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## New Light on the Universality of Isis (pVienna D. 6297+6329+10101)\*

During the Hellenistic period in Egypt, an occasionally conflict-laden atmosphere, highly complex interactions evolved between the indigenous Egyptian population and the Greek-Macedonian immigrants. This evolution continued when new problems arose during the Roman period. It is one of the most exciting tasks of Egyptologists, Greek papyrologists and ancient historians to elucidate the various aspects of life in such an environment between 300 BCE and 500 CE and to come closer to a balanced look at the ancient reality. A vast field of interdisciplinary research has developed for Egyptologists with a specialization in Demotic; they are particularly qualified because they study chiefly those texts that are presumed, in many cases, to have not been authored too long before the act of writing. Yet, I am well aware that there are also much older texts that have been transcribed into the later Egyptian Demotic script, or have even been translated from earlier stages of the Egyptian language into Demotic. The Demotic sources provide us with a wealth of texts, apparently newly composed at the time, that shed light on Graeco-Egyptian interrelations and on the ways in which one culture influenced the other. This paper shall focus on one of those sources, which will have some significance in regards to questions of tradition. The source is the as-yet-unpublished hymn to an Egyptian goddess, which is preserved on a papyrus in the Austrian National Library under the inventory number D. 6297+6329+10101. I will usually refer to this as the 'Vienna Papyrus' in order to not confuse the reader with such complicated inventory numbers.

On palaeographic grounds, it can be said that the scribe who wrote this text likely dwelt in the Fayyum, most probably in Dime, during the first half of the first century CE. The fragments that have survived can be arranged into 13 columns. This arrangement has been inherited from Eva A. E. Reymond, who in the late 1970s to early 1980s started working on the papyrus, but died before having finished an edition. She was only able to publish a short note on the text in an overview of the Viennese Demotic literary papyri.<sup>1</sup> I assume that I will be able to join some fragments as my work on the manuscript progresses. Therefore, the present alignment is anything but certain and will be subject to a thorough revision. In general, it can be safely stated that pVienna D. 6297+6329+10101 is the relic of an originally quite

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\* Thanks are due to Dr. Christina Riggs (University of East Anglia, Norwich, UK) for correcting my English.

<sup>1</sup> REYMOND, *Demotic Literary Works*, 42–60.

extensive scroll containing a lengthy praise to a goddess. Unfortunately, her name is not preserved on any of the fragments.

### Contents

The major part of the still extant text identifies this goddess with various other Egyptian goddesses and enumerates her dominion over a series of Egyptian towns. Such a parallelization of one goddess with others is so far only attested for Isis and hence typical for her. Thus, in all probability the anonymous author presents us Isis as a universal Egyptian deity. Reymond's proposed identification as a panegyric to Cleopatra Philopator, the famous Cleopatra VII, is rather unlikely, as I have not found evidence that would indicate such an interpretation. Possibly, the numerous references to the praised person as the mistress of the royal diadem and the manifestation of the uraeus misled Reymond. However, Isis took over former titles of royal women during the Ptolemaic period and could be seen as the divine protectress of the regalia, much as Ptolemaic queens were perceived and presented as incarnations of Isis.<sup>2</sup>

The first fragments appear to contain a mythological explanation for the goddess' significance. The section is dominated by future III or circumstantial clauses with a 3<sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular pronoun as subject. Due to its poor state of preservation my understanding of this part is rather vague. The person to whom "she" refers is connected somehow to Pa-Shai, i.e. the Agathodaimon, to the sun god Re and also to pharaoh. It could describe the relationship of the goddess as uraeus of various gods as well as of the pharaoh. A rather violent tone in the wording encourages the reader to think of her as active against the gods' and the king's enemies. A bit puzzling are the occurrences of the first person singular, because it is unclear who the speaker might be.

With the next pieces we are on a firmer ground, as a female person is addressed and equated with various other goddesses. These sentences follow the pattern: "You are X". The section starts with a series of 19 still extant identifications stating her dominion by saying, "You are the mistress of ...". Unfortunately, the objects of her governance are mostly lost. Following this, the goddess is equated with other Egyptian goddesses, as mentioned above. The text reads for example: "You are the great one at the brow who is in Khemmis". The line continues with another identification that, for the most part, has been destroyed. Another example reads: "You are the great Astarte at the brow". Again, the rest of the line is difficult to understand due to its poor preservation. The next line continues the references to the serpents of the crown: "You are the living uraeus who is in [...]". The identifications are connected to a series of Egyptian towns. It is likely, but not certain, that the equations of the entire section were continued by an ancient formula found in the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BCE Pyramid Texts, the so-called name formula. Such a formula is found on some

<sup>2</sup> OTTO, *Gott und Mensch*, 22 f.; ŽABKAR, *Hymns*, 42–45.133. See also: STADLER, *Weiser und Wesir*, 153 f. Add to the references cited there BRESCIANI, *Tempio*, 80 f.

fragments of the Vienna Papyrus, yielding: “You are X who is in the town Y in this your name of Z”. Usually; certain names were explained in a pseudo-etymological manner by homophones. The exact nature here of those pseudo-etymologies is hard to determine, because their first part is lost.

Altogether, the first pieces of the papyrus, which I have presented so far, appear to contain a hymn to a goddess that is rather traditional and for which comparable examples can be cited, although exact parallels are missing. Yet, on the possibly 10<sup>th</sup> surviving column a section is preserved that is unique so far in Egyptian Isis-hymns. On the right-hand side each line starts with: “You are over ...” (*t̄i=t̄ hr...*), or: “You stand for ...” (*t̄i=t̄ ḥc n...*). It continues on the left-hand side with different regions of the world. Through this, the hymn develops the picture of Isis as a global and universal deity; Isis rules over the south, the north, the east and the west. In between the various peoples, in the right column and on the left, the respective foreign, non-Egyptian names are attributed. Thus Isis is responsible for the Ionians, i.e. in Egyptian terminology for the Greeks, and there she is called Demeter. Among the Medes her name is Anāhita, among the Assyrians Nanaia and so on. The line concerning the Persians poses a particular problem, where our goddess, presumably Isis, corresponds to a certain Athyna (*ḥthyn*) or Athynen (*ḥthynn*) or Lathyna (*Lḥthyn*) or Lathynen (*Lḥthynn*) as the chief goddess.<sup>3</sup> We will postpone its discussion for a moment.

### Parallels

Altogether this calls our attention to a number of classical Greek sources that thematize and enumerate the manifold names of Isis. In the *Metamorphoses* written by Apuleius the goddess appears to Lucius and presents herself in her different names by which the various peoples call her.<sup>4</sup> In the first hymn of Isidoros of Narmouthis, dating to the 1<sup>st</sup> century BCE, the author also praises her as the multi-named and identifies her with goddesses of other peoples in the eastern Mediterranean.<sup>5</sup> Much more similar to the Demotic Vienna Papyrus and far more elaborate is the Greek P.Oxy. XI 1380: after describing the Isiac cult topography of Egypt it adds a list of Isis’ names in the various areas of the ancient world.<sup>6</sup> I shall come back to the relationship between that text and the new Demotic source, which I am presenting here, when I explore the question of influence in combination with the Athyna/Athynen/Lathyna/Lathynen-problem. However, the Egyptian evidence shall be quickly reviewed first.

<sup>3</sup> In an earlier article (STADLER, Hymnen, 160–162) I erroneously read *ḥteynn* or *Lḥteynn*. However, the Demotic sign is clearly an *h* and not an *e*. I thank Friedhelm HOFFMANN and Joachim Friedrich QUACK for bringing this to my attention.

<sup>4</sup> Apul. Met. 11, 5. GRIFFITHS, Apuleius, 76 f.143–157.

<sup>5</sup> SCHULZ, Warum Isis, 266; TOTTI, Ausgewählte Texte, 76 f. See also MOYER, Isidorus, and his contribution to the present volume (pp. 182–206).

<sup>6</sup> GRENFELL/HUNT, Oxyrhynchus Papyri XI, 190–220.

In Egyptology, two Demotic texts have been proposed as the models of the Greek Oxyrhynchus Hymn. The first is pTebtunis Tait 14 with its parallel pCarlsberg 652 vs. The papyrus pCarlsberg 652 vs. is currently unpublished, but known to scholars through announcements by Joachim Friedrich Quack.<sup>7</sup> According to him, pCarlsberg 652 vs. substantially extends the text as it is preserved on the small fragment known as pTebtunis Tait 14. Never having seen the former myself, I can only speak about the latter. Thus far, the text is solely analogous to the first part of both the Oxyrhynchus version and the Demotic Vienna Papyrus. All three compositions recount Isis as mistress of several Egyptian towns. Yet, we cannot say with certainty whether the Tebtunis version also contained a similar section that presented the goddess to the rest of the ancient world with the same qualities as the Oxyrhynchus and the Vienna papyri do. The only pertinent word which would have linked Isis to the foreign goddess Anat in the Demotic pTebtunis Tait 14, and which would thus show some analogy to the list of Isis as being manifest in foreign goddesses in the Oxyrhynchus and Vienna papyri, proved to be a misreading of *rnnṯy*, “prosperity”.<sup>8</sup> Likewise, pHamburg 33 vs. is not – as originally thought – an invocation to Isis parallel to P.Oxy. XI 1380, but a list of female Egyptian deities and their Egyptian cult centres.<sup>9</sup> Due to its highly fragmentary state of preservation, it cannot be safely said that each sentence commenced with an independent 2<sup>nd</sup> person singular feminine pronoun equating a female addressee with a series of goddesses. Therefore, it is not certain that these goddesses were also identified with Isis as is generally assumed.<sup>10</sup> On the other hand, it is possible that a general introduction connected Isis with the goddesses in the following topographical list.

All the manuscripts that I have discussed so far do not exhibit direct word-by-word parallels, but seem to be more or less similar in their basic plan or concept of a polyonymous Egyptian Isis.<sup>11</sup> This Egyptian polyonymity has been assumed as the basis for a transposition to the entire known world. However, when we reduce the parallelism in such a general manner, further Egyptian sources must be cited here, chiefly hymn no. 7 from Philae (in Louis Žabkar’s numbering),<sup>12</sup> hymns to Isis in her temple at Assuan,<sup>13</sup> and Ostrakon no. 10 in the archive of Hor.<sup>14</sup> All are significantly older: The Philae-hymn dates to the reign of Ptolemy II (thus to the first half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BCE), the Assuan-hymns were inscribed under Ptolemy IV (late 3<sup>rd</sup> century BCE) and the Hor-Ostrakon was written in 169 BCE as stated in the text

<sup>7</sup> TAIT, Papyri from Tebtunis, 48–53, no. 14, pl. 4; KOCKELMANN, Praising the Goddess, 31–36; QUACK, Ich bin Isis, 326 n. 27; ID., Perspektiven, 73; ID., Einführung, 107. Publication forthcoming by QUACK, Lobpreis.

<sup>8</sup> TAIT, Papyri from Tebtunis, 48–53, no. 14, pl. 4; SMITH, Review of Tait, 201; KOCKELMANN, Praising the Goddess, 33 f.

<sup>9</sup> BRUNSCH, Zwei demotische Texte; ZAUZICH, Schülerübung.

<sup>10</sup> See e.g. KOCKELMANN, Praising the Goddess, 53.86; QUACK, Einführung, 107 f.

<sup>11</sup> For further Egyptian sources, see the contribution by S. NAGEL in the present volume (pp. 207–231).

<sup>12</sup> ŽABKAR, Hymns, 103–114.

<sup>13</sup> Particularly BRESCIANI, Tempio, 66 f.103–105. STADLER, Isishymnus E.14.

<sup>14</sup> RAY, Archive, 46–48; DEN BRINKER/MUHS/VLEEMING, Berichtigungsliste, II 416; KOCKELMANN, Praising the Goddess, 11–17; QUACK, Apokalyptische Passage, 245 f.

itself. Furthermore, a series of Isiac epithets was inscribed in Philae under Ptolemy VI (first half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BCE) and copied under Augustus in Kalabsha.<sup>15</sup> The aforementioned texts all share certain features with the Demotic Vienna Papyrus, such as the equation with other goddesses, the name formula in several instances and an enumeration of places of worship in almost all sources cited. Those lists are generally less detailed than in the Vienna Papyrus. Yet, the earliest text that, to my knowledge, presents Isis in various mythological functions as well as towns where she enjoyed a cult is the version of the Book of the Dead spell 142 as given in the early 10<sup>th</sup> century BCE pGreenfield.<sup>16</sup> All of the Egyptian parallels are focused on Egypt and do not provide an analogous section for Isis as being identical with other non-Egyptian goddesses. It seems as if this is a Hellenistic invention and innovation. But who was responsible for this? Could it have been an Egyptian or a Greek author?

### The Hymn's Position within the Tradition of Isiac Hymns: Ancestors, Relatives and Offspring

Since antiquity, when the most famous Greek sages such as Pythagoras, Solon, Plato and others were said to have learnt from Egyptian priests,<sup>17</sup> the influence of Egyptian wisdom and religion on the Greek philosophy has been at issue. In Demotic studies this discussion centred on the question of Homeric models for the Demotic Petubastis-Inaros-cycle and has re-gained some importance around the turn of the 2<sup>nd</sup> to the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium CE.<sup>18</sup> A hitherto unattested Egyptian text that parallels a Greek one might further ignite such debates. Furthermore, Isis' Egyptianness during the Hellenistic era and the Roman Empire has been hotly contested among Classicists and Egyptologists.<sup>19</sup> Most Classicists have accepted, without too much hesitation, that the Hellenistic Isis is something new, a Hellenistic deity who by chance had the same name as the old Egyptian goddess, but otherwise lacked any Egyptian characteristics. In the published proceedings of the conferences on Isis that have been held every three to five years since 1997 and which discuss the diffusion of the cult of Isis outside Egypt, various papers illustrate this assumption very well.<sup>20</sup> Few Egyptologists have participated in these colloquia, and none of those who have published in the corresponding volumes specialize in Demotic and/or temple inscriptions of the Ptolemaic-Roman period. Contributions by scholars from Ancient History, Classical Philology and Classical Archaeology dominate the volumes, and

<sup>15</sup> JUNKER, *Preis der Isis*.

<sup>16</sup> BUDGE, *Greenfield Papyrus*, pl. CXIV, col. 4 ll. 28–col. 5 ll. 23. Translation: ALLEN, *Book of the Dead*, 118.

<sup>17</sup> The sources are collected and discussed by DÖRRIE, *Der hellenistische Rahmen*, 427–449; ERLER, *Platon*, 46–48.

<sup>18</sup> QUACK, *Homer-Rezeption*; ID., *Einführung*, 66–70.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. DOUSA, *Imagining Isis*.

<sup>20</sup> See BRICAULT, *De Memphis à Rome*; ID., *Isis en Occident*; BRICAULT/VERSLUYS/MEYBOOM, *Nile into Tiber*.

these seem to be unfamiliar with recent developments in Demotic studies concerning Isis.<sup>21</sup> Thus, these Isiac studies tend to be rather self-referential, but even among Egyptologists some follow the Classicists' view.<sup>22</sup>

The situation may seem obvious at first sight: An Egyptian goddess is praised as a universal deity and, coincidentally, an Egyptian source for this was lacking, whereas we know a range of Greek texts concerning this phenomenon. Now – one might think – the natural order has been restored as an older Egyptian text, the Vienna Papyrus, testifies of what has hitherto been known only from Greek texts (most of which have been written and found in Egypt). Egyptologists would welcome such an idea and would be quite happy to have an Egyptian text that is 100 years older than the Greek Oxyrhynchus Papyrus since, as mentioned earlier, attempts to identify such an Egyptian precursor as compelling evidence have been unsuccessful so far. Yet, despite the earlier age of the Vienna Papyrus compared with the Oxyrhynchus text, the hymns as preserved in the inscription of Isidoros of Narmouthis should prevent us from acting too quickly because they again predate the Demotic version by another 100 years.

There are further indications that caution is a wise choice. As we will see, the papyrus exhibits features that do not provide a simple answer to the question of dependence. To reach a conclusion, I propose to proceed step by step. First of all, the basic assumption is that in pVienna D. 6297+6329+10101 a traditional Egyptian Isis-hymn is combined with a more recent hymn. This newer hymn can only be imagined in an Egypt that had intense contact over a long period with neighbouring religious phenomena, as well as with more remote peoples, some of which had conquered and occupied Egypt for some time. The presence of theonyms such as Anāhīta, Nanaia and Demeter – unattested in Egypt during earlier epochs – justifies such a suggestion. The question of whether P.Oxy. XI 1380 is a translation from an Egyptian composition similar to the one preserved in the Vienna Papyrus remains, however, because the verso of P.Oxy. XI 1380 contains the so-called Imuthes-Asklepios-aretalogy (P.Oxy. XI 1381). The introduction to the aretalogy refers explicitly to the huge difficulties posed by a translation from Egyptian into Greek.<sup>23</sup> As the verso is inscribed with a translation from Egyptian into Greek, it is not unlikely that the recto, the Isis-hymn, was also presented as a translation from an Egyptian original. It is possible that this postulated presentation may have been lost along with the introductory section on the beginning of the recto text – but all this is rather hypothetical and cannot be proven.

Continuing on to the next step, the Vienna Papyrus says: “You are among [the] Persians – <L>athynen – [is your name]”. P.Oxy. XI 1380 has in l. 104 ἐν Πέρσαις Λατεῖνεν (“among the Persians – Latina”). This posed a severe problem to students of the text, for usually Anāhīta is the best-known Persian goddess. Therefore Clas-

<sup>21</sup> Cf. e.g. QUACK, *Ich bin Isis*; ID., *Ritual*.

<sup>22</sup> BOMMAS, *Apostel Paulus*. A more nuanced view (Isis' nature predestined her for a mystery cult which, however, had little in common with Egyptian religion) is expressed by ASSMANN, *Pythagoras und Lucius*.

<sup>23</sup> P.Oxy. XI 1381; see GRENFELL/HUNT, *Oxyrhynchus Papyri XI*, 221–234. Cf. also the bibliography in TOTTI-GMÜND, *Aretalogie*.

sicists assumed a corruption and conjectured Ἀναίτην for Λατείνην.<sup>24</sup> However, Isis is already Anāhīta among the Medes according to the Demotic text, and under the condition that both texts are related; it is unlikely that the passage in the Oxyrhynchus Papyrus should be emended to Anāhīta. In the Greek version the names are given in the accusative for reasons of syntax. Turning to the Demotic we realize that <L><sup>c</sup>thyn<sup>r</sup>n<sup>r</sup> (“<L>athynen”) might be written there as well. The last phonetic sign before the determinative is damaged and could be an *n* which might reflect the Greek accusative ending. This would be surprising for Egyptian, which does not display cases at the surface and would not have the same ending, if there were an accusative in Egyptian. Thus, the Demotic text may give us a clue that it was translated from Greek rather than into Greek from Egyptian.

Yet, this still leaves us with “Latina” as an unknown Persian goddess, and we should take a further step. The reading <L><sup>c</sup>thyn<sup>r</sup>n<sup>r</sup> (“<L>athynen”) is in itself an emendation of the Demotic based on the “Latina” of the Greek version, as an *L* is not written in the Demotic. Furthermore, there is the possibility to read the last damaged phonetic sign as an *ʒ*. Therefore, the transliteration <sup>c</sup>thyn<sup>ʒ</sup> should be pondered. Should “Athena” rather than Latina be the principal Persian goddess?

Addressing this, it seems as if 300 years of Hellenism have left their traces in Persia and that Anāhīta’s *interpretatio Graeca* was Athena.<sup>25</sup> Indirectly, Plutarch points to the similarities of Anāhīta and Athena when he reports that Artaxerxes went to Pasargades to be inaugurated as king by the Persian priests. Plutarch continues by referring to the temple of Anāhīta: Ἔστι δὲ θεᾶς πολεμικῆς ἱερὸν ἦν Ἀθηναῶν <ᾶν> τις εἰκάσειεν (“Here there is a sanctuary of a warlike goddess whom one might conjecture to be Athena”).<sup>26</sup> More direct evidence comes from the Persepolis sanctuary of Anāhīta, which was restored after the great fire that burnt down the city. Greek dedicatory inscriptions in this new Anāhīta-temple mention Artemis and Athena.<sup>27</sup> And finally, even an Isis-Athena is known.<sup>28</sup> In this light a reading <sup>c</sup>thynn or <sup>c</sup>thyn<sup>ʒ</sup> as “Athena” for the Persian chief goddess seems to be possible, which would show how thoroughly the Greek deity was established there by the 1<sup>st</sup> century CE, whereas Anāhīta is reserved for Isis among the Medes four lines later in pVienna D. 6297+6329+10101. Another interpretation might be that Anāhīta was simply presented as an *interpretatio Graeca*, much as P.Oxy. XI 1380 l. 30 says that Isis is Athena in the Saite nome, a clear reference to the Egyptian Neith whom the Greeks saw as Athena. In other words: The litanies which *prima facie* seem to be dictionaries of polytheism reflect the actual nomenclature rather than historically correct information concerning the original and indigenous names.

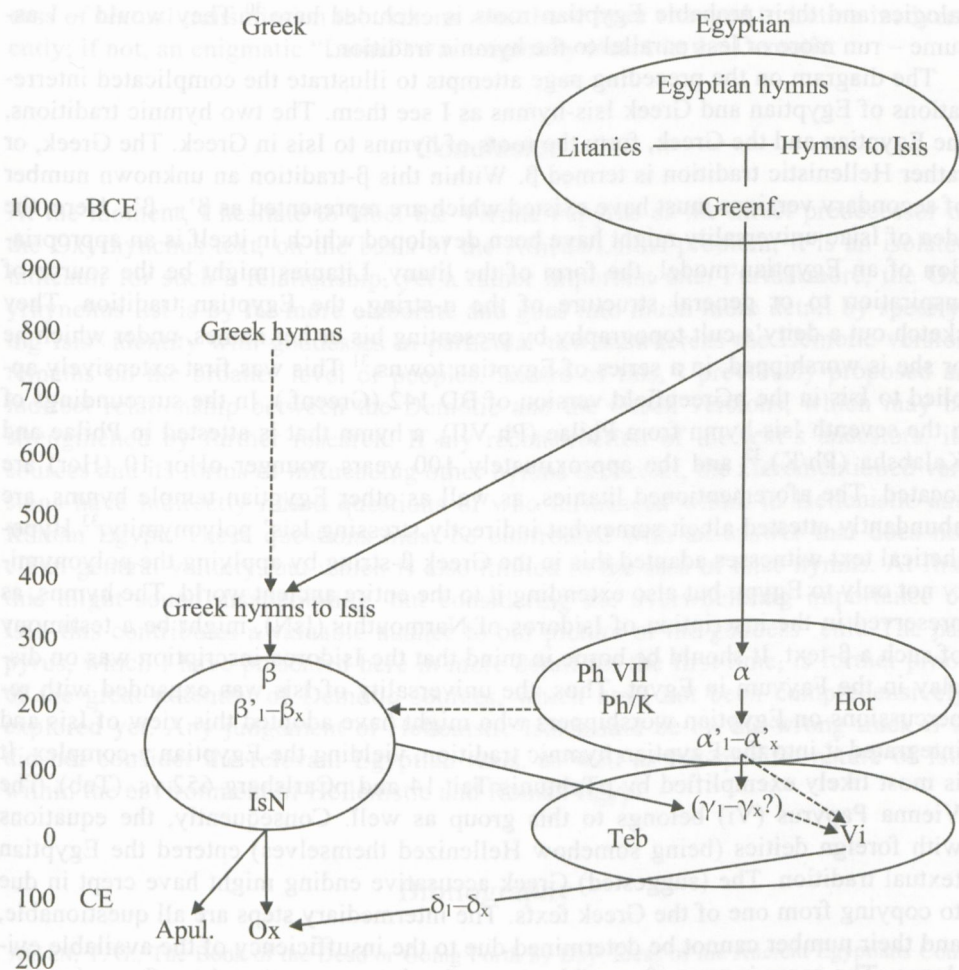
<sup>24</sup> CUMONT, Isis Latina; BRICAULT, *Myrionymi*, 14; TOTTI, *Ausgewählte Texte*, 67.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. BOYCE, Anāhīd; HAUSSIG, *Götter und Mythen*, 280–284; HERZFELD, *Archaeological History*, 44.

<sup>26</sup> Plut. Art. 3. Cf., however, BINDER’s scepticism (*Plutarchs Vita*, 117–120) concerning Plutarch’s identification of Anāhīta with Athena.

<sup>27</sup> HAUSSIG, *Götter und Mythen*, 280–284; HERZFELD, *Archaeological History*, 44.

<sup>28</sup> Ben-Gurion-Universität VI 1216, 82 (BRICAULT, *Myrionymi*, 12).



The Demotic papyrus might also elucidate how the Persian “Latina” came into being. Right beneath *ṯhyn<sup>r</sup>3<sup>r</sup>/ṯhyn<sup>r</sup>n<sup>r</sup>* a certain *Lty* is mentioned. Her identity is not clear to me at the moment – in an earlier article I assumed “Leto”, but phonetically it is problematic to take the  $\omega$  to be represented by a Demotic *y*.<sup>29</sup> Be that as it may, the *L* of this name is positioned somewhat out of the line, almost between the two lines. A copyist or translator might have seen the *L* as pertaining to the *ṯhyn<sup>r</sup>3<sup>r</sup>* or *ṯhyn<sup>r</sup>n<sup>r</sup>* by *aberratio oculi* thus creating Latina. However, this implies that pVienna D. 6297+6329+10101 is a predecessor and belongs into the tradition of P.Oxy. XI 1380. Yet, there are too many features which distinguish one text from the other. Therefore, the Vienna text cannot be a direct ancestor of the Oxyrhynchus text. I would rather propose the model of tradition as shown in the diagram above. In order to avoid an overly confusing picture, the question of the so-called Greek Isiac are-

<sup>29</sup> STADLER, Hymnen, 160–162.



talogies and their probable Egyptian roots is excluded here.<sup>30</sup> They would – I assume – run more or less parallel to the hymnic tradition.

The diagram on the preceding page attempts to illustrate the complicated interrelations of Egyptian and Greek Isis-hymns as I see them. The two hymnic traditions, the Egyptian and the Greek, form the roots of hymns to Isis in Greek. The Greek, or rather Hellenistic tradition is termed  $\beta$ . Within this  $\beta$ -tradition an unknown number of secondary versions must have existed which are represented as  $\beta'_1 - \beta'_x$ . Here, the idea of Isiac universality might have been developed which in itself is an appropriation of an Egyptian model, the form of the litany. Litanies might be the source of inspiration to or general structure of the  $\alpha$ -string, the Egyptian tradition. They sketch out a deity's cult topography by presenting his or her names, under which he or she is worshipped, in a series of Egyptian towns.<sup>31</sup> This was first extensively applied to Isis in the pGreenfield version of BD 142 (Greenf.). In the surroundings of  $\alpha$  the seventh Isis-hymn from Philae (Ph VII), a hymn that is attested in Philae and Kalabsha (Ph/K),<sup>32</sup> and the approximately 100 years younger oHor 10 (Hor) are located. The aforementioned litanies, as well as other Egyptian temple hymns, are abundantly attested albeit somewhat indirectly stressing Isis' polyonymity.<sup>33</sup> Hypothetical text witnesses adapted this in the Greek  $\beta$ -string by applying the polyonymity not only to Egypt, but also extending it to the entire ancient world. The hymns, as preserved in the inscription of Isidoros of Narmouthis (IsN), might be a testimony of such a  $\beta$ -text. It should be borne in mind that the Isidoros-inscription was on display in the Fayyum in Egypt. Thus, the universality of Isis was expanded with repercussions on Egyptian worshippers who might have adopted this view of Isis and integrated it into the Egyptian hymnic tradition, yielding the Egyptian  $\gamma$ -complex. It is most likely exemplified by pTebtunis Tait 14 and pCarlsberg 652 vs. (Teb). The Vienna Papyrus (Vi) belongs to this group as well. Consequently, the equations with foreign deities (being somehow Hellenized themselves) entered the Egyptian textual tradition. The (suggested) Greek accusative ending might have crept in due to copying from one of the Greek texts. The intermediary steps are all questionable, and their number cannot be determined due to the insufficiency of the available evidence. The same is true of possible contamination at any step, i.e. of copying one manuscript from one string under comparison with a second papyrus from a different tradition. Either directly from  $\alpha'_1 - \alpha'_x$  in comparison with a Greek version ( $\beta'_1 - \beta'_x$ ), or by the medium of one of the hypothetical  $\gamma$ -manuscripts, the text on pVienna D. 6297+6329+10101 was created. Contaminating the  $\beta$ -texts, which perhaps inspired Apuleius (Apul.), with descendants ( $\delta_1 - \delta_x$ ) of that Egyptian version, the hymn to Isis was probably authored as it survived in P.Oxy. XI 1380 (Ox). Thus, the Oxyrhynchus version could be a Greek translation from Egyptian. In this pro-

<sup>30</sup> Cf. QUACK, *Ich bin Isis*; STADLER, *Vorlage*. Response to the latter: QUACK, *Erzählen als Preisen*, 306 n. 69, who repeats and asserts rather than contradicts my argument (see STADLER, *Weiser und Wesir*, 230 n. 651).

<sup>31</sup> STADLER, *Funerary Texts*.

<sup>32</sup> JUNKER, *Preis der Isis*.

<sup>33</sup> KOCKELMANN, *Praising the Goddess*, 53.

cess of textual transmission the Athena must have been changed to Latina inadvertently; if not, an enigmatic “Latina” was originally meant in the Demotic.

### Conclusion

At the moment, I hesitate to label the Vienna Papyrus as the direct predecessor of the Oxyrhynchus text, on the basis of the Athena/Latina-problem; it is an isolated indicator for such a relationship, yet a rather important one. Furthermore, the Oxyrhynchus list is by far more elaborate and goes into much more detail by specifying Isis’ identity with goddesses in particular towns, whereas the Demotic version remains on the broader level of peoples. Aware of this, I previously proposed an indirect relationship between the Demotic and the Greek versions, which may be strengthened by further research. If my reconstruction of the text’s ancestors, its sources and its forms of influencing other hymns is correct, the aforementioned versions have indirectly raised questions of who influenced whom in Hellenistic and Roman Egypt. These questions must be confronted with an answer that does not claim general validity, but which is also limited to the area of Isiac hymns. At first this might sound disappointing, but considering the overwhelming importance of Isis, this contributes a valuable nuance to our picture of the goddess’ cult. The papyrus, which I have presented here in more detail for the first time, is further proof of the great potential of Demotic sources, which have not been comprehensively explored yet. Any judgement of Hellenistic Isis would be on the wrong track if it did not consider the relevant Egyptian texts, as well as the specific nature of Isis within the environment of Hellenistic and Roman Egypt.

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