

Orphic hymns. Cf. especially XXXII 15: κλυθί μου εὐχομένου, δὸς δ' εἰρήνην πολυόλβον.

30. *ικέτηι*: cf. *M.* 36. 'Suppliants' in Greek hymns are simply those who pray to the deity.

*ὄλβον*: see III 6. Cf. *h. Hom.* XV 9 and XX 8: δίδου δ' ἀρετὴν τε καὶ ὄλβον.

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 *σύνναοι* 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. *εὐθυμίαν* 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 linguaeque totidem vel indefessi sermonis aeterna series.*

*εὐθυμία*: gladness, happiness, as in *Pi. I.* 1.63; and *Pi. Pae.* 1.2. Cf. *Ep. Jac.* 5.13; and *P. Amh.* 133.4. *εὐθυμία*, 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)

Ἵψίστων μεδέουσα θεῶν, Ἑρμοῦθι ἀνασσα,  
 Ἴσι ἀγνή, ἀγία, μεγάλη, μεγαλώνυμε Διοῖ,  
 σεμνοτάτη δώτειρ' ἀγαθῶν μερόπεσσι ἅπασι  
 εὐσεβέσω μεγάλας χάριτας καὶ πλοῦτον ἔδωκας,  
 5 καὶ (ξ)ωῶν γλυκερὴν τε ἔχεω καὶ τέρψω ἀρίστην  
 Ὀλβον, εὐτυχίην καὶ σωφροσύνην τε ἄλυπον.  
 ὅσσοι δὲ ζῶουσι μακάρτατοι, ἄνδρες ἄριστοι,  
 σκαπτροφόροι βασιεῖς τε καὶ ὅσσοι κοίρανοί εἰσι,  
 οὔτοι σοι ἐπέχοντες ἀνάσσουσ' ἄχρι τε γήρω[ς],  
 10 λαμπρὸν καὶ λιπαρὸν καταλείποντες πολὺν ὄλβον  
 υἱάσι θ' υἰωνοῖσι καὶ ἀνδράσι τοῖσι μεταῦ[τις].  
 ὄν δὲ κε φίλτατον ἔσ(χ)ε ἀνάκτων ἢ βασιλεῖα  
 οὔτος καὶ Ἀσίας τε καὶ Εὐρώπης τε ἀνάσσει,  
 εἰρήνη(ν) τε ἄγων, καρποὶ βριθουσω ἐπ' αὐτῷ  
 15 παντοίων ἀγαθῶν, καρπὸν τε φέροντες ἄρ[ισ]τ[ον].  
 ὅππου δὴ πόλεμοί τε ἀνδροκτασίαι τε μάλιστ[α]  
 μυριάδων ὄχλων τε τὸ σὸν σθένος, ἡ δύνα[μις] σου,  
 πλῆθος ἀπημαύρωσ', ὀλίγοισι δὲ θάρσος ἔ[δωκε].

κλύθι ἐμοῦ, Ἀγαθή τε τύχη, ἱκέτου σου, ἀνασσ[α,  
 20 ἥ που ἐς Λιβύην ἢ ἐς Νότον ἀμφιβέβηκα[ς,  
 ἥ βορέου πέρατα ναίεις ἠδυπνόου αἰεί,  
 ἥ Εὐρου πρυιάς, ὅθι ἀντολαὶ ἡελίω,  
 ἥ καὶ Ὀλυμπον ἱκανες ὅπου (οὐ)ρανίων[ες ἐν]ε[ισώ  
 ἥ καὶ ἐν οὐρανῶι ὑψι μετ' ἀθανάτοισι δικάζεις,  
 25 ἥ καὶ ἡελίου ὠκυδρόμου ἄρματα βᾶσα,  
 κόσμον ἅπαν διάγουσα, κατοπτεύουσα ἅπαντα  
 ἔργ' ἀνδρῶν ἀσεβῶν τε καὶ εὐσεβέων καθορῶσα,  
 εἰ δὲ καὶ ὧδε πάρει, ἰδίαν ἀρετὴν ἐφορῶσα,  
 τερπομένη θύμασιν, λουβαῖσι τε ἠδὲ θηλαῖ[ς,  
 30 ἀνδρῶν ναιότων Σούχου νομόν Ἀρσωοειτῶν  
 παμφύλων ἐθνῶν, ὅσοι κατ' ἔτος τε πάρεισι  
 εἰκάδι μηνὶ Παχῶν καὶ Θωῶθ δεκάτην σοι ἄγον[τ]ε[ς  
 καὶ Ἀγχόη, Σοκονῶπι, θεοῖς {α} ἀγίοισιν, ἑορτή.  
 πυθομένη εὐχῶν, μελανηφόρε Ἴσι ἐλήμων,  
 35 καὶ ὑμεῖς, μεγάλοι τε θεοὶ σύνναοι ἄμ' αὐτῆι,  
 πέμψατ' ἐμοὶ Παιᾶν', ἀχέ[ω]ν ἰήτορα πάντων[ν].  
 Ἴσιδωρος  
 ἔγραψε.

5. ζώην Vogliano; σωήν (Hondius) SEG VIII 7. lap. ἀ(ὐ)νδρες 9. lap. ANΣΣ, ἀν(α)σσοῦσ' Vogliano; in fin. γήρω[ς] ibid. 10. ἔ[λ]βον ibid. 11. μεταῦ[τις] ibid. 12. lap. ΕΣΚΕ, ἔσ(χ)ε ibid.; in fin. βασιλε[α] ibid. 13. lap. ANΣΣΕ, ἀν(α)σσει ibid. 15. ἀρ[ου]ρ[η]ς ibid.; ἀρ[ισ]τ[ον] (Hondius) SEG VIII 16. μάλιστ[α] Vogliano 17. δύνα[μις] σου ibid. 18. ἔ[δ]ωκας ibid.; ἔ[δ]ωκε (Hondius) SEG VIII 19. ἀνασσ[α] Vogliano 20. ἀμφιβέβηκα[ς] ibid. 23. {ε}πουρανίων [...] ε [...] ibid.; ὅπου (οὐ)ρανίων[ες ἐν]ε[ισώ] Segre; ὅ(ν) οὐρανίων[ες] ἔ[χ]ουσω Vandoni 26. ἅπλητα Vogliano, ἅπαντα M. Vandoni 29. θηλαῖ[ς] Vogliano 32. ἄγο[υ]σω ibid.; ἄγον[τ]ε[ς] Segre; ἄγουσ(ν) M. Vandoni 36. ἀχέ[ω]ν Vogliano; πάντων[ν] ibid.

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,  
 5 a life that is pleasant, and most seren 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,  
 10 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,
- 20 *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,*
- 25 *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 Arsinoïtes,  
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,*
- 35 *and You Great Gods who share the temple with Her,  
send Paeon 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 Hermouthis, 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. ὑψίστων μεδέουσα θεῶν: with ὑψίστων 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 μεγίστου, and Osiris (App., *Met.* XI 30): deus deum magnorum potior et maiorum summus et summorum maximus et maximorum regnator. In A. 45, μεδέουσα also refers to Isis. Cf. *Anthol. Palat.* VI 231: Αἰγύπτου μεδέουσα μελαμβώλου λωόπεπλε, and PGM 4.2774: Ἴω πασικράτεια καὶ Ἴω πασιμεδέουσα Ἴω παντρεφέουσα (Io = Isis).

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

2. ἀγνή: cf. IV 1 ἀγνὸν . . . ἱερόν.

ἁγία: cf. Paus. X 32.13: ἱερόν Ἴσιδος ἀγιώτατον; also IG XII 694.14, and

CHAPTER TWO  
THE HYMNS: TEXTS, TRANSLATIONS AND COMMENTARIES

*Hymn I (Plate VI)*

- πλουτοδοτί βασιλεια θεῶν, Ἑρμοῦθι ἄνασσα,  
παντοκράτειρα, τύχη Ἀγαθή, μεγαλώνυμε Ἴσι,  
Δηοῖ ὑψίστη, ζωῆς εὐρέτρια πάσης,  
παντοίων ἔργων ἐμέλησέ σοι, ὄφρ' ἀναδοίης  
5 ἀνθρώποισι βίον τε καὶ εὐνομίην τε ἅπασι,  
καὶ θεσμούς κατέδειξας, ἕν' εὐδικίη τις ὑπάρχη,  
καὶ τέχνας ἀνέδωκας, ἕν' εὐσχήμων βίος εἴη,  
καὶ πάντων τε φύσιν εὐανθέα εὖρεο καρπῶν.  
Σοῦ τε χάριω συνέστηχ' ὁ πόλος καὶ γαῖα ἅπασα  
10 καὶ πνοιαί ἀνέμων καὶ ἥλιος ὁ γλυκυφεγγής.  
Σῆι δυνάμει Νείλου ποταμοὶ πληροῦνται ἅπαντες  
ὦρη ὀπωρινῆι, καὶ λαβρότατον χεῖθ' ὕδωρ  
γαῖαν πᾶσαν ἔπι, ἕν' ἀνέγλιπος καρπὸς ὑπάρχη.  
ὅσοι δὲ ζῶουσι βροτοὶ ἐπ' ἀπίερονι γαίηι.  
15 Θρᾶκες καὶ Ἑλληνες, καὶ ὅσοι βάρβαροί εἰσι,  
οὐνομά σου τὸ καλόν, πολυτίμητον παρὰ πᾶσι,  
φωναῖσι φράξουσ' ἰδίαις, ἰδία ἐνὶ πάτρηι.  
Ἄστάρτην Ἄρτεμίν σε Σύροι κλήξουσι Ναναίαν  
καὶ Λυκίων ἔθνη {η} Λητοῦν καλέουσι ἄνασσαν  
20 Μητέρα δὴ κλήξουσι θεῶν καὶ Θρήϊκες ἄνδρες,  
Ἑλληνες δ' Ἥρην μεγαλόθρονον ἠδ' Ἀφροδίτην  
καὶ Ἑστίαν ἀγαθὴν, καὶ Ῥεῖαν, καὶ Δήμητρα,  
Αἰγύπτιοι δὲ Θιοῦν, ὅτι μούνη εἶ σὺ ἅπασα  
αἰ ὑπὸ τῶν ἔθνῶν ὀνομαζόμεναι θεαὶ ἄλλαι.  
25 Δεσπότι, οὐ λήξω μεγάλην δυνάμιν σου αἰείδων,  
σώτειρ' ἀθανάτη, πολυώνυμε, Ἴσι μεγίστη,  
ἐκ πολέμου ῥυμένη τε πόλεις πάντας τε πολίτας,  
αὐτοὺς καὶ ἀλόχους καὶ κτήματα καὶ φίλα τέκνα.  
ὅσοι δ' ἐμ μοίραις θανάτου συνέχονται ἐν εἰρκτῆι,  
30 καὶ ὅσοι ἀγρυπνίαις μεγάλαις ὀχλοῦντ' ὀδονηραῖς,  
καὶ οἱ ἐν ἀλλοτρίηι χώρῃι πλανώμενοι ἄνδρες  
καὶ ὅσοι ἐμ πελάγει μεγάλω χειμῶνι πλέουσι

ἀνδρῶν ὀλλυμένων νηῶν κατὰ ἀγνυμενάων,  
 σώζονθ' οὔτοι ἅπαντες, ἐπευξάμενοί σε παρέϊναι.  
 35 Κλυθι ἐμῶν εὐχῶν, μεγαλοσθενὲς οὐνομ' ἔχουσα  
 εὐειλατος ἐμοί τε γείνου, λύπης μ' ἀνάπασσον ἀπάσης.  
 Ἴσιδωρος  
 ἔγραψε.

18. *Navaíav* Vogliano, P. R.: κλήξουσα ἄνασσαν, SEG VIII 548 (Hondius): κλήξουσα Ἄναϊαν  
 19. ἄνασ[σαν] Vogliano 21. Ἀφροδίτην *ibid.* 23. ἄπασα[ι] *ibid.* 35. ἔχουσα *ibid.*

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  
 5 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;  
 10 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,  
 15 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,  
 20 The Thracians also name You as Mother of the gods,  
 And the Greeks (call You) Hera of the Great Throne, Aphrodite,  
 Hestia the goodly, Rheia and Demeter.  
 But the Egyptians call You 'Thiouis' (because they know) that You, being  
 One, are all  
 Other goddesses invoked by the races of men.  
 25 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,  
 30 As many as are in pain through long, anguished, 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).

1. *πλουτοδοτι*: a hapax legomenon. Cf. *πλουτοδοτης* II 10 and note. *πλουτοδοτειρα* refers to Eleusinian Demeter/Ge in D. S. I 12.4 = h. Orph. XI 3. In Hes. *Erga*, 126, the men of the Golden Age become *δαίμονες πλουτοδοται*. Isidorus' epithet appears to have Eleusinian association. Wealth-giving is also a traditional function of Egyptian royalty.

*βασιλεια θεων*: cf. *η βασιλεια*, III 12. In the Orphic hymns *βασιλεια* and *παμβασιλεια* are common epithets. *βασιλεια* also is a title of Isis: A. I; D. S. I 27.4 (*βασιλισσα*); H. Oxy. 36-37; 218; and App. *Met.* XI 4 (regina Isis).

*Ερμουθι*: see Plates XI-XIV. Hermouthis or Thermuthis (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.<sup>1</sup>

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).<sup>2</sup>

1. The name, phonetically *ernen-wôte*, or *ermûte*, 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. *rnnt*: riches, fortune; 3. *rnn*: he who is brought up, a young man; 4. she who is brought up, a young woman; 5. *rnn*: cow, young bull-calf. The verb-stem *rnn* is written in the Greco-Roman period as *rr* and *rnnt/rnnwtt* (= the goddess Thermuthis) as *rrt*. It is interesting, in relation to Hymn I, to note that a similar word *rrt* (= pig?) is

determined with the sign of a star and associated with Fate (*Š3w*).

2. Hermann, *Das Kind und seine Hüterin*, 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.*).

Imouthes-Apollo-Asclepios. See C. Kerényi, *Asklepios, Archetypal Image of the Physician's Existence*, trans. R. Manheim, p. 82.

For Apollo (= Paian?) as a god at Medinet Madi, see SEG VIII 545.

I have Professor E. G. Turner of University College, the University of London, to thank for the above reference to 'Pajawon.'

*Hymn IV (Plate IX)*

- τίς τόδε ἀγνὸν ἔδεμ' ἱερὸν Ἑρμοῦθι μεγίστη;  
 ποῖς θεὸς ἐμνήσθη πανιεροῦ μακάρων;  
 Ὡς αἰπὸν καὶ ἄδυτον ἐσημῶσατ' Ὀλυμπον  
 Διοῖ ὑψίστη Ἴσιδι θεσμοφόρῳ,  
 5 καὶ Ἀγχόηι υἱῷ καὶ δαίμονι ἀγαθῷ Σοκονῶπ[ι,  
 ἀθανάτοις ὄρμον εὖρε δικαιοτάτον.  
 Αἰγύπτου τῶά φασι γενέσθαι θεῖον ἄνακτα,  
 ὃς πάσης χώρας κύριος ἐξεφάνη,  
 πλούσιον, εὐσεβέα, δυνάμει πάσῃ τε μεγίστη[ι  
 10 ὃς κλέος καὶ ἀρετὴν ἔσχεν ἰσουράνιον.  
 τούτῳ γὰρ καὶ γαῖα ὑπήκοος ἦν τε θάλασσα  
 καὶ ποταμῶν πάντων νάματα καλλιρρόων,  
 καὶ πνοιαί ἀνέμων καὶ ἥλιος, ὃς γλυκὺ φέγγος  
 ἀντέλλων φαίνει πᾶσιν ἀριπρεπέως.  
 15 καὶ πτηνῶν τε γένη ὁμοθυμαδὸν ἔκλυεν αὐτοῦ  
 καὶ τὰς ἐπιστέλλων πάντα ἐπήκοα ἦν.  
 Δῆλον τοῦτ' ἐστὶν ὅτι ὄρνεα ἔκλυεν αὐτοῦ  
 ὡς οἱ τῶν ἱερῶν γράμμ' ἀναλεξάμενοι  
 φάσκουσιν ποτε τοῦτον ἐπιστείλαντα κορώνην,  
 20 σὺν τε ἐπιστολίῳ ἦλθε φέρουσα φάσιν·  
 οὐ γὰρ ἔην βροτὸς ἀνὴρ, οὐδ' ἐκ βροτοῦ ἦεν ἄνακ[τος,  
 ἀλλὰ θεοῦ μεγάλου ἔκγονος ἀενάου,  
 Σούχου παγκράτορος μεγάλου μεγάλου τε μεγίστου  
 δαίμονος τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ υἱὸς ἀναξ ἐφάνη.  
 25 Μητροπάτωρ τούτου δ' ἐστὶν ζωῆς ὁ μερ[ιστής,  
 Ἄμμων, ὃς καὶ Ζεὺς Ἑλλάδος ἠδ' Ἀσίας.  
 τοῦνεκα καὶ τῶι πάντα ἐπήκοα, ὅσσ' ἐπὶ γαίῃ  
 ἔρπετὰ καὶ πτηνῶν οὐρανίων τε γένη.  
 οὐνομα δ' ἦν παταπὸν τούτῳ; καὶ τίς τόδ' ἔθηκε  
 30 κοίρανος ἢ βασιλεὺς ἢ τις ἀθανάτων;  
 ὁ θρέψας Σεσοῶσις, ὃς οὐρανοῦ ἔσπερ' ἀφείκται,  
 οὐνομ' ἔθηκε καλὸν ἡλίου εὐφεγγέος.  
 Ἑρμηνευσάμενοι δ' Αἰγύπτιοι οὐνομα τούτου

Πορραμάνρην κλήζουσι, τὸν μέγαν, ἀθάνατον.  
 35 θαῦμα δὲ καὶ παράδοξον ἐγὼν ἐσάκο[υ]σα παρ' ἄλλων,  
 ὡς ἔπλει ἐν ὄρει ἄξοσι καὶ ἰστίωι.  
 Ἄσφαλέως δὲ μαθῶν τε παρ' ἀνδρῶν τῶν ἱστορούντων  
 ταῦτα καὶ αὐτὸς ἐγὼ πάντ' ἀναγραψάμενος  
 ἠρμήνηυσ' Ἑλλησι θεοῦ δύναμίν τε ἀνακτος,  
 40 ὡς βρο[[το]]τὸς οὐδ' ἕτερος ἔσχεν ἴσῃν δύναμιν.  
 Ἰσίδωρος  
 ἔγραψε.

5. Σοκονῶπι Vogliano 9. μεγίστη[ι] Vogliano 12. καλλιρ {ρ} ὄων Vogliano καλλιρρόων V. V.  
 21. ἀνακ[το]ς Vogliano; ἀνακ[τος] V. V. 25. μερ[ιστής] Vogliano 35. ἐσάκ[ου]σα Vogliano; ἐσάκο[υ]σα  
 Hondius

*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 Olympos.  
 For Deo Highest, Isis Thesmophorus,  
 5 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;  
 10 he had fame, yes, and virtue that rivalled 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.  
 15 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  
 20 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.  
 25 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.*



- 30 *What was the name of this one? What ruler,  
what king, or who of the Immortals, determined it?  
(Why) the one who nurtured him, Sesoösis, 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)  
'Porramanres, the Great, Deathless.'*
- 35 *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,  
I myself have set them all up on inscribed pillars  
and translated (into Greek) for Greeks the power of a Prince who was a god,*
- 40 *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, Porramanres, who founded the temple-community (7-36).

1. ἔδειμ': an epic-poetic verb for constructing large projects.

ἱερόν: 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 ἱερόν here means the temple-community rather than merely the material structure.

Ἐρμούθι: 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 ποῖος. A parallel seems to be: Πτολεμαῖς for Πτολεμαῖος. See *P. Par. Wiss.* 23. 19. 29 (165 B.C.) and *P. Teb.* 24.81 (117 B.C.). Wilhelm thought of reading τῖς (ις) instead of ποῖς; from this he conjectured τῖς (ις) 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 pi 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 Ξ, which could be an incomplete five-bar sigma. The god is the Egyptian king, Porramanres, of 34. On the divinity of the Egyptian King, see Frankfort, *Kingship*, pp. 26-35.

ἐμνήσθη: cf. μνησθέντες 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 ἄδυτον ἐσημειώσατ' ὡς αἰπὸν

καὶ κυμαίνω θάλασσαν; 49: ἐγὼ ναυτιλίας εἰμι κυρία; 50: ἐγὼ τὰ πλωτὰ ἄπλωτα ποιῶ ὅταν ἐμοὶ δόξη; A. 34-5: ἄδε θαλάσσης πρῶτον ἐν ἀνθρώποισι περάσιμον ἤνεσα μόχθον; and A. 145-157; H. Oxy. 61: πελάγους κυρείαν; 99: εὐπλέαν; 121-3: ἐπίτροπον καὶ ὀδηγὸν θαλασσίων καὶ ποταμίων στομάτων κυρίαν; Ank. 9: πόντου διὰν ἄνασσαν πανδε[ρ]κῆ. Perhaps Isis, goddess of the sea, is entirely Alexandrian.

33. This line is almost identical with *Od.* X 123: ἀνδρῶν τ' ὀλλυμένων νηῶν θ' ἅμα ἀγνυμένων. Cf. *Il.* XVI 769. Isidorus omits the epic τε and substitutes κατὰ (= θ' ἅμα). His κατὰ is best understood as an attempt at epic tmesis.

34. σώζονθ': cf. σώτειρα 26 above and note. cf. *H. Oxy.* 76: Ἴσω σώζουσαν.

ἐπευξάμενοι: cf. II 8, 16, III 34. ἐπεύχομαι occurs in *h. Hom.* III (to Apollo) 370: ὡς φάτ' ἐπευχόμενος and *h. Hom.* V 48: καὶ ποτ' ἐπευξαμένη εἶπη μετὰ πᾶσι θεοῖσιν. It is an epic-poetic formula for prayer.

παρεῖναι: cf. III 28. It means come (to help), appear.

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 εὐσέβεια (= loyalty) is stressed as a prerequisite in II 6, III 4, 27, but not in I. The saving acts of the goddess are ἀρεταί/ἔργα. 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*<sup>2</sup>, 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. μεγαλοσθενές οὖνομ': see οὖνομα 16 above and note. The adjective is used of Horus, *K. K.* 64. Cf. πολυώνυμε, 26.

36. εὐεϊλατος: the adjective is used of Demeter, *GDI* 3536 (Cnidus): καὶ μὴ γένοιτο εὐεϊλάτ[ου] τύχην Δαμάτρο[ς]. Cf. *UPZ* 109.6, first century B.C.: εὐεϊλάτου τετεύχα[σι τοῦ] βα[σιλέως]. For the thought, cf. *Hes. Op.* 340; *A. Pr.* 241-3; *Call.* VI 138 (to Demeter); and *A. Supp.* 616 (to Zeus ἱκέσιος).

#### Hymn II (Plate VII)

χαῖρε, Τύχη Ἀγαθή, μεγαλώνυμε Ἴσι μεγίστη,  
Ἑρμούθι· ἐπὶ σοὶ πᾶσα γέγηθε πόλις,  
ζωῆς καὶ καρπῶν εὐρέτρικα, οἷσί τε πάντες  
τέρπονται τε βροτοὶ σῶν χαρίτων ἔνεκα.  
5 ὅσοι σοὶ εὐχονται ἐπ' ἐμπορίην τε παρεῖναι,

- πλουτοῦσ' εὐσεβέες εἰς τὸν ἅπαντα χρόνον·  
 καὶ ὅσοι ἐν νούσοις θανατώδεσι μοῖρῃ ἔχοντ[αι  
 σοὶ εὐξάμενοι ταχέως σῆς ζωῆς ἔτυχον.  
 Ὡς ἐτύμως ὁ ἀγαθὸς δαίμων, Σοκονῶπις κραταῖός  
 10 σύνναος ναίει πλουτοδότης ἀγαθός.  
 κτίστης καὶ γαίης τε καὶ οὐρανοῦ ἄστερόεντος  
 καὶ ποταμῶν πάντων κώκυτάτων τε ῥοῶν,  
 καὶ Ἀγχόης ὁ σὸς υἱός, ὃς οὐρανοῦ αἰθέρα ναίει[ι  
 ἥλιος ἀντέλλων ἐσθ', ὃς ἔδειξε τὸ φῶς.  
 15 ὅσοι δὴ ἐθέλουσι γονὴν παίδων τε ποιῆσαι,  
 εὐξάμενοι ὑμῶν εὐτεκνίης ἔτυχον.  
 Νεῖλον χρυσορρόαν πείθουσ' ἀνάγεις κατὰ [κ]αι[ρό]ν  
 Αἰγύπτου ἐπὶ γῆν ἀνδράσω εὐτερπίην.  
 Εὐανθεὶ τότε καρπὸς ἅπας καὶ πᾶσι μερίζ[εις,  
 20 οἷσι θέλεις, ζωὴν παντοδαπῶν ἀγαθῶν.  
 Σῶν δώρων μνησθέντες, ὅσοις πλουτόν τ' ἀνέδωκας  
 καὶ χάριτας μεγάλας σὰς τε ἔχεω δι' ὄλου,  
 τούτων σοὶ μοῖραν δεκάτην ἀπένευμαν (ἅ)παντες,  
 χαίροντες κατ' ἔτος, σῆι τε πανηγυρίῃ  
 25 εἶτα ἐδωρήσω περιτελλομένου ἐνιαυτοῦ  
 αὐτοῖς μηνὶ Παχῶν πᾶσιν ἐς εὐφροσύνην.  
 τερφθέντες δ' εἰς οἶκόν τε πανηγυρίσαντες ἔβησαν  
 εὐφῆμως πλήρεις τῆς παρὰ σοῦ τε τρυφῆς.  
 Σ]ῶν δώρων κάμοι μετάδος, Ἑρμοῦθι ἄνασσα,  
 30 σῶι ἱκέτηι ὄλβον καὶ ἅμα εὐτεκνίην.  
 Ἰοίδωρος  
 ἔγραψε.  
 Εὐχῶν ἠδ' ὑμνῶν τε θεοὶ κλύοντες ἐμεῖο,  
 ἀνταπέδωκαν ἐμοὶ εὐθυμίαν χάριτα.

3. εὐρέτρια) Vogliano, P. R.; εὐρέτρια Vandoni. 7. ἔχοντ[αι Vogliano 8. σῆς Vogliano; ταχέως {σ} ἦς  
 Wilhelm 13. ναίει Vogliano 17. χρυσορ {ρ} ὄαν Vogliano; χρυσορρόαν M. Vandoni. In fin. [γαῖαν  
 Vogliano; [ῶρας Hondius SEG VIII; [κ]αι[ρό]ν M. Vandoni 18. ἐπὶ τῆν Vogliano; ἐπὶ γῆν Wilhelm; ἐπὶ γῆν  
 Hondius SEG VIII 19. ὃ τε Vogliano; τότε Segre, ex imag. In fin. μερίζ[ει Segre; μερίζ[εις Hondius SEG  
 VIII 29. τ]ῶν Vogliano; σ]ῶν Wilhelm.

- Hail, Agathetyche, greatly renowned Isis, mightiest  
 Hermouthis, 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,*

if they (but) pray to you, quickly attain your (renewal of) Life.  
 How truly the Agathosdaimon, mighty Sokonopis,  
 10 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.  
 15 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  
 20 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.  
 25 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,  
 30 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 synnaoi gods, Sokonopis her partner, and her son, Anchoes, she can grant a child to those who pray to her for offspring.

2. Ἑρμοῦθι: cf. I 1 and notes above.

πᾶσα πόλις: cf. D. S. I 27.4: ἐγὼ Ἰσίς εἰμι ἡ βασίλισσα πάσης χώρας; M. 3a: Εἷς ἐγὼ εἰμι ἡ τύραννος πάσης χώρας; Chalkis (to Karpokrates): πᾶσαν ἐκάθηρα γῆν; H. Oxy. 219: πᾶσαν χώραν; 244: πάση χώρα; 125-6: ἐπὶ πᾶσαν χώραν and App. Met. XI.5: Totus . . . orbis. Isis is a universal god.

γέγηθε: for joy in the Isis-hymns see also εὐφροσύνη 28. Cf. H. Oxy. 31-2: ἐν