for ποῖς. A parallel seems to be: Πτολεμαῖς for Πτολεμαίως. See P. Par. Wiss. 23. 19. 29 (165 B.C.) and P. Teb. 24.81 (117 B.C.). Wilhelm thought of reading τίς instead of ποῖς; from this he conjectured τίς (κό) was meant (Sitz. Ber. Wiener Akad. 224, 1946 (1) p. 47). But the photograph shows ποῖς with a clear five-bar sigma. However neither the πι nor the iota are entirely clear in the photograph, while the omicron seems deeper, clearer, and smaller than these letters. See Plate IX.

θεός: the photograph shows the final letter clearly as Σ, which could be an incomplete five-bar sigma. The god is the Egyptian king, Porramanes, of 34. On the divinity of the Egyptian King, see Frankfort, Kingship, pp. 26-35.

ἐκμητηθείς: cf. μηκηθείτες II 21 above. The act of recalling, or heeding, implies a gift to the deity.

3. The line is to be best construed as: καὶ ἀδιον ὁμημενώσατ ὁκ αἰτιν
'Ολυμπος. ἀδώνις is faultily scanned: short-long-short.

ἔστημι, ἀπεκαίνου: for ἔστημι, ἀπεκαίνου. For the use of η = ei, see Mayser, Grammarik, 2(1) 74. The verb seems to mean mark by milestones, mark out for oneself (as in Plb. 3.39.8; 21.28.9). The reference is probably to the Egyptian ceremony of ‘drawing the cord,’ that is, surveying. See line 1. The same ceremony is shown in a relief within one of the Medinet Madi temple’s hypostyle halls leading into the XIth Dynasty temple. There the king is shown leading in ‘drawing the cord’ (or measuring the ground) for the temple’s foundation. See Vogliano, S. R., p. 23; also A. Moret, Du Caractère religieux de la Royauté pharaonique, p. 132, plate 25.

αιτίη: it is important to note that the innermost XIth Dynasty shrine was on an upper level. See Chapter I, note 14. For the cliché, αἰτίη οὐφρασόν, see Solon 13.21-22 (quoted at III 23).

'Ολυμπος: see III 23; also αἰτίη immediately above. Like Olympus, any Egyptian temple was considered an earthly dwelling-place for gods. The temple-community could also be viewed as an ‘image’ of the world, a microcosm. See Rochemontex, Oeuvres choisis (1897?).

4. Δηνί: cf. I 3; III 2, above and notes. Here as in I, Δηνί is qualified by ἰψίωτη.

ἰψίωτη: see I 3 above. Cf. III 1.

θεσμοφόρος: cf. I 6, θεσμοῦ, above. See also I 3, Δηνί. For a bibliography of Thesmophorus, see Müller, Isisarealogien, p. 26, note 2. θεσμοφόρος is a common Greek epithet for Demeter. See for example Hdt. VI 91, 134; D. S. I 14. It is used also of Persephone (Ar. Th. 83; Pl. fr. 37) and of Dionysus (H. Orph. XVII 1). Isis has obviously been given an Eleusinian title. Müller considers the epithet Thesmophorus came directly from her assimilation with Demeter, and not from Egyptian theology, although several of the Egyptian gods in the New Kingdom were ‘law-givers’ (Müller, Isisarealogien, pp. 26-7).

M. 4 also states (of Isis): ἐγώ εἰμι ή θεσμοφόρος καλομενή.

5. The scansion of the line seems to be:

καὶ Ἀγγέλου ὑνίω καὶ δαιμονίων ἐγαθώσει Σοκούνωσι.

'Αγγέλου νύω: see II 13-14. Cf. ibid., 32-33; III 33, 35.

δαιμονίων ἐγαθώσει Σοκούνωσι: see II 9-12; cf. III 33, 35.


For Hathor (perhaps equated to Isis) as a saving goddess of the sea, see Morenz, Ag. Religion, pp. 247 ff. Isis herself is entitled ὄμιστρια, H. Oxy. 15-16, and 74; and Isis’ priest tells Lucius: Ad portum quietis... venisti (App. Met. XI 15.1).
ēβρε: founded, created. Cf. I 8; also ειρέτρια I 3; II 3. This is a non-Greek meaning assumed by the verb. Cf. IJS, εἰρήνακος III.

δικαίωταν: for Isis associated with δικαίωσιν, δίκη, δίκαιος, κτλ., see I 6 (ειδική), and III 24 (δικάξειας). For the later meaning, see LJS δίκαιος B. But see also note on III 24.

7-36. Summary. These 30 lines tell the story of the miracles of the god-king and folk-hero, Porramenres (34), son of Sesōsis (31). He is usually considered to have been the XIth Dynasty Pharaoh variously known as Amenemhet [III], Amenemises, Ameres, Lamasis, Lambares, Moiros, and Moiris. In the late period the folk-hero’s name appears as Porramanres, Poremmanres, Premanres, Premarres, Permarres, Pormares, Premmarres, and Porimandres of the magical texts. These names seem all to mean ‘Pharaoh Manres.’

Traditionally Porramanres was associated with the successful control of the waters of the Fayum lake, Lake Moeris; and so his name had continued to be remembered in the Fayum where, in the late Ptolemaic era, he was the object of the popular folk-cult. One suspects it was fostered by Ptolemy II Philadelphus (see III 30) who had built a new irrigation system and planted many colonies of Greeks and Egyptians in the newly reclaimed land. Isidorus ignores Philadelphus’ works. The statue of Porramanres had been set up in Fayum temples beside those of the royal gods and local divinities like Hermouthis and Sokonopis. A synod of Permarres had been established by Soter II’s predecessor.

From the evidence of the hieroglyphic inscriptions on the walls of the XIth Dynasty chapel at Medinet Madi, both Amenemhet III and Amenemhet IV were remembered at the temple. Isidorus does not use this Dynastic name nor does he mention Porramanres’ successor, but he does correctly name Sesōsis (= Sen-Usert, Sesostri) as the Dynastic name of the King’s father. Sesostri III immediately preceded Amenemhet III. See W. Helck, Untersuchungen zu Manetho und den Aegyptischen Königslisten, 1956, pp. 60 ff. Cf. the incorrect surmise of Herodotus (II 101-2) and Diodorus (I 51.5).

Although the name Porramanres is well known in the Fayum, at the Medinet Madi temple Isidorus’ Hymn alone mentions him. Moreover, his story of Porramanres’ pet crow (19-20) is corroborated by Aelian’s tale of the tomb and stele of Pharaoh Mares’ pet crow at Arsinoe-Crokodilopolis (Ael. de Nat. An. VI 7).

7. άνακτα: see III 12, above.

8. πάσης χώρας (κύριος): cf. III 12-13. It means the whole earth. Cf. Ank. 9; H. Oxy. 121; and A. 7-9. This is probably not merely Hellenistic universalism. The ancient concept was even more bombastic, that the Egyptian king was the successor to the Creator, and so in his origin he was close to, if not in reality, the prototype of all kings. He was, in imagery, the champion of all cosmic order. See Frankfort, Kingship, pp. 148-9.

δέξαθαι: for κεκαθαίω referring to human birth, see II. XIX 104: σήμερον ἄνδρα φόυως Ὑπείθυ εἰκόσει. In the passive it also means to shine forth, as in
Il. XIX 17, and may (perhaps by borrowing the metaphor of the sun) refer to a sudden appearance, an epiphany. In Egyptian thinking the sun is the prototype of the Pharaoh. See φέγγος, 13, below.

9. εἰσεβεία: cf. II 6; III 4, 27. As in II 6, wealth and moral goodness are concomitant: goodness brings wealth. The king is expected to be in tune, as it were, with the divine, and the mediator between his people and the gods. He will himself be blessed, and able to bless his people with material rewards.

dυνάμει πάσηι τε μεγίστη: he is the strongest of all the kings in the world. For this use of the dative see Kühner-Gerth, Grammatik, 2(1),433 ff. Translate: of omnipotent power.

10. κλέος καὶ ἀρετή... ιουράνων: cf. Od. VIII 74: κλέος οὐρανῶν... ikare. With ἀρετή = virtue, power, etc. compare III 28 above. ἀρετή usually, of a human, ranges from general moral excellence to a specific virtue. But the arete of a god is equivalent to divina vis; it is discussed above, III 27. Isidorus uses the word in its fullest sense here for the King is both man and god.

The metre is faulty. Of κλέος the second syllable is scanned as short in spite of the two consonants following. Also καὶ, here long, would be shortened by a better poet.

In lines 11-14 the King is Lord of all the elements, earth, water, air, and fire. The Egyptian King is said in inscriptions to have had much the same vast elemental power as is described here. He is, for instance, often equated to the Nile as Bringer of Fertility and Riches. For references from the Hellenistic and Roman periods, see D. Müller, Isisaretalogien, p. 62, n. 10. Annually on Thoth 1, the beginning of the Egyptian New Year, the king repeated Horus’ victory over Seth, that is, the Nile’s annual conquest of the western desert’s drought and winds. See OGIS 90.23-7 (the Rosetta Decree).

13. πνειαὶ ἀέρεὼν: see I 10.

φέγγος: the Egyptian king is Horus, the sun-god. The same god both makes the physical sun shine and sits on the throne of Egypt. The verb ἤ’ is used for the rising of the-sun and the appearance of the Pharaoh at his accession, at festivals, and on his throne. See Frankfort, Kingship, p. 57.

14. ἀριστερέως: conspicuously, visibly, so as to be easily seen. It refers to the King’s power over the physical sun and is theological. Its prominence in the line shows it is significant: the King being the True Sun (Re etc.) controls Helios who is the True Sun’s visible image. See Frankfort, Kingship, p. 57; ἀριστερέως implies that ἡλιος can be seen; the True Sun cannot.

15. ἐκλευ: cf. I 35; II 32; III 19, above. C. B. Welles suggests that the king appears to have been a kind of Orpheus. The anecdote begun in line 15 runs through to 20.

16. ἐπιστέλλω... ἢ: an awkward periphrasis for ἐπιστέλλει. Line 16 appears to repeat 15 (see 17 and note below). The lines could be an instance of the so-called Oriental Parallelismus Membrorum. See Müller, Isisaretalogien, p. 74 (re M. 55).
ἑπήκοα: contrast ἑπήκοος, II; ἑπήκοος, possibly more literal than ὑπήκοος, may mean listening, giving ear to.

17. ὤρεα ἐκλεύν... αὐτοῦ: repeats 15 and τάδ... πάντα ἑπήκοα, 16. Similar repetition occurs in lines 2 and 7. Cf. ΙΙΙ 14-15.

18. τῶν ἱερῶν: may be 'of the temples.' But οἱ ἱεροὶ may also mean the initiated, the members of a religious colony. See IG V 1.1390.1.

γράμμιν ἀναλεξάμενον: see Call. Epigr. 25: τὸ περὶ ψυχῆς γράμμιν ἀναλεξάμενον. Isidorus' expression closely resembles it. See too ibid., 23.4. Apparently Isidorus cannot read hieroglyphs. Welles suggests that τῶν ἱερῶν γράμμιν ἀναλεξάμενον may be a periphrasis metri gratia for such a phrase as ἰερογραμματεῖς.

This is evidence for holy scripture in hieroglyphs. A magical papyrus from Leyden mentions a holy scripture by 'birds' (ὄρνεον πληροφορί). See P. Mag. Leid. W 2.37, 4.22.

19. ἐπιστεδάματα: supply εὔνοια. It stands for ἐπιστεδαμάτα. Cf. the periphrasis ἐπιστεδάλων... ἤν 16. Periphrases such as this are a Koine characteristic. See Appendix.

κορώνην: for reference to what appears to be the same crow see Aelian, NA VI 7, quoted by Vogliano, P. R., p. 47. For stories of other miraculous birds in Egypt see D. S. I 87.8; XVII 49.5. See also the summary of 7-36 above.

20. ἐπιστελλόμαι: ἐπιστεδέλων is a diminutive of ἐπιστελή. There is a jingle here with ἐπιστεδέλων in 16, and ἐπιστεδάματα in 19.

φάσων: φάσει means word, (oral) report. Cf. πέμψον μοι τὴν φάσων in P. Oxy. 2149.17 (second/third centuries A.D.). Wilhelm conjectured φάσων and Harder πάλων. The photograph, however, shows very clearly φάσων.

Line 20 appears to be the immediate result of 19, and, in fact, almost an instance of Parallelismus Membrorum. Cf. 16 and note. Probably the King instructed the bird and it flew off with his message in a letter to deliver it to the one addressed. Aelian’s story of Mares’ crow expands the same tale. See 19, above. It was his swiftest messenger, for as soon as it heard his instructions it knew exactly where to fly.

21. The line scans as an hexameter only if ἄρην οὖς is taken as a dactyl. 21 and 22-24 are to be taken together, for lines 22-24 repeat 21 in a slightly different fashion (again Parallelismus Membrorum). 15-16 and 19-20 are other instances of the same. Cf. 1 3, 6.

22. θεόδ μεγάλου: this is the language of Egyptian temple inscriptions. Cf. SEG VIII 536-7. The various forms of Sebek’s name are often found with μέγας etc. See Σούχου, 23 below.

ἄναυν: ‘ever-flowing’ (Hes. Op. 595); or ‘everlasting’ (Simon. 4.9, P. O. 14. 12). The meaning is equivalent to αἰωνίον. The XIth Dynasty hieroglyphic inscription to Sbk and Rnn.t refers to their gift of eternity to the king. See Vogliano, S. R., pp. 17 ff.

23. Σούχου: cf. ΙΙΙ 30 and note, also Σοκούρωπ ΙΙΙ 15 and note. Σούχου
here is predicated by epithets that show limitless power, eternity, in fact an existence beyond the comprehension of mortal men. Cf. Vogliano, S. R., pp. 17 ff. and Müller, Isisartalogien, pp. 22 ff.

παγκράτορος: first known use of παγκράτωρ. It is next found in Susa in the first century A.D. See SEG VII 13.4. Possibly its use is an attempt to translate an Egyptian title of Sbh into Greek. Cf. Isermuth as παντοκράτειρα I 2, and Hermes (Thoth?) in Crete as παντοκράτωρ, Kaibel, Epigr. 865.

μεγάλου κτλ.: an attempt, no doubt, to reproduce the language of temple inscriptions. Cf. θεοῦ μεγάλου 22. The piling up of repetitions of μέγας and synonyms was intended to convey great holiness; it replaces more specific epithets (λευκός in 22, παγκράτορος in 23). The doubling of μέγας is particularly common in Egypt. See e.g. SEG VIII 498: Σοκε[π]τωκε θεοῦ μεγάλου μεγάλω. Perhaps μεγάλου μεγάλον τε μεγάτων is intended really as a strengthened superlative form, like Trismegistos, but Vogliano considers the first century B.C. to be too early for such an interpretation (P. R., pp. 47-48). Merkelbach, “Note Critiche e Filologiche, Osservazioni Critico-Testuali Agli Inni Isiaci di Isidoro,” La Parola del Passato 103, pp. 252, 298-9, suggests plausibly that Isidorus wrote: παγκράτορος μεγάλου μεγάλ(ον) τε μεγάτων. Cf. App., Met. XI 30: Deus deum magnorum potior et potiorum summus et maximorum regnator Osiris. He thinks the stone mason erred because he knew μέγας μέγας as used in Egypt. See, e.g., OGIS 176.4: 178.3; 90.19; μέγας, etc., is very common in papyri. For instance, Isis is μεγάλα μήτερ θεών in P. Strassb. 81.14 (second century B.C.), and Horus is μεγάλωσε παί (Stob. I 41. 44. 973, and 981) and μεγαλόδοξος (ibid., 974).

24. ἄναξ εφάνη: cf. κύριος ἔφεσάν, line 8. Obviously the language is formulaic.

25. μυροπάτωρ: cf. ll. XI 224. This is the lineage on the mother’s side.

ζωής ὁ μεριστής: μεριστής is perhaps a Greek translation of an Egyptian title of Ammon. Cf. Poll. 4. 176; P. Mag. Leid. 14.42 and Vett. Val. 62. 4 (where μεριστής χρωσμίων ζωῆς means Lord of the Horoscope). Or μεριστής may refer to a primeval divider of heaven and earth. Various Egyptian gods are said to have ‘separated earth from heaven’ at the time of Creation, e.g. Schu, Wepwawet, Osiris-Pth-Sokaris, and Haroeris-Sch. For Wepwawet see I 9, note. The Greek word δαίμων = god in later times was etymologically derived from δαίμων = μερίζω.

26. Ἀμμοῦ κτλ.: Herodotus equates Zeus of Greece to Ammon/Amon of Thebes (II 33, 42); Pindar calls Ammon ‘The Libyan Zeus’ (P. 4.16).

27. τῶν: the divine founder of the temple. See 7 ff.

27-28. δῶ… ἐπετά κτλ.: ἐπετά, ἔρπω, κτλ. are formulaic for ‘earth-bound’ or ‘earthly’ creatures. Cf. ll. XVII 447; Alcm. 60.3; Cleanthes 1. 5. See too Horace, Satires I 3. ἐπετά is, in fact, contrasted with πετωνάι by Herodotus (I 140).

29. ποταπός: ποταπός is a frequent Koine adjective, equivalent to τῖς. See 2 above and note.
τις τῶθ επήκε: cf. the language of I: τις τῶθ ἐσειμα. The answer here, however, is different: Sesoois (31). But just as in lines 1-2, 7 ff., the questions of 29-30 are at once answered by the poet himself. The information shows a noticeable variation from the extant hieroglyphic inscriptions of the inner temple where Amenemhet IV, the successor, not the predecessor, of Amenemhet III is mentioned. See Vogliano, S. R., pp. 17 ff.

τάδε με with οὐνομάζω/όνομα is a well known idiom. It appears to mean compose, determine, institute, think of first. That is, the expression keeps some of the dignity of its early use in, for example, Od. VIII 465. It even implies artistic achievement as in the English ‘compose,’ ‘execute,’ or ‘create.’ Cf. οὐνομάζω I 16, and note. The god in question (Sesoois of line 31), being the earthly father of Porromanres (34) gave his son a divine title, thus making him heir to the throne. For the bestowing of a crown prince’s (that is, a Pharaoh’s) early titles, see Frankfurt, Kingship, pp. 46-7. Frankfurt lists them in order as (1) the title ‘Horus’; (2) the ‘Nebty’ title (from the tutelary goddesses of Upper and Lower Egypt); (3) ‘Horus of Gold,’ a name symbolizing either the imperishable brightness of the sun or Horus’ victory over Seth; (4) ‘King of Upper and Lower Egypt’; (5) ‘Son of Re’; (6) the nomen which the king had received at birth, and which seems closely combined with 5. Isidorus appears in 32 to mention 3, 5, and 6. The translation of ήλιος εὐφρεγος as ‘Son of the Golden Sun’ is a compromise; the expression may refer to ‘Horus as Victor over Seth,’ as well as meaning ‘Son of Re.’

The style of this Hymn is quite unlike Hymns I-III. The questions of 1-2 are answered in 7-20. Thereafter lines 21-26 interrupt the narrative with a laudatory refrain. Lines 27-28 resume narration, and two new questions are asked in 29-30. These are immediately answered in 31-32, and the lines that follow them revert to the story of the divine founder of the temple, Porromanres, whose name, after some suspense, is finally given at line 34. The last two adjectives of this line may be unimportant, and merely serve to extend the king’s titles throughout the line. In narrating the story in this prolix fashion Isidorus could be following some elaborate priestly account. He says as much in 18-19 and 37-39. Incidentally, his mention of the temple, line 1, merely serves to introduce his story of its founder.

31. Σεσοώνε: for the story of the same king (called Σεσούτραος), see Hdt. II 102, 104, 110; and D. S. I 55. For Σεσοώνε see Plu. de Is. 24; Tac. Ann. II 60; Strabo, 769; Josephus, contra Apionem, I 98. 102 (quoting Manetho’s story of ‘Sethosis’= Rameses); Eusebius in Dindorf, Georgius Syncellus, Corp. Script. Hist. Byz. Pars. vii, 111-112. For the history of Sesostri/Sen-Usert I, II, III, see H. Kees, Ancient Egypt, and J. A. Wilson, The Culture of Ancient Egypt. The dynastic name is variously transliterated: Sesoosis, Sesostri, Sesostris, Sethosis, Sen-Usert, Senusert, etc. In lists of XIlth Dynasty kings, given by R. Lepsius, Uber die Zwolfte Königsdynastie, Berlin, 1851, and W. Helck, Untersuchungen zu Manetho und den Ag. Königslisten, 1956, pp. 60 ff. Sesostri III, Amenemhet III, and Amenemhet IV, appear in this order at the end of the dynasty. Isidorus
agrees with Lepsius’ list when he says ‘Amenemhet’ (Porramanres) follows Sesostris (Sesoösis), and the temple hieroglyphic inscriptions also agree in that Amenemhet IV follows Amenemhet III. Both they and Isidorus know that Egyptian kingship was an institution involving two generations. However, to Hellenistic Greeks and later sources, the hero ‘Sesoösis’ was obviously one ancient, legendary figure whose deeds in fact included those of the three historical kings of that name.

It is not surprising that the Sen-Userts had become legendary in the Fayum; the first two historical kings of that name had been buried close to the newly developed Fayum province. Amenemhet III was associated even more closely with its history (see Porramanres, 34 below). In the third century B.C. Ptolemy II, by developing the area and repeating the work of the XIIth Dynasty benefactor-kings, may have obliquely associated himself with them by encouraging the cult of Porremanes. The present Hymn does not honour Philadelphus.

‘Εσερ’: for Ἐσερα (neuter plural), cf. e.g. Od. XVII 191: πολι Ἐσερα; and Ap. 5. 304: Ἰφ’ Ἐσερα. Cf. ὁ Ηλίας... Ἐσερα κύκλοι δανών (Nech. ap. Vett. Val. 154.29) where the meanings ‘evening’ and ‘western’ naturally blend, as they do with us. When a Pharaoh died he was said to ‘soar to heaven’ (that is, escape, to the western heaven) in the form of a hawk, and so to return to his father, the god Re. The Egyptians always thought of the realm of the dead as situated in the west. Cf. Vogliano, P. R., p. 49.

ἀφιέται: for ἀφιέται. For long iota written as ετ, see Mayser, Grammatik, 2(1), pp. 87 ff. Cf. εἰδέσατος and γείνω, 1 36. Forms of this verb are often placed last in a Greek hexameter line. Cf. h. Orph. LVII 7, and XXXVIII 11, 12. The obvious meaning here is, has gone to, i.e., is now in, the western heaven.

32. οὖν ο’ ἐθηκε: see 29 above. This is another instance of Isidorus’ repetitious style. Cf. 11-15 and 27-8.

33. ἤλιον εἰδέγγεις: cf. 13 above and II 10. The metre of 32 is faulty.

34. Πορραμάνρης: for the various spellings of the name, see 7-36, summary. Cf. Vogliano, P. R., p. 50; and P. Mich. Zen. 84.19. Lepsius (Uber die Zwölfte Ag, Königsdynastie, Berlin, 1851) states that ‘Ἀμμανήμης’ in Manetho’s list is ‘Amenemhe,’ and that (in Africans) the same king is Amenemes, Amers (and Lamas or Lambares). Herodotus knows him as Μοῖρος (II 13, 101) and Diodorus as Μοῖρος (I 51.5). Cf. Strabo 811.21

21. For the historical king see RARG, p. 756; Erman, Die Religion der Aegypten, 1934, pp. 394 ff.; Grandin, Terres Cuites, No. 45, 1937; ibid., Buxet et Statues portraits d’Egype romaine, p. 132, No. 68; Weber, Die aegyptisch-griechischen Terrakotten, Koenigl. Museen zu Berlin, Berlin, 1914, Plate 1, 142, No. 214, Plates 21 and 141. For the same king as Amenemhet III, see W. Schmidt, de græk-egyptische Terra-Kotten, Ny Carlsberg Glyptothek, Copenhagen, 1911, p. 74,
For Porramanres/Amenemhet III’s regulation of Nile flood waters in the Lake Moiris region, see D. S. I 51.5-7. He also built a famous Labyrinth at the entrance to the Fayum that was probably the prototype of all later labyrinths (see RE, s.v. Labyrinthos; H. Kees, Ancient Egypt, p. 224). The historical XIIth Dynasty Amenemhet III’s figure was engraved on the wall of the inner shrine of the Medinet Madi temple; and as Porramanres his statue also undoubtedly stood in the temple beside Hermuthis, Sokonopis, etc. Isidorus knows something of the history of the XIIth Dynasty kings; but one would imagine he would know more of the large scale attempts of Ptolemy II Philadelphus to regulate Fayum water and settle the reclaimed land. See Ἀραμωέως III 30, and note on 31 above. The irrigated soil was rich and produced horticultural abundance (see Strabo XVII 80.9; cf. Hdt. II 129). Its luxuriant olive-groves were planted by Greeks under the early Ptolemies. However, what are really Ptolemy II’s achievements in the area Isidorus confuses with, or passes off as, those of the XIIth Dynasty Pharaoh. Cf. Summary, 7-36, above. Porramanres’ cult we know was definitely encouraged at least in the late second century B.C. under Ptolemy X Alexander I. A Synod of the same god (‘Premarres’) at this time permitted Greeks to become priests for life: ὑπὲρ βασιλέως Κλεοπάτρας καὶ βασιλέως Πτολεμαίων τοῦ ἐπισκόπου Ἄλκιβάδος Θεομετρήτου οἱ ἐκ τῆς Μεγάλης συνόδου πρωμαρεσίους θεοῦ μεγάλου. Ὁ τερείκ δὲ μὲν Εἰρηναῖος Ἐρηναίων ὁ συγγενής ἐπιμελητήριος (Φίλωνος τοῦ Φίλωνος Λ. γ. ή καὶ ι Ἐπιφυς κτ. (SB 1269). See also Brady, Reception, p. 35, notes 18, 37. At Dimai (= Soknopaios Nesos) a temple was dedicated to the four gods, Isis, (Σονονε?) Harpocrates and ‘Premarres’ (OGIS 175). An altar (?) of Προμάρρης stood at ‘Απωλλωνία’ (P. Petr. II 43 b.66).

The metre of 34 is incorrect. Cf. 32.

35. θαύμα δὲ καὶ παράδοξον: a miracle of the god-King. The phrase is probably a cliché. Cf. Pl. Men. 593; R. 473 a.

36. ἐπελε ἐν δρέα: ὄρος is the ‘desert,’ P. Teb. 383.61.

35-36. The explanation of this strange couplet seems somewhat as follows. First, the Egyptian word for mountain, hill, and desert is the same (since the hills were not inundated by the Nile but remained barren, or desert). Secondly, there are many pictures in temple reliefs of processions with the carrus navalis, which sometimes went from the villages up to the hills (and cemeteries), or to other distant sites. Thirdly, ancient Egyptian priestly guides probably invented stories to astound the traveller. (Cf. The remarks of Spiegelberg, Die Glaubwürdigkeit von Herodots bericht über Aegypten, 1925, reprinted in W. Marg, Herodot., Wege der Forschung, Darmstadt, 1966.) The present verse might be explained by combining the above facts. Possibly Isidorus’ priestly informants who had but little knowledge of hieroglyphs had tried to decipher an inscription accompanying the relief of a Carrus Navalis procession (which would state it went by river to the

Plates 27, 67; I. Vogt, Expedition E. von Sieglin,
Ausgrabungen in Alexandria, II 2, Tarskotten,
Leipzig, 1924, (2), Plates 2, 2, p. 84.
hills or desert). Therein they fancied they saw a paradox or ‘miracle.’ And so they said that the King travelled ‘by wheels and sail over the desert (or hills).’ Again, they may have invented the whole thing without the aid of a relief or inscription. Isidorus merely repeats what they told him, realizing he does not understand it.

37-41. Summary. Isidorus concludes Hymn IV with the explicit statement that he has composed in Greek the story of Porramanes, basing it on what he had heard from priestly ‘scholars’ (18-20). He has then set it up in a public inscription to expound to the Greeks the divine nature of Egypt’s Kings. This is really an aretalogy not of the goddess of Hymns I-III but of the god-King Porramanes. In a way it is an exposition of the cult. The Hymn in other words is a kind of ‘evangel to the Greeks.’ Doubtless, the Greeks wondered who he had been.

37. ἵστοροντος; ἴστορέω means enquire into, enquire about, examine, study and report (orally or in writing), come to know. Cf. Hdt. II 113: ἐλεγεν δὲ μοι οἱ ἱερεῖς ἴστορέωντι. The present context states somewhat the same, although not Isidorus but the priests are said to ‘enquire’ or ‘examine.’ Isidorus himself (cf. 38, αὐτὸς ἐγώ) has carefully listened to the account given him by Egyptian scholars of the Sacred Writings (18). He does not claim to be an historian or scholar. Cf. Isidoros ὁ γλύπτης (Appendix, note 36).

38. ἀναγραψάμενος: place on record; set up publicly (a pillar with an inscription on it).

39. ἱµήτησθαι: for ἱµῆρεσσα cf. 33, above. The active voice means interpret, say in Greek (i.e. for Greeks); the middle apparently means say in one’s own language (see 33, above).

δύναμις: cf. 9, above. δύναμις (of gods) is much like ἀρετή, meaning both divine power, and its manifestation in miracles (but δύναμις is the more common term).

ἄνακτος: cf. 7, above.

40. βροτότος: an obvious instance of dittography. On βροτός see 21, above.

The line sounds like a concluding refrain. Cf. 21.
CHAPTER THREE

THE SPREAD OF THE CULT OF ISIS UNDER THE EARLY PTOLEMEIES

If the so-called Hellenistic Isis had a Hellenistic beginning, our knowledge of it is tenuous. Changes in the goddess' cult and character probably were gradual, and not entirely a matter of deliberation or decree. Herodotus, after consulting the priests of Memphis, Heliopolis, and Thebes, had interpreted Isis and Osiris as Greek Demeter and Dionysus. 1 It would appear, therefore, that Isis was already the Egyptian equivalent of a Greek Karpophoros for the karpos association is the best attested and continuously the most distinctive feature of Demeter's cult. 2 If this is true of Isis, she must have usurped the rôle of the Egyptian goddess of cereal grain before the fifth century B.C., for dependable sources affirm that Isis had not always been a vegetation goddess. 3 Her syncretism with Renenutet may actually have happened in very ancient times well before the fifth century.

Isis (Isis-Renenutet) appears early in the Ptolemaic period as the goddess of cereal grain, referred to in the manner we know for Demeter. From the Memphis Serapeum, in the so-called Dream of Nectanebo, 4 she is described as ἑλευργήται καρπῶν ἑλευργήτη ... ᾿Ισίς. This is the first instance of an address to her as the Karpophoros goddess. Possibly it is the first time she is so called in Greek. Henceforward, she was common to both Egyptian and Greek cults; in Greek and Egyptian inscriptions Demeter and Isis are each known as the Theremophoros and Karpophoros goddess. For instance, at Philae, Isis is καρποτόκος; 5 at Edfu, in hieroglyphs she speaks to Ptolemy IV offering him agricultural bounty; 6 at Philae the papyrus early Ptolemaic. See note 8 below. Nectanebo, last of the Pharaohs, was associated at least by the second half of the third century B.C. with Alexander the Great in the account of Pseudo-Callisthenes, Bk. I. For the dating, see C. B. Welles, 'The Discovery of Sarapis and the Foundation of Alexandria,' Historia 11, 1962, pp. 271-298. He considers Ps. Call. to be at least as early as the second half of the third century B.C. A. D. Nock, Karpokrates, pp. 221-8, refers to the Somnium Nectanebei as 'a good illustration of the Hellenistic hymn-pattern.' See Chapter IV.

5. G. Kaibel, Collectanea Alexandrina, 982.1.
and Denderah, she appears in hieroglyphs similarly characterized, in the Hymns of Isidorus and in the long hymn, P. Oxy. 1380, she is entitled θεομοφόρος. Meanwhile Isis and Demeter each continued to retain their separate characterizations in the two respective cultures. Their common cult was a new and special thing, and may have been encouraged by Eleusis.

The new city of Alexandria was an important cult-site of Hellenistic Isis. Tacitus tells us that Isis had been worshiped there with Serapis in an ancient temple on the hill of Rhamotis before Alexander built his Serapeum. By Serapis Tacitus must mean Osiris-Hapi, or the bull-god Apis, whom Herodotus had already associated with both Isis and Osiris. The Memphite god Apis was later named Osorapis by the Greeks. Clearly, Greeks celebrated the cult of Isis and Osiris, or Isis and 'Oserapis,' both in Alexandria and Memphis.

By the third century B.C., Osiris and Osorapis/Oserapis were probably indistinguishable. Indeed, in 255 Apollonius, the finance minister, asked for wood for the 'Isis festival' in Alexandria; it seems to have been the same as the Osiris/Isis festival held in Egypt for centuries. Although archaeologists have not been able to identify any temple of Isis in the Serapeum area at Alexandria, all agree that she was worshiped there, and probably in her own temple, at least from the early years of the Serapeum. Her Greek cult was probably the same as that of Memphis.

There are good reasons for the spread of Isis-worship among Greeks in Egypt in the early Ptolemaic period. Arsinoe II and Philadelphus himself are closely associated with propaganda for the royal cult of Isis. Arsinoe adopted the title 'Isis Arsinoe Philadelphus,' and it may well have been she who encouraged the

7. *Dend. II, 17a; and Philae 509 (Photo 159). For the latter, cf. Müller, *Isiacatalogien,* p. 96. See also *OGIS* I, 107 (from Parendre beyond Philae); and *RE* IX, 2098 (Roedel). Cf. Brady, *Reception,* p. 28 and notes 50–51. Brady states that the worship of Isis, which had been prominent in Upper Egypt since the XXXth Dynasty at Philae, 'began to forge ahead as a resort of Greeks.'


spread of the cult in the Fayum temples of Philadelphus' new towns. The cult of Isis shares almost all Fayum temples of later times, although Isis herself was not always as prominent as other local deities. At court, however, Isis was paramount. Philadelphus regarded her priests as the official priesthood, and the king's ministers propagated her cult among the Greeks in Egypt. The admiral Callicrates built a temple to Isis and Anubis.\textsuperscript{14} Apollonius, mentioned above, built one to Serapis and Isis in Philadelphia.\textsuperscript{15} It is noted above that the latter considered Isis' festivals as the major festivities in Alexandria.\textsuperscript{16}

Ptolemy III Euergetes I (246-221) continued to promote the cults of Isis and Serapis. He built the Serapeum proper at Alexandria. He designated only the names of Isis and Serapis to stand with those of the deified rulers in the royal oath.\textsuperscript{17} His successor, Ptolemy IV, built the small temple to Harpocrates, the infant son of Isis, in the Alexandrian Serapeum area, where it still identifiable by its foundation plaques.\textsuperscript{18}

From the end of the third century B.C. (the period to which belongs the older Ptolemaic temple within the Medinet Madi temenos), Serapis and Isis appear to have become accepted and ranked even with the Olympian gods by Greeks throughout Egypt. Serapis himself seems to have been almost entirely Greek. The Egyptians knew little or nothing of a god by that name, and Serapis was apparently still unknown to the Egyptian priesthood at the end of the third century B.C. Egyptians continued to venerate Memphite Osiris-Hapi as god of the underworld.\textsuperscript{19} Only Isis and her family were shared by both peoples.

Isis had reached lands beyond Egypt's borders well before Hellenistic times. Greeks had frequented her temple at Naucratis in the fifth century B.C., and her cult had come to the Peiraieus before the last quarter of the fourth century.\textsuperscript{20} At Rhodes, a statue dedicated by a Carian in Demotic to ‘Osiris-Hapi’ and Isis may also be pre-Hellenistic.\textsuperscript{21} Later, the royal cults spread with the expansion of the activities of the early Ptolemy in the Aegean. The cult of Serapis was probably

\begin{enumerate}
\item[16.] P. Cornell 1; see also references in note 15.
\item[18.] Rowe and Rees, \textit{Arch. W. Desert}.
\item[21.] See Nilsson, \textit{GGR} 2, p. 120, note 1, for a bibliography of the spread of Egyptian cults. For their arrival in Athens, see IG XI 1306.129 (Isis); XI (2) 1282 (Ammon). See also S. Dow, “The Egyptian cults in Athens,” \textit{HTKR} 30, 1937, pp. 183 ff.
\item[22.] P. Jouguet, \textit{Rev. Belge} 2, p. 422. Brady, \textit{Reception}, p. 9, note 8, states: “This statue may have been a cult object similar to that found at Cyrene.” He cites Salac, \textit{BCH} 51, pp. 384-387 (and for similar objects at Delos and Pompeii: Roussel, \textit{CE} p. 65; and Mau-Kelley, \textit{Pompeii, Its Life and Art}, 2nd ed., p. 175, respectively). Nilsson, \textit{GGR} 2, p. 124 and note 5, cites W. Spiegelberg (“Die demotische Inschrift auf der Statue von Rhodos,” \textit{ZAS} 50, 1912, pp. 24 ff) and says the latter dates the statue 169/64 (see D. S. \textit{XXXI} 15a).
\end{enumerate}
established at Delos under the reign of Ptolemy I or Ptolemy II, and an 
inscription from Miletus attests that city’s early interest in Egyptian gods. The 
text, a dedication ‘to Agathe Tyche and Osiris,’ belongs to a period near the last 
years of Soter’s reign. From Halicarnassus come two early texts, one, of 270 
B.C., commemorating Ptolemy I and another, also of the third century dedicated 
to τῷ πατρὶ . . . Τύχῃ Ἀγαθῇ. A third text, from Halicarnassus or its 
immediate vicinity, as yet unpublished, commemorates a civic honour to a 
Ptolemy. Since it is third century B.C., before 257 B.C., the Ptolemy in question 
is undoubtedly Philadelphus. After its early start, the cult of Isis thrived at 
Halicarnassus. In the first century B.C. the city had a priest of Isis and the goddess 
appeared on their coinage.

But Ptolemaic conquests were not the only reason for the spread beyond 
Egypt of the royal cult of Isis and her family. While Zoilos, Apollonius, and 
others in the royal service were encouraging the worship of Serapis and Isis within 
Egypt, other officials, usually Greek, still in the service or retired, were carrying 
(or had already carried) the cult into cities and islands of the Aegean. For 
instance, toward the middle of the third century, the Sarapiasitai, a cult society of 
Serapis, were already installed in the small town of Iulis on the island of Ceus, and 
are known to have passed a decree in honour of one Epameinon for services he 
had rendered them. The society honoured him publicly with a crown at the Iseia 
or festival of Isis. It is unknown when the cult of Isis had been introduced into 
little Ceus, but the father of Epameinon was, or had been, in the service of 
Philadelphus. A Myndian’s dedication on Thera shows the same activity of royal 
officials. And a man who had served as an elephant-hunter under Philadelphus 
retired later to Thera, and there spent his time and money building shrines and 
setting up dedications to the Isis-family, and including the deified rulers in 
dedications: “In behalf of King Ptolemy and the gods Soteres and Philadelphoi, to 
Serapis, Isis, and Anubis.” Although this may have been a private cult, it is 
probable that before the end of the third century B.C. there was a public cult of 
Serapis on Thera. And in an illustration from Cnidian, a Greek returning from

22. See below, note 29.
24. For the two Halicarnassus inscriptions, see 
OGIS 16, N. Greipl, Philologus 85, 1930, pp. 159; 
Sti, Wilcken, Archiv 9, 1930, p. 223, note 2; and 
Sig. 1044, p. 34. See also Wellen, RC, p. 34, note 2.
25. The text was discussed in a paper by Mr. F. J. Frost, at the meeting of the Archaeological 
Institute of America in 1966.
26. BCH XIV, p. 111, no. 12, 74; Rusch, p. 77. 
27. The evidence for the various places: Iulis
Egypt brings to that island the cult of Serapis and Isis.28

As time passed, Serapis' importance waned in the Aegean islands. The development of the cult of the Egyptian gods can best be witnessed on Delos. As at other sites, the cult of Serapis had possibly been established there in the time of Ptolemy I or II.29 Well before 220, a second Serapeum was founded there by another Apollonius.30 Archaeological evidence shows there were, in all, three Serapea on Delos.31 It is not certain that Isis accompanied Serapis when his cult first came. The cult had remained private, and therefore small, throughout the third century B.C. The second, also presumably private, cult was founded before the end of the third century. It probably came from Alexandria and is known to have had an Iseum.

The cult of the Egyptian gods grew somewhat more slowly on Delos after it was lost to Egypt. In about 180 the combined cult of Isis and Serapis became semi-public under administrators called ἐπιτοίχου, but, at all times, it appears to have had at least one professional Egyptian priest in attendance. From 180-137 it remained semi-public. By this time it was in fact under Roman surveillance, for, about 164 when Athens was considering abolition of the cult, Rome forbade the action. In 137, at Rome's command, an Athenian was established as priest of Serapis.32

on Croes: IG XII 5(1) 606; Thera: IG XII 3 1388; 1389; Condas: SB 2217; 2215; Thess.: BCH 51, p. 220; Thrace: Jahresr. 23, p. 193, no. 152; Amphipolis: BCH 18, p. 417, no. 7; Paphos: Jahresr. 23, p. 156, no. 93; SSA 23, pp. 86-89 (Tod). For Anaphi, Cos, Astypalaea, Samos, Tenos, Aegiale, Lesbos and Minoa, see Brady, Reception, p. 31, note 69.

28. GDI 5528; see Brady, Reception, p. 23, note 83.

29. Delos was lost to Egypt in 246 B.C. See Rousell, CE, pp. 71-75. Tarn (Hellenistic Civilization, 2nd ed., p. 321) dates the introduction of the cult about 300. Roussel (Rev. hist. et litt. Rel. 7, p. 33) thinks it at least as early as 260. See IG XII 7 506; XI 4 1299. But Nilsson dates Sarapeion A to 220 B.C. (GGR 2,2,122). See also Brady, Reception, pp. 10, note 14, 18, note 42.

30. Of this confusing situation Brady says (Reception, p. 31): "In almost all instances, the further extension of the worship of Sarapis after the reign of Euergetes I came by way of the older foundations in the Greek world and not from Egypt. Delos had been lost to Egypt at the battle of Andros, and it remained in the hands of the Macedonian kings until Philip's defeat by Rome. During this period, although contacts with Egypt were not as close as formerly, a second cult of Sarapis was established in the island, probably about 220 (Roussel, CE p. 253). This second cult may have been derived from the first one, but it is more likely to have been a separate foundation from Alexandria. The cult planted there by Apollonius was the early 'unreformed' worship and may have been looked upon by the followers of the Alexandrian worship in somewhat the same way the Christians of Rome regarded Irish Christianity. It seems clear from the history of the cults at Delos that Isis was more prominent in the Alexandrian cult than she was in that of Memphis. In time, of course, the religious literature projected Isis back and gave her an important place in the early history of the cult. In a few years, the second cult at Delos completely overshadowed that of Apollonius and about 180 was made a public cult by the Delian state (IG XI 1032). For the epigraphical references, see Nilsson, GGR 2,2, p. 121, notes 11-12.

31. Nilsson, GGR 2,2, p. 122. The date of the first Sarapeion may precede the first establishment on the island of the Great Mother of the gods, or Cybele, who, after her establishment in Thrace in mid-third century B.C., had perhaps come thence to Delos. See W. Otto and H. Bengtson, Geschichte, p. 72. She was formally established in Rome in 204.

32. Cf. Brady, Reception, pp. 42 ff.: "Shortly after the Athenian occupation of Delos, perhaps about 164, the Roman Senate sent to Athens a decree in which it forbade the Athenian state to
Few details are known about Delian cult-life. From 220 onward, in the time of the second and third Serapeum, there were cult associations carried on by θεραπευταί. After 167 B.C., Isis was given the title Σωτῆρα, which may be related to the same title adopted in Egypt by Cleopatra II. Towards the end of the second century B.C. there was a κλείσιμος in the Delian cult, an annually appointed καυστήρας ("from a good family"), a γαρδόν and an ὠμοκράτης. By 156/5, while some of the more private features seem still to have been retained, the Egyptian foundation was more flourishing than before. Further buildings were being erected: near the third Serapeum and the Isen, a temple to Anubis with a Pastophorion was built, as were a stoa, an exedra, and a dromos, all dated to 156/5 B.C. By the end of the second century B.C., cult societies of the Egyptian gods on Delos as in Egypt and elsewhere had become popular and affluent. Three societies appear on Delos: κόινων τῶν θεραπευτῶν, κόινων τῶν μελανθήρων, and θίασος τῶν Σαραπιστῶν. By the mid-second century, in fact, growth of all the cults on

disestablish the cult of Sarapis in Delos (BCH 37, pp. 310 ff.; Roussel, Cf 92, 93). The Athenian generals transmitted the senatus consultum to the Athenian superintendent in Delos. The document states that, upon request of Demetrius Rheneus, a decree had been passed forbidding the Delians, that is, the Athenian cleruchs, and the government of Athens, to hinder Demetrius in the exercise of his priestly duties. This Demetrius is probably a descendant of a great-grandson of Apollonius who founded the first cult of Sarapis in Delos. Some time in the early second century, the family had acquired citizenship in Delos and, like other Delians, Demetrius would have been subject to exile by the Athenian government when the Athenian colony was planted there shortly after 167/6. (Cf. Nilsson, GGR 2.2, p. 121.) No other explanation seems possible than that the Athenian state intended to abolish this cult of Sarapis in Delos. Roman intervention in the interest of Demetrius frustrated her plans and, thirty years later, in 137, she reestablished the old Delian public cult and appointed a state priest (Athenian) to administer its affairs. Between 166 and 137, the cult probably had had a semi-public character like the cult of Bendis in the Peisai. In that event, Athenians could worship the god and engage in the festivals and processions without becoming members of the private societies which were pledged to the worship of the god. But, before 137, the state took no part in the worship and did not, in all probability, authorize any dedications to the Egyptian gods on its own behalf. The popularity of the cult in Delos convinced the Athenians that it would bring even more profit to the state if given a priest and state recognition. So, in 137, the state established an Athenian as priest of Sarapis. Between 166 and 149/8 the cult of Sarapis had been made public in Athens, and this fact, no doubt, made the final step at Delos easier. The private associations continued to exist, but ceased to have any meaning for Athenians since all citizens became ipso facto members of the body of worshipers.”

33. SIG III 1129, Delos 1131. Cleopatra II, self-styled ‘Isis-Soteira,’ was married to Ptolemy VI in 176, and later to his brother Ptolemy VIII. The title, Soteira, is first attested in 131 B.C.
34. Delos, 2105, 2196, 2120. See Nilsson, GGR, 2.2 p. 122, note 2. For a more thorough treatment of the societies, officials, etc. of the Egyptian cult at Pompeii, see Tran Tam Tinh, Le Calle d’Isis à Pompéi, pp. 89 ff.
36. Nilsson, GGR 2.2, p. 122. In Euboea, where the oldest cult establishment of Isis was founded in the first half of Philadelphia’s reign, Erechtia had a καυστήρας τῶν μελανθήρων καὶ ἰμαστανῶν in the second/first centuries B.C. celebrated the festival called πανοικία. See IG XII Supp. 571. Chalci in the second century B.C. offered an initiation into the rites of Sarapis, Isis, Anubis, and Apis, IG XII Supp. 9, 923, 926, 928, 929. See Nilsson, GGR 2.2, p. 128. At Smyrna συναφωστάται are known. See P. Foucart, Des Associations religieuses chez les Grecs, 1873, pp. 234 ff., no. 58. See also Nilsson, GGR 2.2, p. 127, and note 7. At Kos οὐρωστάται are known. See J. and L. Robert, “Inscriptions de Lydie,” Hellenistica 6, 1948, p. 9. They are Hellenistic. See Nilsson,
Delos showed such syncretism that it is difficult for us to see how they (and their priests) preserved any individuality. To choose one well known example concerning Isis, in 130/129 a Sidonian set up an inscription to: "Ἰσίδη μητρὶ μεγάλῳ Ἀφροδίτῃ." However, some serious feeling and deliberation lies behind all such equations, it seems, for at least in the case of Isis, there is a good deal of consistency in the equations. She is repeatedly syncretized with Aphrodite, Astarte, Cybele (Mother of the gods), and Tyche Agathe (or Tyche). She is also Isis Euploia, Isis Pharia, and Isis Pelagia, that is, the specific goddess of navigation, and seems to have come from Alexandria. She seems to have succeeded more ancient Greek deities such as Λευκοκή (Ino), the sea-goddess mentioned in the Odyssey and an Orphic hymn. Although the first reference to Isis Euploia is as late as 106/6 B.C. on Delos, she is spoken of frequently as goddess of the sea and navigation in the Greek hymns. No doubt she was known by such titles all 138 ff., and Nilsson, GGR 2.2, p. 625, notes 7, 9-10.


38. SIG 7646. Isis Pelagia and Isis Pharia often appear on Alexandrian coins. See J. Vogt, Die alexandrinischen Münzen, 1924; W. Wittmann, "Das Isisbuch des Apuleius," Forschungen zur Kirchen und Geistesgeschichte 12, 1938, p. 93; Nilsson, GGR 2.2, p. 628, note 4; and especially Tran Tam Tinh, Le Culte d’Isis à Pompéi, pp. 98 ff. "It seems that it is in the late period that Isis finally assumes power (over the sea) when she is assimilated to other divinities. Indeed, from the time of the founding of Alexandria and of its syncretistic religion, Isis played a new rôle, viz. as patron-goddess of that port-city; here she became Protector of Navigation." Tran Tam Tinh outlines the possible reasons for Egyptian Isis’ association with the sea, and gives the best evidence for Hellenistic Isis as a goddess of navigation. On Delos especially, Isis is Pelagia, Euploia, and Pharia. He relates the festival of the Floraophia or Navigium Isis to these titles of the great goddess.


40. (Isis Pelagia), Nilsson, GGR 2.2, pp. 338, 628, note 4, (Pharia) Ibid. p. 628, note 4. Cf. note 77 above. It could be a time of lively cult activity in the West: for example, the Serapeum at Puteoli is supposed to have been founded in 105 B.C. See note 34.
over the Aegean area as soon as her Alexandrian cult migrated north. The festival of the Ploiafhesia or Navigium Isidis is part of her characterization from Alexandria.

Cults on Delos flourished until 88 B.C. when the forces of Mithridates, no Isis-worshiper, advanced past Rhodes and into the Aegean. Archaeological evidence shows that his forces almost entirely destroyed the Delian cult sites. Only slight activity is attested thereafter at the Serapeum.

In summary, the royal cult of Isis and her consort, usually called Serapis in the Greek world, appears originally to have been carried abroad by the Ptolemies and their officers or representatives. Independent action of Greeks who had gone to seek their fortunes in Egypt, and later returned home leisurely to enjoy their gains, accomplished much the same. Once established, the cults flourished vigorously in many places.

Finally, it is interesting to trace the growth of the cults in the West. Although they spread through the older eastern centres where they became established, the first Ptolemy’s influence could have been felt directly through his step-daughter’s marriage to Agathocles of Catana. And some of the influence may have gone the other way. Delian Isis may have got a cult title from Italy. She is called Isis-Tyche-Protoegena on Delos in 115/4 B.C. This Greek title is the translation of Latin Fortuna Primigenia which is attested at Praeneste from the mid-third century B.C. Fortuna Primigenia also had a temple in Rome by 194 B.C. Πρωτογένεια, as found in the cult title on Delos, is a late Greek word occurring only twice, once with Physis in an Orphic hymn (X 5), and once in the aforementioned Delian inscription of 115/4 B.C. It seems most reasonable to

41. Chapter II, Hymn I 32-33; and the M. text 15, 39, 43, 49, 50; A. 34-35. Cf. Ank. 9; H. Ocy. 61, 99, 121-3.
42. M. Vent. II 66.160. See Brady, Reception, p. 43, for the carrying of the Egyptian cult (of Sarapis) from older centres to their neighbours in Asia Minor and the Aegean Islands: to Cyzicus, Magnesia on the Maeander, and Priene; (from Rhodes) to Lindos and Kameiros, Syme, Chalce and Rhodian Peralia; and to Pompeii, Puteoli, and probably the principal cities of South Italy; and finally (first century B.C.) to Rome, Ambraicia, Dionysopolis (on the Black Sea). For Magnesia on the Maeander see I. Mag., no. 99; for Priene, Inschr. Priene, nos 193, 195; for Ambraicia, CIG II 1800; for Dionysopolis, Syll. 765; for Lindos, IG XII 1 788, 815; Syll. 765; for Kameiros, IG XII 1 701; for Syme, IG XII 3 (1) 4; for Chalce, IG XII 1 957; for Pompeii, Ninen, Pompeianischen Studien, p. 174 (the earliest temple at Pompeii, second century B.C.); for Puteoli, CIL X 1781.5 (105 B.C.); for Rome, App. Met. XI 30, Cic. ad Att. II 17.2, and for a temple to Sarapis in Syracuse, Cic. in Vent. II 66. 160. Isis’ arrival at Pompeii is dated probably to the second half of the second century B.C. See Tran Tam Tinh, Le Culti d’Isis à Pompei, p. 30.
43. For Isis-Tyche-Protoegena on Delos 115/4, see SIG 113 = Delos 2072. For Fortuna Primigenia, see Val. Max. I 3.2. And for the most recent discussion of the cult and temple of the goddess at Praeneste, see F. Fasolo, Il Sanctorium della Fortuna Primigenia a Palestrina, Rome, 1953; and E. Jacopi, Il Sanctorium della Fortuna Primigenia e il Museo archeologico praenestino, Rome 1959. These references have been recently sent to me by Professor George Duckworth, under whose able guidance I visited the Praeneste temple with the American Academy in Rome Summer School in 1955.
44. Liv. XXXIV 53.5.
45. At Halicarnassus, Agatho Tyche, probably equated to Isis, had been called πολυγεία in SIG 1044, which may be third century, but is undated. The Latin titles appears to be earlier.
take this example of cult spread as from West to East, as least insofar as actual nomenclature is concerned.

In Italy, the earliest evidence for the cult of Isis herself is found, however, not at Praeneste, but at Rome, Herculaneum and Pompeii, where it arrived in the late second and early first centuries B.C. Since a considerable number of Roman and Italian names are found in the Delian inscriptions, it may be that Italian adherents of the Egyptian cults fled from the onslaught of Mithridates in 88 to their respective cities in Italy, bringing with them their new cult. Furthermore, Roman residents of Delos may have played a part in introducing Egyptian gods into Italy before 88 B.C., since the cult of Isis probably reached Rome during the late second century. Again, the cults of Isis and Serapis may have come directly to Italy from Alexandria. A college of Pastophori was already established in Rome by the time of Sulla.

So the cults of Isis and her associated Egyptian deities spread through the Greek world as Ptolemaic activity brought inhabitants of the Aegean and the West into closer contact with the newly Hellenized religion. The availability of Greeks who knew the cult and of cult texts in the language of the Mediterranean made the propagation more facile. Some of the transmission may have been direct from Egypt to the West, but, undoubtedly, most of the progress of the new cults was made in stages, moving first into areas in which were the greatest activities of Ptolemy and Greeks from Egypt. Thence it moved into the further reaches of the Hellenic and Latin world.

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47. Ibid., pp. 19 ff.
48. There are some cult characteristics which suggest the direct connection. The seeking and finding of the body of Osiris seems not to have been celebrated in Greece but only in Egypt and Italy. It is presumed that this festival, or Mystery, came to Italy from the Greco-Egyptian cult-life of Egypt. Part of it, the cry τοῦργες ναύρχαρος and the cult-term ἵππος, apply to the sacred pageant. Nilsson suggests also that the ceremony of the mosaic of stones, as reported by Firmicus Maternus, is really the fitting together of the skeleton of Osiris. See Firm. Mat., *de err. prof. rel. 22.2., also Nilsson, GGR 2.2, p. 639 and notes 3-4, and V. Tran Tam Tinh, *Le Culte d’Isis à Pompéi*, pp. 100 ff. Of course, certain Greek societies, like the Melanophoroi of Delos, may have celebrated the same rites.
CHAPTER FOUR
THE EARLIEST ARETALOGIES, OR GREEK HYMNS, TO ISIS

The Tradition of the Texts

After the Hymns of Isidorus, the next Isiac aretalogies come from the Greek world outside Egypt and date also to the first century B.C.: the hymn from Cyme in the Aeolid, the nine-line hymn reported by Diodorus Siculus, and the hymn found on the island of Andros. A later hymn from Ios, dated to the second/third centuries, and a few fragmentary lines from a Saloniki hymn, also supposed to date to the second/third centuries of our era, are, as far as their lines survive, identical to the Cyme hymn. These, apart from the Hymns of Isidorus, are the earliest and most important Isiac aretalogies.

Isidorus’ Fayum Hymns are in hexameters and elegiacs. The Andros hymn is also hexameter, but the other two hymns of the first century B.C. are in prose. Harder believed that the prose aretalogies were translations. They and the Andros hymn are in what has been called the I-style where the goddess herself in the first person tells of her divine power and miracles.

Because of the almost exact similarity of the prose aretalogies, Richard Harder, in 1944, collated the texts of the hymns of Cyme (K.), Ios (I.), Saloniki (S.) and Diodorus (D.), into one Greek text which he called M., assuming that there had been an original, Egyptian text set up on a stele at Memphis early in the Ptolemaic era.¹ He thought D. had come somewhat indirectly from the same prototype.² Harder does not analyse the Andros hymn (A.) but Werner Peek in 1931 demonstrated that it too was derived from the same source as K.³ Harder’s hypothesis is that between M. and the extant Greek prose aretalogies, a Greek translation had been made, adding the introduction still preserved in K. (and A.). The translations of which several copies were made naturally had been in prose. He imagines A. descended from M. through an earlier hexameter version, A².

Isidorus’ three Hymns to Isis are not derived from M., although parts seem to be influenced by it or a similar hymn. They are of the same century as A., D., and K.; all other extant Greek hymns to Isis are later.

¹. Harder, Karpokrates, pp. 21-22.
². Festugière, Aretalogies, discussing Harder.
³. W. Peek, Andros.
The language of the early aretalogies to Isis reveals that their texts, generally, belong to a transitional period. The Fayum Hymns use what could be called an Hellenistic epic-poetic dialect with mostly epic-poetic traits and relatively few influences from the Koine. Further, amid their numerous epic-poetic expressions they also show certain tendencies of Hellenistic prose composition. The M. text (i.e. K., J., S., and D.) is simple Hellenistic prose with few epic-poetic idioms. What in it appears to be poetic, or cult-language, is, in fact, not influenced by Greek poetic formulae. For instance, phrases like “I am the One who rises in the Star of the Dog,” “I separated earth from heaven,” “I taught the paths of the stars,” “I established the course of the sun and moon,” “I made justice strong,” and “I am in the rays of the sun,” clearly show Egyptian influence. Indeed the phrase ἐγώ ἐλήμ, found twelve times in M., is probably an Egyptian temple-formula. One can single out M.’s few purely Greek or Greco-Egyptian phrases: 5 “I am the tyrant of all the land/earth,” “I discovered . . . ,” and “the discoverer of edible vegetation (karpoi).”

4. For Hellenistic linguistic style I have generally relied on: Kühner-Gerth, Grammatik 2.2; Mayser, Grammatik, 2.3; and Moulton and Howard, Grammar. C. B. Welles, RC, Introduction, has some very pertinent references to late Greek linguistic style.

5. For a summary of his study of the Greek and Egyptian influence in M., see Müller, Isisrelatologie, especially the summary, p. 91. ἐγώ ἐλήμ occurs: 3a, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 41, 42, 44, 49, 52. See W. Manson, ἐγώ ἐλήμ, JHS 48, 1947, pp. 137-145.
The vocabulary and expression of the metrical Fayum Hymns, largely epic-poetic as the line-by-line commentary shows, is limited generally to frequent repetitions of common verbs, adjectives, and nouns. Indeed, what seems at times to be a remarkable attention to mood, tense, etc. may in reality be a close dependence on borrowed hexameter formulae. For instance, refinements like the two optatives and two subjunctives correctly used (in four purpose clauses) within ten lines of Hymn I are rare in late Hellenistic Greek. And there are other, less distinctive, borrowed features in the language. The imperatives of the Fayum Hymns, for instance, greatly resemble in vocabulary, grammatical form, and hexameter localization, the imperatives of Orphic hymns. This resemblance to Orphic hymns, of course, extends far beyond the imperative.

M. also has two subjunctives correctly used (3c, 46); and since they probably are not formulaic, M. must qualify, in this respect at least, as a good Hellenistic text. It has no imperatives save ἔφη.

The Fayum hymnologist could not find all the expressions he needed in what he knew of epic and poetic sources. Probably because of this, he adopts certain colloquial idioms. Participles, for instance, are noticeably common in his Hymns and help him to lengthen his sentences. This is a characteristic of the Koine. To this idiom belong also his periphrastic expressions (using participles) with forms of ἐμ (expressed or understood). He also uses the participle with the definite article to form the equivalent of relative clauses, another common feature of Hellenistic Greek.

M., on the other hand, shows no periphrastic constructions, but frequently uses participles with the article to replace relative clauses.

The more closely one examines the four Fayum Hymns, the more one becomes aware of their individual style. Hymn I shows the most complex Greek expressions and, at the same time, most dependence on epic-poetic formulae. Hymn IV, least like Hymn I, retains many epic forms of words but also shows what seems to be an independent, if naïve, use of tense and coordinates. And it has several precise uses of the middle voice which are neither epic nor poetic. At least twice in IV there is a strong hint of prose composition. In fact, simple prose composition, juxtaposed to an epic line, twice produces a sharp stylistic contrast (IV 17-20, followed by 21 ff. and 37-9 followed by 40). The other Hymns, II and III, also show distinct Hellenistic tendencies. III is distinguished for its very numerous participles which almost all occur in one particularly rambling,

7. See the line-by-line commentary for the scattered references. For the Orphic hymns, see G. Quandt, Orphici Hymni, Berlin, 1962.
8. Welles, RC, xlvii ff. Had Isidorus not used participles, we must conclude he would have fallen into the same confusion as is sometimes evident in Hellenistic correspondence. Other types of subordination are less easy to master. It seems clear that, when he wishes to speak for himself directly to the reader, he can write like a good secretarial scribe, e.g. IV 37-9.
10. Mayser, Grammatik 2.2, pp. 54 ff.
seventeen-line sentence.\textsuperscript{11}

\textit{M.}, however, shows no remarkable variation in verb form or use throughout its 57 verses. Its participles are not overly frequent, numbering only 10. Of these, none is in a periphrastic construction, and all except the last (verse 57) are used with the article to replace relative clauses. There is much repetition; \textit{εγώ εµύ} appears 12 times, and the first person singular aorist (usually active and with \textit{γη}) occurs often. Obviously the author of \textit{M.} believed in forceful, monotonous, didactic repetition.

The Fayum Hymns are not so much repetitious as naively limited in language. There is a conscious attempt to employ artistic expression; many of the linguistic features are repeated often enough to show they are deliberate. For instance, the uses of the definite article are not unlike those of the Homeric and Orphic hymns; at the same time, they are usages of the article that scribes of the Hellenistic era followed in their correspondence. Isidorus uses the article well, particularly with participles to form the equivalent of relative clauses.\textsuperscript{12} He uses it with adverbs and a prepositional phrase, with titles and certain epic-poetic nouns. The first two of these are particularly Hellenistic.\textsuperscript{13} He generally omits the article with possessive pronouns and general nouns, and, again, his omissions are very like those of epic and Orphic hymns. Significantly, his usage of the definite article is in marked contrast to the practice of certain other hymnologists of the same century. In the Andros Hymn, for instance, the article is almost entirely lacking.\textsuperscript{14}

\textit{M.} also uses the definite article well, in particular with nine of its ten participles, showing a close resemblance to good Hellenistic practice. In \textit{M.} the article also occurs twice before a prepositional phrase; and it is used consistently with adjectives to form singular neuter nouns. Just as in the Fayum Hymns, it is consistently omitted with general nouns. With titles and names of countries and nationalities \textit{M.'s} use is sporadic.\textsuperscript{15}

\textsuperscript{11} The style in these lines appears not to involve parallel structure, that is, it is freer than in other verses of the hymns (IV 17-20; II 21-26). Its sentences neither coincide with the length of the line nor the couplet. They and III 24-33, as well as IV 37-39, appear to be a venture in more prosaic composition. There is noticeably almost no epic or epic-poetic language in the lines. Instead, as in III 20-33, many of the tricks of rhetoric occur: some parallel clauses, groups of three, antitheses, the contrast of a very short clause (28) with what precedes and follows, rhyming words, rhyme at the ends of lines, chiasmus, and even three participles two of which rhyme, a prolonged periphrasis 20-27, and a rise and gradual fall 31-33. For Hellenistic prose that shows exactly the same tendencies, see Welles, RC, pp. xlvi ff. and Numbers 14, 44. For confusion resulting from the lack of participles and an unsuccessful use of other types of subordination, see RC 66, 22. Phrases like \textit{αἱ ὑπογεγραμμέναι} are very common from the third century B.C. on. It would seem that Isidorus' skill in this particular construction hints at a knowledge of formulae which were common among governmental scribes and which we know from papyri and inscriptions.

\textsuperscript{12} See Mayser, \textit{Grammatik}, 2.2, pp. 54 ff. for this common Hellenistic use. It was particularly common from the third century B.C. on. Cf. Welles, RC, p. lx.

\textsuperscript{13} Mayser, \textit{Grammatik} 2.1, pp. 14 ff.

\textsuperscript{14} Peck, \textit{Andros}, p. 81. Cf. Welles, RC, p. lxx, commenting on the 'well handled' use of the article in the royal letters.

\textsuperscript{15} It is interesting that \textit{D.} four times uses the article when it is omitted in corresponding verses of \textit{M.:} I 27, 3, 6, 8, 9; and he shows an article and participle where \textit{K.} has parataxis with \textit{καλ} (cf. \textit{M.} 3b). See Harder, \textit{Karpokrates}, pp. 20-21.
Finally Isidorus’ frequent use of the particle ἐκ must be noted. It occurs commonly in Hymns I, II, and III. The uses of ἐκ but once, near the beginning (3c) in the well known correlative formula ἐκ ... κατ.’ This absence of ἐκ, when compared with Isidorus’ lavish use, indicates that the simple rhetoric of M. is not influenced by epic-poetic language, that, in fact, some effort has been made to avoid such expressions. It may well mean that M. in its origin is a scribal composition, a translation from another language. This would tend to substantiate Harder’s theory that the prototype was an Egyptian text.

The Hellenistic Hymn-Style
as it appears in early Aretalogies to Isis

Greek Hellenistic hymns show, generally, four divisions of their content. The Invocation gives the names of the deity, his/her nature, cult-sites, genealogy, and relationships to other gods. The second section tells of the universal omnipotence of the deity, that is, his/her dynamis, arete, and klēros. The third section deals with specific works, miracles, and discoveries (erga, aretai, and heuere'mata). These entitle the god to be called universal Lord, Discoverer, Saviour, etc. By contrast with the Homeric hymns, the Hellenistic god’s acts for men are not attached to one particular cult-site where miracles may have occurred. The hymns end with a personal request of the poet who speaks of himself as a suppliant. He considers his whole hymn to be a prayer.

The Homeric hymns differ from the Hellenistic hymns in that between the opening invocation and concluding prayer they relate a legend illustrating the deity’s power and gifts to men; and they frequently refer to some particular cult-site. Thus the main section of the Hellenistic hymn is a departure from the older form of the genre.

There are many examples of the Hellenistic hymn. The most outstanding is

16. See Appendix for details. For the use of ἐκ, see especially: Kühner-Gerth, Grammatik 2.2, pp. 235, sec. 236.2, 243, sec. 518.2 and sec. 520.4; and 241, sec. 519.1; Mayer, Grammatik 2.3, pp. 164, 155, 157; Moulton and Howard, Grammar, pp. 420 ff., LSJ s.v. ἐκ. R. Keydell, “Metrische Bemerkungen zu den Hymnen des Isidorus,” Prolegomena 2, 1953, p. 123, note 1, referring to a similar use in h. Orph.; Theler, Philologiae 94, 1943, p. 249; H. Bluemner, Gnomon 19, 1943, p. 144. Mayer notes that ἐκ is used in the Rosetta Inscription to join a participle to a verb and calls it a recognized use, as he does ἐκ with an infinitive. See also Kühner-Gerth, Grammatik, p. 241, sec. 519.1.

17. ἐκ is avoided in early Hellenistic prose. See Moulton and Howard, Grammar, pp. 420 ff. It occurs for instance mostly in the Pentateuch of the Septuagint (and in Malachi, 104), but only three times in the Psalms. It declines sharply in the New Testament, appearing with any frequency only in Acts and the Epistle to the Hebrews.

18. Harder, Karpokrates, for M.; also Festugière, Aretalogies, pp. 200-234, discussing Hellenistic hymn-style generally and M. in particular. He refers to Norden, Agnostos Theos, pp. 168 ff.; R.E. IX, 140 ff.; Wünsch, Hymnos. A. D. Nock, Gnomon 21, 1949, pp. 221-228 (on Harder, Karpokrates), refers in particular to the style of the Karpokrates hymn, and somewhat generally to other Hellenistic hymns, especially M.

19. See especially h. Hom. II (the Hymn to Demeter).
Cleanthes’ well known Hymn to Zeus; the Orphic hymns also illustrate the pattern. A. D. Nock classifies the Somnium Nectanebi and the Greek aretalogies to Isis\textsuperscript{20} in the genre, and, although he was discussing only the aretalogies that comprise the M. text, we can add all the early Isiac aretalogies, the Andros Hymn, the prose Aretalogy of Diodorus, and those of Isidorus of the Fayum to his classification.\textsuperscript{21} In fact, Isidorus’ Hymns I, II and III divide easily into the four sections of the Hellenistic hymn.

Although Isidorus’ Hymns have their own individual characteristics, each shows in its main divisions the typical Hellenistic hymn style. Hymn I has three almost equal sections, after a sonorous three-line introduction. Though most of the main body of the Hymn is concerned with the goddess’ general dynamis, it includes within that section an eleven-line polonymos or myrionymos passage not found elsewhere in contemporary Greek hymns. Finally, the section of seven lines, preceding the concluding prayer, with specific references to human calamities within which Isis can help, is to be taken as a typical Hellenistic reference to the works of the deity.

Hymn II follows a similar pattern, opening invocation, two long sections, and concluding prayer, but it has a novelty, a postscript which appears to be the poet’s own testimony to the efficacy of the goddess. Hymn III too follows this pattern: a long section following the invocation expresses a eulogy of the goddess’ dynamis-arete and her particular relation to the Egyptian Pharaoh, followed by the usual passage dealing with the deity’s works, in this case Isis’ gifts to the people of the Fayum.

Even Hymn IV, though not addressed to the goddess but to the god-king Porromanres, who founded her temple in the XIIth Dynasty, still follows the pattern we call typically Hellenistic. There are the same references to dynamis, arete, and erga; even heurisko occurs with the Hellenistic meaning of devise, invent, found. The whole of IV magnifies Porromanres as I, II, and III did Isis, and it ends, like II, with a sentence which is obviously personal testimony.

The Memphis text, or M., also shows the customary sections of the Hellenistic hymn. Harder himself analysed the hymn style of his composite text: an introductory inscription, an invocation telling Isis’ genealogy, titles, relationship to other gods, etc., a dynamis section stating her power over nature etc., and her specific achievements, or erga and heurismata. Particularly stressed is her creative activity as it effects the achievements and discoveries of civilization. M. concludes with the goddess’ farewell to Egypt.\textsuperscript{22} It will be recognized at once that Harder’s divisions perfectly reflect the sections of the Hellenistic hymn, with the exception of the final prayer, necessarily omitted in M. since the goddess herself is speaking.

\textsuperscript{20} A. D. Nock, Gnomon 21, 1949, pp. 221-8.
Nock refers to the style found in the Karpokrates hymn as suggestive in various ways of Nonnus, the Orphic hymns, the Andros hymn, and the Somnium Nectanebi.

\textsuperscript{21} All belong to the genre; see Festugière, Aretalogies, pp. 211-234, notes 25, 30.

\textsuperscript{22} Harder, Karpokrates, pp. 39 ff.
D. Müller, in his analysis of M., found that some 19 (or 22) of the 56 verses show concepts that could reasonably be said to come from Egyptian inscriptions extant in the Hellenistic era. The rest of the verses he thought probably of Greek origin. Müller made no reference to hymn style or the arrangement of M., but Festugière, commenting on M. as an example of Hellenistic hymn style, analysed M.'s form in essentially the same way as Harder, assigning specific lines to the sections:

A (3-11): the goddess' nature, cult sites, etc.
B¹ (12-14) and B² (39-56): the goddess' omnipotence, i.e. dynamis.
C (15-38): the goddess' discoveries, i.e. heurémeta (or erga).

To explain his two divisions of B, the dynamis section, Festugière claims that an indefinite number of additions to K. and J. must have been made over a period of time and consequently the order has become distorted. According to him, verses 15-38 should follow, not precede, B² (39-56).

The sections of M. and of Isidorus' Hymns concerning the goddess as a Discoverer and Universal Deity are, as said above, specifically Hellenistic. That she acts alone and is almost monotheistic is another Hellenistic trend. Although the feminine title 'Heuretria' is first used in the Fayum Hymns of the early first century B.C., Festugière would date the prototype M., and its characteristics generally, much earlier than all the extant aretalogies.

Finally, no analysis of the aretalogies would be complete without the observation that the content of Fayum Hymns I, II, and III, and M. seems all to have been rather artificially forced by the hymnologists into the Hellenistic hymn-mould. This is shown especially in the dynamis and erga sections, where the deity's dynamis really cannot be separated from her erga. When such a divinity, omnipotent but warmly personal, as in Isidorus' Hymns, is praised, it would seem to be impossible to divide her specific acts from her universal divine virtue. The conviction that this ever-active Creator's power presides over all life and nature (zoe and karpós/physis) so permeates the Fayum Hymns that her dynamis, arete, and erga, can in no way be confined to certain lines. Verbs pour out the message, showing her as a restless, beneficent, intelligent force, giving of her own life-force to men, and forever instructing, discovering-creating, and saving them. The goddess loves mankind. Surely what we find in these hymns is the emergence of the strong new Hellenistic deity which, like new wine, bursts through the form of the Hellenistic hymn. The Fayum Hymns are evidence that the prose aretalogies to Isis also could have been exalted vehicles of genuine feeling if they had been produced by a Psalmist or more sensitive aretalogos.

Certain new developments are shown in the Isiac Hellenistic hymns. While obscure or absent in M., they can easily be traced in Isidorus' Fayum Hymns. His first Hymn includes a new ten-line polyonymus or myrronymus (many-name)

23. Müller, Isiaretalogien, p. 91: verses 3a, 5, 6, 9, 12, 13, 16, 56, 23, 24, 31, 32, 44, 45, 55, 4, 40, 3c, (117), (46-477).
section in which he equates his goddess to all great goddesses and claims all are merely forms of her whom he calls "the One." Harder refers to this section as traditionally Egyptian, and van Groningen gives several close parallels from Egyptian hymns of praise. We can conclude that Isidorus' polonymous section was influenced directly by Egyptian hymns, possibly temple-hymns. This feature did not reappear in hymns to Isis for some two centuries. Among Greek hymnologists, Isidorus may also be an innovator in the use of the title Heuretia, since his is the first extant use.

There is, finally, the important matter of the goddess' power over death. The M. text makes no mention of death, although it says Isis "conquers himarmenon." These final verses of M. may bear some relation to Isidorus' simple claim that his goddess can save men when death threatens, or as Egyptian inscriptions would put it, she can prolong life. Isidorus says that she can heal the sick and infirm by sharing her "life" with them (II 8). Her vaster power to give a kind of life even after death, that is, her power in the underworld, is not mentioned until Roman times, and then somewhat cryptically by the Oxyrhynchus Hymn and Apuleius. Isidorus' Hymns I and II are the first among Greek or Latin aretalogies to suggest that Isis' power to heal is really divine power over death.

One should also recall that the fourth Fayum Hymn shows at least two lines that are very like a refrain, causing the narrative both to pause midway and to close with a more or less similar, sonorous line. Such a refrain seems never to have occurred again in Isiac hymns.

These are Isidorus' innovations in the Hellenistic hymn; but he had little influence on subsequent hymns, for these features either never reappear, or only reappear much later. From our evidence, the Fayum would seem to have been, especially in the first century B.C., a more or less isolated locale of peculiarly vital religious syncretism. Its theology may come from the great institution of Memphis, but it sought local expression through its own temple hymns, some of them in Greek. Meanwhile, in the outside Greek world, the same goddess' hymns of praise were assuming an assertive new didactic prose form, as if spoken by the goddess-teacher herself to a new, foreign congregation. The I-style prose of the Greek aretalogy to Isis constitutes a peculiar type of Hellenistic hymn for a literate audience outside Egypt, while the Fayum Hymns are of and for the local bi-cultural society.

25. See Harder, Karpokrates, pp. 47 ff. He believes the whole of M. shows the "fine hand" of the Egyptian priesthood. Van Groningen, de P. Oxy., pp. 79 ff., refers in particular to an Egyptian hymn (to Hathor) showing this feature. He seems to prove that references to the mighty name of Isis stem from Egyptian sources, and are therefore early. Cf. Festugière, Aretalogies, pp. 209-34, who implies it is a late feature. It seems to be both. After Isidorus it does not recur in Greek hymn until about the second century of our era.


27. H. Oxy. 13, 242-3, 246-7, 291-3(?), and App. Met. XI 6. In Egyptian mythology she was always concerned with the soul after death.
CHAPTER FIVE
ISIS’ CHARACTERIZATION IN THE EARLIEST GREEK ARETALOGIES

From the Egyptian pyramid texts of the Old Kingdom, ancient Isis, perhaps originally a sky-goddess, or the personification of the royal throne (or its cushion), was never a vegetation goddess and was always associated with other gods in a family.¹ She was daughter, sister and wife, and mother, and, in every reference, youthful and active. She was especially concerned with the human soul after death. Her ancient family relationships are still prominent in Hellenistic M., where the names of Osiris and Horus occur, but, for her new Greek congregation, Geb, her father, is now re-named Cronos; Thoth is Hermes, and Nut, her mother, is omitted.² Nor, in fact, does the name of Serapis occur in the aretalogies of the first century B.C. although he is mentioned in the Cyrenaic aretalogy, of the early second century A.D.

In the Fayum aretalogies, which are local hymns to the universal goddess, the goddess’ family is also present. But they bear names appropriate to the cult of local Hermouthis: Sokonopis, dweller in the temple with the goddess is her husband; Anchoes, the visible sun and a sky-god, is her son but of lesser power and scope than his omnipotent mother. There is no mention of Hermouthis, Sokonopis or Anchoes in M., nor would one expect it.

The early aretalogies emphasize Isis’ power, omnipotent and creative. The goddess shows good will towards men in her erga, which are not separated from her dynamis, as might have been possible in praise of a purely Greek divinity. The goddess has given men justice and laws, she is a strong defender of all human civilization, and she presides over its progressive steps. She has become, in fact, a Greek discoverer and teacher for men, like Prometheus, Demeter, Themis, and Hestia. She “finds” and “teaches” technai: agriculture, writing, sea-faring; she has become the sea-goddess and a punisher of tyrants; she can conquer fate. She is Greek Demeter who discovered vegetation, and the eastern creator who first established the cosmos and made man. Her chief care is for men. The Fayum

². In M. 5 (= K. 5, J. 4) she is said to be daughter of Cronos. In D. 3 she is daughter of youngest Cronos. In A. 15 she is the elder daughter of Cronos and granddaughter of Ouranos (A. 18).
psalmist, in true Egyptian fashion, thinks of her as the cause of the Nile’s annual flood.

Much of this is Eleusinian, or similar to Eleusinian theology, and may have come to Egypt from the Greek world through the Greek immigrants. But there is a strong non-Greek side to the goddess as well. She has been made to usurp the powers of all the great gods of Egypt. Not only has she ordered the courses of the stars but of the sun and moon as well; she is the primeval god who separated heaven from earth. She is, in fact, a new synthesis of all important Egyptian deities.

As this is the Isis of the early aretalogies, so it is the specific goddess of Isidorus’ Hymns. Strikingly, she assumes the characteristics of Renenet, a goddess attested at least in the XIIth Dynasty; her worship had been carried on at the very temple-site of Isidorus’ Hymns. In a temple text Renenet speaks: “I give all life eternally. I give all felicity eternally. I give all eternity eternally. I give all success (or health) eternally.” This ancient Renenet (even to the I-style of her address) reappears as a component of the universal Hellenistic and Greco-Roman Isis.

Unification of different strains under the characterization of Hellenistic Isis is extensive. For instance, Greek Agathe Tyche seems to be a large component. Tyche Agathe, sometimes Tyche alone, frequently occurs equated to Isis in Aegean inscriptions of early Prolemaic times. Isis is also Tyche Agathe in the great Oxyrhynchus Hymn of the first/second centuries A.D., that is, the title continued to cling to her in Egypt. The name Tyche (Agathe) followed Isis not only into the Greek world, but to Italy.

Since the Old Kingdom in Egypt, the control of a man’s length of days had been the prerogative of Egyptian major gods. By decreeing the life span of a man, and the quality of his individual portion of life, Egyptian gods had been said to decree or control a man’s fate. They could also extend an individual’s life span when much of his life force was spent. Two Forces or Powers are thought eventually to have come to symbolize the individual life span and the quality of life given within it: Shai, Psoi, or Shoy, from the Egyptian verb sho, meaning to decree; and Renenet, a Power and goddess, meaning specifically Riches, and Good Fortune, or the quality of life within the life span. These two, Shay and Renenet, usually paired, were, according to inscriptions, always under the control of some major god, who might be Amun, Ptah, Khnum, or Aton in the theology of Amarna. Particularly in the later period, the royal goddess Isis, and the members of her family, Osiris and Horus, were also said to control Shay and Renenet.

4. Egypt, P. Oxy. 51; OGIS 119, Διὸ Σωτῆρα καὶ τῆς πρωτογενῆς αἰείθων (cf. Nilsson, GGR 2.2, p. 209 and note 11); also SEG VIII 657 = SBAU 7791: ἔθελε μονοσώμῳ θεῖος μέγαστος ἱερεῖα λατρείας τῆς θείας (A.D. 159); See Nilsson, GGR 2.2, p. 209, note 12. And in Rome: IG 1006: θεῖος θαύμασθαι λατρεύειν. See also Alfoldi, Isiskult, p. 27, fig. 330: Isis-Tyche-Panthea, first century B.C.
5. Morenz-Müller, Schicksals; Müller, Isistetalogie, pp. 82 ff., especially p. 85, note 5; A. H. Gardiner, JEA 32, 1946, pp. 53 ff.; and H. Kees, Götterglaube, Psoi.
6. Osiris (Dendera 4971): “Shay and Renenet are under his command.” Isis (Brit. Mus. 70, Cat.
Many scholars have stressed the importance of Shay and Renenet in Egyptian theology. Müller states that they are shown to have become more important and more nearly defined in the Amarna period. Shay remained a Power, unpersonified, but Renenet was a goddess more or less personified as she had been from the Old Kingdom. Shay may be very like Homer's μοῖρα θεῶν. But the Greek moira thereon, when concerned with the end of a man's life, may even in Homer be μοῖρα θανάτου, and, in fact, Hellenistic grave inscriptions show moira alone to mean death without any hint of personification. But Shay and Renenet seem never to have been associated with death by the Egyptians.

It is significant that a bilingual text translates Shay as Greek Tyche. It must be Tyche Agathe, the good power who is the implied opponent of death. ὅ ἄγαθος δαίμων is another possible interpretation of Shay. that is, τύχη ἄγαθη alone and with ὅ ἄγαθος δαίμων in the Greco-Egyptian world, may be Egyptian Shay. Renenet-Hermoths who gives men luck and riches presides with Shay over the individual life. The individual is constantly protected during his life span by these two divine agents. This theology has essentially nothing to do with his after life.

Isidorus in the Fayum Hymns invokes Isis as Hermothus, that is, Renenet, and as Agathe Tyche, that is, presumably, Shay. There is a loose equivalent here to the Egyptian title, "Lord of Shay and Renenet." In other words, Isis still controls human life and fate in the Hellenistic Greek world as she did in Egyptian temple-lore. Surely this is why the M. text speaks cryptically of her as controlling Heimarmenion. The concluding verses, "I conquer Himarmenion" (sic), and "Heimarmenon obeys me," are precisely this, cast in first the Greek and then the Egyptian idiom. Hellenistic Heimarmenion is fate, both good and bad. That is, it would seem to be a rough equivalent of both Renenet and Shay (or life), and not, perhaps, their counterpart or moira (death). Isis, herself, can ward off death by prolonging life.

434; 1162 Isiistatue, Cat. 472]: "Mistress of Life, Lady of Fate and Increase"; Horus (W. Spiegelberg, "Horus als Arzt," ZAS 57, 1922, pp. 70 ff.): "The words of Horus save every man whose Fate stands (just) behind him." And for Is is able to increase a man's life span, see Phale, Pylon 76, 4-6. Cf. Müller, Isiaretalogien, p. 85, note 3.

7. Müller, Isiaretalogien, pp. 81 ff. Cf. Roeder, Der Religion des Alt. Ag., p. 182. They are spoken of in that era either together or separately and confused, for each might represent the other (or it would seem so). Usually Renenet is feminine and Shay masculine although this is not always so. Shay seems not to have been strongly personified, symbolizing chiefly the life span of a man from birth to death.


11. Müller, Isiaretalogien, p. 85, note 5. Later, moreover, Apuleius (Met. 6) can say: "Vives autem beatus, vives in mea tutela gloriosus; et cum spatium saeculi tui perennius ad inferos demearias, ibi quoque in ipso subterraneo seminturundo me, quam vides Achorantis tenerris interlucuentem stygiasque penetrabilis regnantem." And ibid.: "Scies ultra statuta tace tuo spatio vitam quoque tibi prorogare nihil tantum licere."
The authors of the *M.* text have carefully expunged the names of all other goddesses, obviously seeking to hide Isis’ syncretistic nature in *M*’s implied monotheism. The Fayum Hymns, on the other hand, claim in Hymn I to be monotheistic, but literally glory in their goddess’ syncretism. After invoking her as Egyptian Isis-Hermouthis and Greek Agathe-Tyche-Deo, Isidorus tells us the specific names of ten other great deities to whom he equates her: Syrian Astarte, Syrian Artemis, Syrian Nanaïa, Lycian Leto, the Thracian Mother of the gods, and the Greek goddesses Hera, Aphrodite, Hestia, Rhea, and Demeter. Those Isidorus names are all old, important, Near East and Greek deities. Egyptian Thioëis, The One, comes dramatically at the end; all the others are one in her.

Isidorus’ unique, divine mother is undoubtedly an early product of centuries of Greco-Egyptian syncretism in Lower Egypt. The poet is a man of some culture, living amid humbler Fayum farmers, in the early first century B.C. His Hymns meld a little Greek physical philosophy, certain Eleusinian cult concepts of a discovering-civilizing divinity, and a Near Eastern creation myth.12 Almost surely the general concepts that underlie his words must have originated in greater intellects than his, that is, with theologians who antedated him. His is a sophisticated goddess whose character is the result of enlightened speculation, and deliberate theological formulation of a high order.

APPENDIX
THE GRAMMAR, SYNTAX AND VOCABULARY OF ISIDORUS’ HYMNS

The following is a brief summary of Isidorus’ commoner linguistic features. His language, like his theology, belongs to the Fayum society of his day.

His use of verbs is characteristic of his vocabulary, grammar, and syntax. Statistically, he uses, on the average, one verb a line, a fairly high proportion of verbs. There is much repetition of the commonest Greek verbs, and present and aorist tenses by far outnumber other tenses. Often one particular verb form occurs.¹ His commonest moods by far are the indicative and the participle.² Other moods do occur, but are, strangely, limited almost to Hymn I, and even there to one passage of nine lines.³ To a very large extent this concentration of similar forms is true of all his lines. For instance, he uses the imperfect tense only nine times, eight of which uses are in Hymn IV.⁴ He uses participles 41 times, and over a third of these are in Hymn III.³ He uses subjunctives only twice, and, as said above, both times in I. He uses the optative only twice and again only in I. In short, his use of verbs is rather more rigid, and formulaic even, than one would expect from one who spoke Greek (of any type) fluently. His stilted vocabulary is evident in his infinitives. He uses only seven.⁶ This lack of fluency is even more obvious in his imperatives, although one might expect little freedom of speech in the concluding prayers of his hymns.⁷

He appears to use participles, however, with some freedom, a feature which obviously gives his syntax limited flexibility. Of his verb forms 28 per cent are participles, largely occurring in groups or clusters. Hymn III has almost twice as many as the other three hymns together. They occur in the main section of his

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¹. His verbs are frequently compounds of ἔχω, ἥκω, εὐλογέω, and ἔβαλλομαι. The others that are frequently repeated are: κλάω, νιᾶλω (cf. ἀφέωνοι), εἰρήκαμαι (cf. εἰρήκων), κλαίω, νέρομαι, φαινόμαι, εἴρηκαμαι (cf. εἰρήκων), ἀφέωνοι, κλαίω, νιᾶλω, ἀφέωνοι, ἐφέσσω (cf. εἰρήκων), and ἐβάλλομαι. The present tense occurs in all 70 times: in I (20 times), II (17), III (23), IV (10). The aorist in all appears 43 times: in I (5 times), II (14), III (5), IV (19). Forms such as the following appear more than once: παρείδηκα (I 34, II 5), ἔχασα (II 22, III 5), κλάω (I 35, III 19), ἀκούσα (I 6, 14), ἑβάλλακα (I 7, II 21) and ἐβάλλακα (III 4).

². He uses the indicative 86 times, the participle 41: I (indicative 19 times, participle 8); II (indicative 22, participle 9); III (indicative 17, participle 14); IV (indicative 28, participle 10).

³. Subjunctive I 6, 13, optative I 47. These are the only uses in the four Hymns.

⁴. They are all of the three verbs: εὐλογεῖ (11, 16, 21 twice, 29); κλάω (15, 17); κλαίω (36). The other use is III 23.

⁵. Nine uses are concentrated in lines 25-34.

⁶. In 144 lines his only infinitives are: παρείδηκα (twice), ἔχασα (twice), παρείδηκα (twice), and γενέσθαι.

⁷. His only imperatives are: κλάθε (twice), γείω, κατάπτωσα, χαίρε, μετάβου, τέμπε ἢ ἐκπολύσα.
composition, after the formulaic invocation and before the concluding formulaic prayer. In III he uses participles to compose with evident dexterity (or manoeuvring) one very long and complicated sentence. His uses of the participle are those generally recognized in Greek syntax. The conditional or temporal participle occurs 14 times, the causal and attributive each nine times, the circumstantial and supplementary each three. But his most distinguishing use of the participle is with forms of εἰμι (understood) in a periphrastic construction. The construction does not occur in Hymn II, but I shows one periphrastic use, III has three, and IV two. Those of IV are especially remarkable (IV 16): ἐπιστεύλας ἦν the equivalent of ἐπιστεύλας ἦν, and (19) ἐπιστεύλαντα (ἐναὶ), the equivalent of ἐπιστεύλαν.

Apart from two purpose conjunctions ἦν and ὅρα, Isidorus writes only simple subordinating conjunctions: ἵπποι / ἵπποι (once), ὅτι (meaning “that, because,” twice), and ὡς (three times, all in IV).10 His use of the relative pronoun is more noteworthy because he repeats it frequently.11 Clearly it is a means of description for him. The correlatives ἦ and ἦ καὶ occur only in III; but are used rhetorically to begin a group of six consecutive lines.12 The frequent use of καὶ and ἦ are discussed below.

But the feature of his composition that shows most precision, and even refinement, is his use of the aorist and perfect tenses. The perfect occurs once in each hymn, and is well used. In I 9 the perfect ὑφεστικχ', is intransitive, meaning “has come into existence, and therefore exists”; “has become compact or congealed, and therefore is solid.” It is used precisely to express divine creation of the cosmos just as Plato had used it in the Timeaus (32b). The same verb in the perfect tense but in the active voice predicates Isis as cosmic Creator in H. Oxy. 183. If we can judge from Ovid’s use of Latin consistere in a generally parallel passage (equivalent to Greek ὑπώσταμαι?), the compound form of ὑπήμη, by the first century B.C. had become formulaic to describe the act of creating the physical cosmos.13 The perfect tense used as here is particularly apt but may also have been formulaic. (The Oxyrhynchus Hymn also shows this apt use of the perfect.) In Hymn II 2, the perfect tense in γέγοιθε is the epic-poetic use of the perfect and so merely part of Isidorus’ epic-poetic vocabulary; ἦμων ἐθηκει (III 20) is also epic-poetic. But the fourth perfect tense ἄφεκται (IV 31) is of interest.

9. See Goodwin, Greek Grammar, 1557 ff. for the three recognized uses: attributive, supplementary, circumstantial (including the genitive absolute, participles showing conditional, temporal, or causal, force, and participles in a periphrasis with forms of εἰμι). For Isidorus’ attributive use see I 24, 27, 35; II 14; III 1, 30; IV 18?, 31, 37 (second); supplementary use, I 25; IV 14, 197; and circumstantial use: genitive absolute I 33 twice; II 25; conditional or temporal: I 34; II 8, 16, 27 twice; III 14, 26 twice, 27, 28, 29 327; IV 207, 337, 387; causal: II 17, 21, 24, 32; III 9, 34; IV 337, 37 first, 387; the periphrastic construction with εἰμι: I 31; III 147, 157, 25; IV 16, 197.
10. Purpose in I 6, 7, 13, and 4.
11. The epic-poetic relative pronoun ὡς/ὅς occurs five times in I, four in II, three in III, but once only in IV. ἦ occurs four times in II, once in III, and five times in IV.
13. See Ovid, Metamorphoses I 54.
Its meaning is entirely appropriate to express the blessed state of the Egyptian god-king's spirit that has reached and now dwells in the afterlife of the western heaven. It is, of course, a Koine form of the verb, where εἰ has replaced ε.\textsuperscript{14}

Isidorus' use of the aorist is also precise. It occurs frequently, especially in Hymns II and IV.\textsuperscript{15} It shows two distinct uses, a simple past act which is the simple aorist, and an habitual or general act, the gnomic aorist, to be translated by the English present.\textsuperscript{16} All the instances of the simple aorist occur in I and IV in narration. The uses of the simple aorist in I are, with one exception, to express the seemingly instantaneous past acts of the Creator: ἐμέλησε, ἀνάδωσε (4), κατέδειξε (6), ἔδωκε (7), εἶρε (8), γειώνυ (36). These uses reveal Isidorus' basic concept of his goddess as a one-time creator and continuing power in men's lives. The real gnomic aorists are easily detected. For instance, II 14: δὲ ἔδειξε τὸ φῶς expresses a daily occurrence and ἀνάδωκε (II 21) is annual. In short, Isidorus' uses of the aorist are those of classical Greek.

He uses the present tense either as the historical present or the present general.\textsuperscript{17} The simple use of the present to express one act in present time, of course, does not normally occur in hymns although ἔοιρω (IV 17) is an instance of it.

His participles are all the present or aorist tense. In these he distinguishes tense as carefully as he does in the indicative. All his aorist participles show acts that could properly precede the main verb or the next participle.\textsuperscript{18} This is particularly noticeable in βάσσα (III 25) which is followed by six present participles.\textsuperscript{19} Each expresses an act that is continuous throughout each day: διάγονα, καταπεινόσα, καθομόσα, ἐφορώσα, τερπομένη, ναϊάνων. βάσσα is a one-time act each twenty-four hours. Possibly ἄγωνα (32), though not really continuous, is present because it expresses the continuous stream of Fayum farmers bearing their produce offerings, as they might appear in a painted or sculptured temple relief.

Isidorus' use of voice is particularly careful, and provides evidence that the refinements we have noted above may well be intentional. The active and middle voices remain distinct in all his verbs; his use of the passive is infrequent but exact.\textsuperscript{20} Middle and passive deponent verbs are used somewhat freely in I and II and are always correct. The active voice largely predominates, as is to be

\textsuperscript{14} See Mayser, Grammatik 2.2, pp. 87 ff. The tendency in the second century B.C. was to write εἰ for εἰ (long and short) and also to keep it for εἰ. See IV 31 commentary for examples.

\textsuperscript{15} The aorist occurs 66 times: I (5), II (37), III (5), IV (19).

\textsuperscript{16} The simple past acts are the aorists: IV 1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 10, 107, 29, 32, 35, 39, 407; I 4, 6, 7, 8; and II 32. The gnomic aorist occurs: I 36 twice; II 8, 14, 16, 21, 23, 25, 27, 29; III 4, 18 twice.

\textsuperscript{17} General present tenses are: I 11, 12, 17, 18, 19, 20, 34; II 4, 6, 10, 14, 17, 19, III 9, 13, 14, 28; IV 7, 17, 19, 25, 34.

\textsuperscript{18} I 34; II 8, 16, 21, 27 twice; III 25, 34; IV 18, 19, 31, 33, 37, 38.

\textsuperscript{19} I 36 twice, 27, 29, 30 (32).

\textsuperscript{20} Middle and passive deponent verbs are used somewhat freely in I and II and are always correct. The active voice largely predominates, as is to be
expected.\textsuperscript{21} The greatest variety of voice is in I and IV; the least in III. I also shows the greatest variety in mood.

Some of Isidorus’ remarkably precise uses of voice deserve attention. For instance, ἀναλήγομαι (IV 18) is properly middle, meaning “read.” Callimachus has an expression that is very similar (Epigr. 25). Isidorus’ voices, in fact, may betray his formal training. The middle voice in ἐρμηνεύομαι (IV 33) almost certainly is to be translated “express, put into words, articulate in familiar speech.” This is a classical use of the middle and is carefully distinguished from the active in ἡρμηνεύω (39): “translate into a foreign language, interpret for foreigners.” The latter is both classical and Koine. Another apparently precise use of voice occurs in εὑρέω (18) where the middle voice predicates the εὑρήτρια goddess. In IV 6 the same verb occurs in the active of the god-king, meaning “found, establish (the temple).” Therefore it would seem that Isidorus has deliberately chosen the epic-poetic middle voice to describe the major acts of his primeval creator. With this it is to be compared the epic use of the verb (cf. Od. XIX 403, where it means “find, conceive and bestow”).

Thus it seems obvious that Isidorus has a restricted but usually correct knowledge of epic-poetic and classical Greek. It indicates that he has had at least some formal schooling. Certain passages of poetry he may know by heart, passages such as have been found in Hellenistic school textbooks.\textsuperscript{22} Students were apparently required to memorize and study intensively selected poetic excerpts. But Isidorus’ vocabulary is not entirely epic-poetic. For instance, his idiomatic ἀναγραφόμενος (IV 38), ἱστοροῦντος (37), and ἐρμηνευό (33, 39) are found in what appears to be freer sentence structure, in fact almost prose structure. Hymn IV, lines 37-39 show an especially distinct style. III 26-33 may be similar.

And so, while many of his words, phrases, and sometimes whole lines can easily be identified as epic or epic-poetic, his language is, in fact, a patchwork of borrowed, well worn poetic phrases, a few commonplaces that may be original (see λαμπρόν καὶ ιρενάρόν III 10), and some very good ‘prose’ sentences. All are combined somewhat naively and with the awkwardness that could characterize an intelligent man who had learned, but did not easily speak, Greek. Sometimes he seems to write merely nouns and adjectives joined by very unclear connectives. Cf. III 5-6:

\[ καὶ ξύφηλις γλυκερὴν τε ἐξεχεῖ καὶ τέρψεις ἀριστη \]

\[ ὃλων εὐθυγραμματικτοσ καὶ σωφροσύνῃ τε ἁλυσων. \]

Since Isidorus belongs to the late second and early first centuries B.C., his Greek should bear evidence of the Koine. And there is such evidence. Participles are abnormally frequent in III; he uses fairly often the periphrastic construction cited above; his imperatives are probably the commonest forms of the commonest

\textsuperscript{21} The active voice occurs: I (22 times), II (28), III (32), IV (30).

\textsuperscript{22} See, for instance, O. Guéraud et P. Jouguet, \textit{Un livre d’écolier du IIIe siècle avant J.-C.}, Le Caire, Imprimerie de l’Institut français d’archéologie orientale, 1938
verbs known to Greek. His frequent and repetitious relative clauses are probably also influenced by the Koine; in fact his use of simple relative clauses for present general conditional-relative clauses is possibly Koine. At the same time, recognizable Koine forms occur: ἀφείσατο (IV 31) τείγων (I 36), and ἀναπεδίδομα (II 33). Yet his pervasive dependence on epic-poetic formulae makes his language seem more epic-poetic than Koine. Purely epic expressions occur, like ἐπι and ἔδρα (IV 21), and ὑκατερ (III 23). His uses of tense and voice are consistently classical.

The definite article appears to be somewhat sporadic at first sight. But it is noticeably well used with participles in Hymns I and IV. Here it produces the equivalent of relative clauses. This is a classical use, but it remained common in Hellenistic times. Isidorus also employs the definite article with adverbs and prepositional phrases, a classical use that continued in later Greek. Elsewhere he uses the article chiefly in titles and sometimes with possessive pronouns or their equivalent, for example ὁ σῶν νυκτὸς (II 13), and τὸ σῶν οἴνος (III 17) (and perhaps ἡ δύναμις σοῦ III 17). He also uses the definite article with the nouns πόλεως, ἐθνος, and χρόνος which is probably a formulaic use. Otherwise he omits the article, notably with general nouns (cf. I 5 ff.).

In short, his uses of the article are seen to be both epic-poetic and Hellenistic according to the best tradition. They also coincide with the use of the article in more formal prose, such as is found in Hellenistic letters. This good use of the article by Isidorus is to be contrasted with, for instance, its omission in the Andros hymn of the first century B.C. where it is almost entirely lacking. Isidorus’ uses could, perhaps, further indicate his formal training as a scribe.

His uses of τὸ are most difficult to tabulate. Generally this particle is probably epic-poetic. At first sight he appears to use it with the utmost freedom. It occurs most frequently in III and least in I and IV. Often it is merely the equivalent of καὶ (and ἄδε). Here his use resembles somewhat that of τὸ in the Homeric, and certainly the Orphic, hymns. Twice the correlatives τὸ ... τὸ occur, in what are demonstrably epic lines (I 27, III 16). And other correlative uses are clear: τὸ καὶ (I 5, II 11, III 8, 27) and τὸ ἔδρα (III 29). In all instances, of course, his use of τὸ may be metri gratia, especially when it appears in the fifth foot (as it does some 11 times). Sometimes Isidorus appears ingeniously to use it in the fifth foot both metri gratia and as a correlative.

There are, however, less clear uses of τὸ in the Hymns. Some of these may be an epic adverbial use somewhat like an emphatic enclitic, which had survived in classical Greek in two, sometimes indistinguishable, forms: (a) as a suffix on

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24. I 24, 31; IV 18, 31, 37.
27. Peek, Andros, p. 81.
29. For τὸ ... τὸ, see Kühner-Gerth, Grammatik 2.2, p. 520. For τὸ καὶ, τὸ ἔδρα see Mayser, Grammatik 2.3, p. 164.
31. I 27; II 24; III 16; IV 11, 39.
conjunctions and (b) in relative clauses. These uses are known to epic and classical Greek, but fall into disuse in the Koine except for the occasional retention with participles and infinitives. Isidorus may know the epic and classical enclitic use of τε in relative clauses, but one must admit that in each of his uses in relative clauses, τε also appears in the fifth foot of his hexameter line. But it also occurs with participles some three times where it is not in the fifth foot. His four uses of τε with infinitives, however, are in the fifth foot half the time.

It could be that the τε, which often appears unnecessary and awkward, may be intended simply as an enclitic, i.e. emphatic, appendage. This would explain intelligibly Isidorus’ use of the particle in II 12: καὶ . . . καὶ . . . τε; III 5: καὶ . . . τε . . . καὶ . . . τε . . . τε . . . τε τε; III 13: καὶ . . . τε καὶ . . . τε . . . τε; III 6, 35: καὶ . . . τε.

The particle τε is of epic origin, and significantly, several of Isidorus’ uses of it occur in epic quotations (I 27, III 11, 16 and probably II 12). In later Greek it is rare, prosaic, variable, and usually difficult to define. Isidorus’ frequent use of τε surprises anyone who expects him to employ the Koine. But understandably it is a great convenience in writing the long Greek hexameter line, especially when a word of one short syllable may be placed almost anywhere.

Isidorus’ linguistic and poetic limitations are easily recognized. His Hymns are important chiefly as documents of social history. As literary efforts they are pedestrian, but careful and intelligible especially in their employment of mood and voice, and the definite article. Generally, his language is formulaic and repetitious, but at the same time his sentiment is unusually clear. His expression is, moreover, simple, never pompous or superficial. His Greek will serve, he believes, to communicate his message to Greeks. He may, in fact, have been able to write creditable Greek prose; and, further, Isidorus, the devout author of the Hymns, may have been Isidorus γλυπτης. In Hymn IV he states he is writing an exposition for Greeks to be set up publicly. Obviously he seeks to merit the goddess’ favour by his compositions. They are a conscious exercise of his command of the Greek language ἐν ἀγαθῷ. As an aretologist at the temple, he is a professional hymn-writer. His Greek hymns obviously enjoyed the respect of the local Greek congregation of Isis-worshipers. Otherwise they would not have appeared prominently at the temple’s main gate.

32. Mayer, Grammatik 2, p. 155, Kühner-Gerth, Grammatik 2,2, p. 236, 518.2 (τε in relative clauses) and p. 241, sec. 519.1 (τε with participles and infinitives); Mayer, Grammatik, p. 157 (τε with participles and infinitives); Moulton and Howard, Grammar, pp. 420 ff (τε with participles). Isidorus’ use of τε in relative clauses occurs: II 3, 5, 15, 21; III 31; with a participle: II 27; III 14, 15; with infinitives: II 5, 15, 22; III 5.


34. IV 37-9.

35. Voghiano, P. R., pp. 52-3 = SEG VIII 538 = S 8129, undated: θεῷ μεγατίς ἐπεμψάθη, ὁδίπερ ἔρχεται, ἢσθαι τις γλύπτης ἐπιλείποι καὶ λαθεύομαι ἐν ἀγαθῷ.
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Plate I. Aerial photograph of the excavations at Medinet Madi, 1935-36.

Plate II. The temple forecourt and termination of the Processional Way at the South Portal.
Plate IV. The same as Plate II, left.
Plate Va. The dedication inscribed at the top of the left pillar.
Plate VI. Isidorus' Hymn I.
Plate VIII. Isidorus' Hymn III.
Plate X. The left pillar and its inscriptions.
Plate XI. Renenutet-Hermouthis, a dedicatory stele found at Medinet Madi during the 1936 excavation.
Plate XIV. Isermuthis, Anchoes (?), Sokonopis; a fresco found in situ in an alcove of the Second Court, 1936
Δημήτριος ἀρτεμιδόρου ὁ καὶ θρασίας Ἰλάγνης ἀπὸ Μαίανδροῦ Ἰσίδου εὐχήν.

Τάδε ἐγράφη ἐκ τῆς στύλης τῆς Ἐλευθερίας ἐπί τῆς ἦλθην πρὸς τῷ Ἡφαιστίων.

Εἰς τὸν ἔγο εἰμὶ καὶ τύμμανος πάσης χώρας. καὶ ἐπαιδεύθην ὑπὸ Ἑρμοῦ. καὶ ἐγὼ Ἰσίδων εἰμὶ ἀπὸ βασίλεια πάσης χώρας, καὶ παιδευθεὶς ὑπὸ Ἑρμοῦ. γράμματα εὐρον μετὰ Ἐρμοῦ τά τε ἱερὰ καὶ τὰ δημόσια, ἑνα μὴ τῶν αὐτῶν πάντα γράφεται.

Ἐγὼ νόμος ἀνθρώπων ἦμι καὶ ἐνομοθέτησα ὑπὸ ὅσδεις δύναται μεταβείναι. καὶ δου ἐγὼ ἐνομοθέτησα, ὅσδεις αὐτὰ δύναται λύσαι.

Ἐγὼ ἐμὶ Κρόνου θυγάτηρ προσβυτάτη. Ἐγὼ ἐμὶ γυνὴ ἐγὼ ἐμὶ ὁ τοῦ κατάκυρον Κρόνου θεοῦ θυγάτηρ προσβυτάτη. Ἐγὼ ἐμὶ γυνὴ καὶ δόλη ὁ Ὀσέριδος βασιλεύς. Ἐγὼ ἐμὶ Κρατῶν ἀνθρώπων καὶ δολη ὁ Ὀσέριδος βασιλεύς. Ἐγὼ ἐμὶ Κρατῶν ἀνθρώπων.

Ἐγὼ ἐμὶ μήτηρ Ὁρὸς βασιλεύς. Ἐγὼ ἐμὶ ἐν τῷ τοῦ Κῦνδος εὐφρον. Ἐγὼ ἐμὶ μήτηρ Ὁρὸς τοῦ βασιλέως. Ἐγὼ ἐμὶ ἐν τῷ ἄστρῳ τῷ ἄστρῳ ἑπτάλλουσα. Ἐγὼ ἐμὶ ἐν παρὰ γυναῖξ ἥελις καλομένη. Ἐγὼ ἐμὶ ἐκ τοῦ ἐπτάλλουσα. Ἐγὼ ἐμὶ ἐν παρὰ γυναῖξ ἥελις καλομένη.

Βούδαστος πόλις οὐκοδομήθην. Ἐγὼ ἔχωρισα γῆν ἀπὸ ῥάρανο. Ἐγὼ ἐκ νόμους πόλις οὐκοδομήθην. Ἐγὼ ἐκ ἀστρῶν ὅπως ἦσα, Ἐγὼ ἐκ καὶ σιλήνης πορείαν συνεταχάμην.

Plate XV. The M, or Memphis, text of Harder
15 ἔγω, θαλάσσας ἠργα εὐρόν. 16 ἔγω τὸ δίκαιον λαχυρὸν ἐποίησα. 17 ἔγω γυναῖκα καὶ ἄνδρα συνήγαγον. 18 ἔγω γυναῖξι δικαίωσα βρέκος ἐλς φῶς ἐξενεγκέν ἔτασσα. 19 ἔγω ὑπὸ τέκνων γονής φιλοσοφεῖται ἐνομοθετίσα. 20 ἔγω τοὺς δυτήχας γονεῖς διακειμένους, τειμορίαν ἐπέθανον. 21 ἔγω μετὰ τοῦ ἀθλητοῦ ἔπεδας τοῦ ἀθραπτοφαγίας ἔπαυσα. 22 ἔγω μυϊκός ἀνθρώ- πος ἐπέθανε. 23 ἔγω ἀγάλματα θεῶν τειμάν ἐπίδεικνυμι. 24 ἔγω τημένη θεῶν ἰδρυσάμην. 25 ἔγω τουράνιον ἀρχάς κατέλυσα. 26 ἔγω φόνους ἔπαυσα. 27 ἔγω στέργονθαι γυναῖκας ὑπὸ ἄνδρων ἤναγκασα. 28 ἔγω τὸ δίκαιον λαχυρότερον ἁρπασαν καὶ ἄργυρος ἐποίησα. 29 ἔγω τὸ ἀληθὲς καλὸν ἐνομοθετήσα νομι- μεθαί. 30 ἔγω συγγράφας γαμικᾶς εὗρον. 31 ἔγω διαλέκτους Ἑλληνικοὶ καὶ ἱερεῖαν. 32 ἔγω διαλέκτους ἱερεῖαν. 33 ἔγω τὸ καλὸν καὶ ἀλχρόν διαγενώσκεθα ὑπὸ τῆς φύσεως ἐποίησα. 34 ἔγω ἢρκον φοβερώτερον οὐδὲν ἐποίησα. 35 ἔγω τὸν ἄθλος ἐπιβουλεύομεν (ἄλλος) ἄλλο υποχειροῦν τῷ ἐπιβουλευμένῳ παρέ- δισκα. 36 ἔγω τοὺς ἄθλος πρόστησαν τειμορίαν ἐπιτίθημι. 37 ἔγω ικάτας ἱλαῖν ἐνομοθετίσα. 38 ἔγω τοὺς δικαίους διμονόμους τειμάω. 39 ἔγω πτασιμάτων καὶ ἄνεμου καὶ ἐποίησας εἴμι κυρία. 40 ἔγω τοὺς δικαίους διμονόμους τειμάω. 41 ἔγω εἴμι πολύμοι κυρία. 42 ἔγω κεραυνοῦ κυρία εἴμι. 43 ἔγω πραύλωσαν καὶ κυμαίνον θάλασσαι. 44 ἔγω ἐν τοῖς ἡλίου ἀναβας εἴμι. 45 ἔγω παρεθρέψα τῷ τοῦ ἡλίου πορεία. 46 δὴ ἦμι δόξα, τοῦτο καὶ τελείται. 47 ἦμι πάντ' ἐπείκει. 48 ἔγω τοὺς ἐν διοκτισμῷ λύσα. 49 ἔγω ἡμετεράς εἴμι κυρία. 50 ἔγω τὰ πλοῖα ἔπλοσα τοῖς ἔβας, ἐβας ἦμι δόξα. 51 ἔγω περιβόλους πόλεων ἐπικυρία. 52 δὴ ἦμι ἐλ ἐθεομοφόρος καλομένθ. 53 ἔγω νῦν ήσσος ἐν β[υ]ήν ἐλς φῶς ἤναγκασαν. 54 ἔγω ἡμβρον έλμει κυρία. 55 ἔγω τὸ ἴμαρμενον νικό. 56 ἦμι τὸ εἰμαρμένον ἄκουε. 57 Χάρις ἐλήπτε με. 58 χάρις χάρι ἐλήπτε ἐλήπτε με.
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