The Stanzaic Structure of Isidorus, Hymns 2 and 4  
(SEG 8.549 and 51)

Christopher A. Faraone  
(University of Chicago)

The Hymns of Isidorus are inscribed on two piers of the entrance to the outermost forecourt of the large temple complex of Isis in the town of Narmouthis (modern Medinet Madi), which lies in the southernmost part of the Fayyum. These hymns date at the latest to the first century BCE and each hymn ends with the brief prose declaration "Isidorus wrote (it)". Isidorus, who is otherwise unknown, composed Hymns 1 and 3 in dactylic hexameters, a common meter for hymnic compositions, but he rendered the other two in elegiac couplets, a medium rarely used for such purpose. His hymns have (perhaps understandably) attracted little interest among historians of Greek poetry, because they are metrically faulty, poetically inept, and even to the casual reader seem excessively repetitive and monotone. In recent years, however, Hymns 2 and 4 have been adduced as useful comparanda for Callimachus' Bath of Pallas, a hymnic composition written in the same meter. Indeed, as the Russian Formalists often noted, sometimes amateur poets can teach us more about traditional poetic genres and audience expectations,

1 Vanderlip (1972) passim and Dielemen and Moyer (2010 forthcoming). For the date, see Bollók (1974). I am grateful to Fred Brenk, Marco Fantuzzi and Ian Moyer for their comments on earlier drafts of this study.

2 See, e.g., Bernand (1969) 651, who summarizes the trenchant critiques of Keydell and Préaux, but defends Isidorus as a thoroughly Hellenized Egyptian, albeit bad, poet.
than the most sophisticated ones. It has not been noticed, I think, that the elegiac hymns of Isidorus are both composed in an oddly round number of lines (respectively thirty and forty lines in length), raising the suspicion that they may have been composed as a series of five-couplet elegiac stanzas, a technique that was popular among archaic elegists, but seems to have fallen into disuse in the Hellenistic and Roman periods, with the notable exception of Callimachus, who seems to use the same technique in the prologues to his *Actia* and his *Bath of Pallas*.

### The Stanzaic Architecture of Early Elegy:

In what follows I offer a close analysis of the stanzaic structure of both of Isidorus’ elegiac hymns and then close with some thoughts on why Isidorus chose to compose these poems in such a meter and in such an archaic style. But before analyzing the two hymns it is useful to sketch briefly the important features of the archaic elegiac stanza, which is usually five couplets in length and comprises an independent unit in terms of its content, rhetorical focus and/or style. Single elegiac stanzas can, for example, contain a free-standing prayer, a catalogue or a mythological exemplum, and are often marked by a somewhat heavy handed kind

---


4 It is important to note at the outset that, as far as I can tell from the photographs in Vanderlip (1972), neither Isidorus nor his stonemason made any attempt to indicate the individual stanzas on the stone, e.g. by placing spaces or marks between them. The two hexametrical hymns (nos. 1 and 3) are both thirty-six lines long.

of ring-composition between the first and fifth couplets and the second and fourth.\textsuperscript{7} In longer poems, however, the internal structures of individual stanzas tend to be less pronounced and the boundaries of stanzas are often marked more by a change in content or linguistic mode. We also find elaborate responsion between stanzas, which -- like strophaiac responsion in choral poetry -- often provides an armature for organizing the whole poem.\textsuperscript{8}

These features of stanzaciac architecture are most obvious in the extant fragments of Tyrtaeus, who, for example, makes regular use of the elegiac stanza in his fragment 10, the first thirty lines of which divide up quite easily into three alternating stanzas.\textsuperscript{9} The first provides a meditation on the choice between bravery and cowardice (10.1-10):\textsuperscript{10}

\begin{center}
\footnotesize
\begin{verbatim}
τεθνάμεναι γὰρ καλὸν ἐνὶ προμάχοισι πεσόντα
ἀνδρ' ἁγαθὸν περὶ Ἡ πατρίδι μαρνάμενον,
τὴν δ' αὐτοῦ προλιπόντα πόλιν καὶ πίονας ἀγροὺς
πτωχεύειν πάντων ἐστ' ἀνηρότατον,
πλαξόμενον σὺν μητρὶ φίλη καὶ πατρὶ γέροντι (5)
παισὶ τε σὺν μικροὶς κοουριδὴ τ' ἄλοχῳ.
ἔχθρος μὲν γὰρ τοις μετέσσεται οὐς κεν ἱκηται,
χρησμοσύνη τ' εἶκων καὶ στυγερῆ πενίη,
\end{verbatim}
\end{center}

\textsuperscript{6} For stanzas encompassing single set-pieces, see, Faraone (2008) 26-29 who discusses prayers -- Theognidea 341-50 (to Zeus) and 773-82 (to Apollo). For catalogues, see Faraone (2005b) and for the archaic elegiac practice of framing an exemplum within a single stanza, see Faraone (2008) 97-100 and 165-67.

\textsuperscript{7} See Faraone (2008) 198 s.v. "ring-composition" for many examples.

\textsuperscript{8} Faraone (2008) 60-70.

\textsuperscript{9} Noted by Weil (1862) 11 and first explained by Rossi (1953/54). For a summary of their insights, see Faraone (2008) 45-51.

\textsuperscript{10} For Tyrtaeus I give the text of West (1992) and the translation of Gerber (1970) throughout.
It is a fine thing for a brave man to die when he has fallen among the front ranks while fighting for his homeland, and it is the most painful thing of all to leave one’s city and rich fields for a beggar’s life, wandering about with his dear mother and aged father, with small children and wedded wife. For giving way to need and hateful poverty, he will be treated with hostility by whomever he meets, he brings disgrace on his line, belies his splendid form, and every indignity and evil attend him.

Tyrtaeus presents us here with an extended gnomic reflection introduced by γάρ, which first describes the brave warrior, who dies defending his homeland, and then the craven or defeated one, who flees and takes his family into exile. Although no obvious signs of ring-composition or repetition mark these five couplets internally as a complete unit, we are made aware of their autonomy when after a pause the poet continues on in a very different manner (10.11-20):

εἰ δ’ οὐτῶς ἀνδρός τοι ἀλωμένου οὐδεμί’ ὀρη γίνεται οὐτ’ αἰδός, οὐδ’ ὀπίσω γένεσιν, θυμῷ γῆς πέρι τῆςδε μαχώμεθα καὶ πέρι παῖδων θυησκομεν ψυχέων μηκέτι φειδόμενοι. ὧ νέοι, ἀλλὰ μάχεσθε παρ’ ἀλλήλοις μένοντες, (15) μηδὲ φυγής αἰσχρῆς ἄρχετε μηδὲ φόβου, ἀλλὰ μέγαν ποιεῖσθε καὶ ἄλκιμον ἐν φρεσὶ θυμόν, μηδὲ φιλομυχεῖτ’ ἀνδράσι μαρινάμενοι· τοὺς δὲ παλαιοστέρους, ὃν οὐκέτι γοννατ’ ἐλαφρά, μὴ καταλείποντες φεύγετε, τοὺς γεραιούς. (20)

But if there is no regard or respect for a man who wanders thus, nor yet for his family after him, let us fight with spirit for this land and let us die for our children, no longer sparing our lives. Come, you young men, stand fast at one another’s side and fight, and do not start shameful flight or panic, but make the spirit in your heart strong and valiant, and do not be in love of life when you are fighting men. Do not abandon and run away from elders, whose knees are no longer nimble, men revered.
This second group of five couplets is clearly distinguished from the first by linguistic mode and rhetorical purpose. Just as he marked the initial verse of the previous meditative stanza with γὰρ, Tyrtaeus uses the particle τοι (line 11) at the start of this stanza to signal the switch from generic speculation to direct exhortation of the audience at hand.\(^{11}\)

Indeed, whereas the first stanza is entirely descriptive or evaluative and focuses exclusively on the situations of two hypothetical soldiers, the second from beginning to end exhorts the audience of young men to fight bravely: Tyrtaeus distributes seven exhortations evenly over the ten lines: two first-person plural hortative subjunctives (13 and 14) followed by five second-person plural imperatives (15, 16, 17, 18 and 20). The two participles placed near the end of the second stanza (18: μαρνάμενοι and 20: μὴ καταλείποντες), moreover, plainly recall and in some sense respond positively to the pair of participles placed near the beginning of the first stanza (2: μαρνάμενοι and 3: προλιπόντα), the first of which describes the brave warrior fighting in the thick of battle and the second the craven one in the act of abandoning his city in disgrace. The advice supplied in the second stanza is, in short, based solidly on the "theory" outlined in the first. It seems, then, that the poet designed the first twenty lines of Tyrtaeus 10 as a pair of stanzas, the first of which -- by means of generic description, comparison and evaluation -- ruminates on the choices set before a soldier in time of war, while the second exhorts the audience to follow one of these paths and avoid the other.

\(^{11}\) See Denniston (1954) 537-38 and Verdenius (1969) on the force of τοι here.
The third stanza of this fragment, like the first, offers a meditation introduced
by γάρ (10.21-30):  

αἰσχρόν γάρ δὴ τούτο, μετὰ προμάχοις πεσόντα
κείσθαι πρόσθε νέων ἄνδρα παλαιότερον,
ηδὴ λευκὸν ἔχοντα κάρη πολιόν τε γένειον,
θυμὸν ἀποπνείοντ' ἀλκίμον ἐν κοινῷ,
αἴματόεντ' αἴδοια φίλαις ἐν χεροῖν ἔχοντα -- (25)
αἰσχρά τά γ᾽ ὀφθαλμοῖς καὶ νεμεσητὸν ἰδεῖν --
καὶ χρόνα γυμνωθέντα· νέοισι δὲ πάντ᾽ ἑπέοικεν,
ὀφρ᾽ ἐρατῆς ἡβης ἀγλαὸν ἄνθος ἔχῃ,
ἀνδράσι μὲν βητῆς ἰδεῖν, ἐρατὸς δὲ γυναιξὶ
ζωὸς ἔων, καλὸς δὲ ἐν προμάχοις πεσόν. (30)

For this brings shame, when an older man lies fallen among the
front ranks with the young behind him, his head already white
and his beard grey, breathing out his valiant spirit in the dust,
clutching in his hands his bloodied genitals—this is a shameful
sight and brings indignation to behold—his body naked. But for
the young everything is seemly, as long as he has the splendid
prime of lovely youth; while alive, men marvel at the sight of him
and women feel desire, and when he has fallen among the front
ranks, he is fair.

Here, as in the first stanza of the fragment, Tyrtaeus explores and compares the
appropriateness of men falling in battle, a theme that he once again examines in two
hypothetical and diametrically opposed cases, which are neatly bracketed and
contrasted by the ring-composition—in nearly identical phrases—at the end of the
first and last lines: it is shameful for the old men to fall in the front ranks while the
young hang back (21: αἰσχρόν γάρ ... μετὰ προμάχοις πεσόντα / κείσθαι
πρόσθε νέων) whereas the young man is virtuous, brave and beautiful, whenever he

12 Barron and Easterling (1999, 92) discuss these verses as if they were a discrete and
coherent unit.
falls among the fore-fighters (30: καλὸς δ’ ἐν προμάχοις πεσόνυ)\textsuperscript{13}

There emerges, then, a significant pattern of alternating stanzas in the first thirty lines of Tyrtaeus 10:\textsuperscript{14}

[10 lines] Meditation introduced by γάρ
(indicative verbs and singular participles, primarily in the accusative, but then ending in the nominative)

[10 lines] Exhortation introduced by τοι
(plural hortative subjunctives and imperatives with plural nominative participles)

[10 lines] Meditation introduced by γάρ.
(indicative verbs and singular participles, primarily in the accusative, but then ending in the nominative)

Weil also noted how the last line of the third stanza, in addition to recalling the first line of its own stanza, also echoes the very first line of the fragment:\textsuperscript{15}

τεθνάμεναι γάρ καλὸν ἐνί προμάχοις πεσόντα (1 = 1\textsuperscript{st} line of 1\textsuperscript{st} stanza)
αισχρὸν γάρ δῇ τούτο, μετὰ προμάχοις πεσόντα (21 = 1\textsuperscript{st} line of 3\textsuperscript{rd} stanza)
ζωὸς ἐὼν, καλὸς δ’ ἐν προμάχοις πεσόνυ. (30 = last line of 3\textsuperscript{rd} stanza)

This triple responsion of nearly identical verse-ending phrases at the beginnings of both meditative stanzas and at the end of the last stanza emphasizes important differences in their moral evaluation: it is a fine thing, Tyrtaeus asserts, when brave men fall fighting in the front ranks, but a shameful thing when elderly warriors fall in the same position, while the young hang back. This combination, therefore, of ring-

\textsuperscript{13} Weil (1862) 12-13.

\textsuperscript{14} Rossi (1953/54) 414-15.

\textsuperscript{15} Weil (1862) 11 and Rossi (1953/54) 415. The result, as Adkins 1977, 96 puts it, is that line 30 “constitutes the conclusion of, if not quite an argument, the movement of Tyrtaeus’ thought.”
composition within stanzas and responsion between them serves two important functions: similar line-endings articulate the architecture of the fragment by calling attention to the beginnings and endings of individual units, while at the same time diametrically opposed moral terms at or near the start of these same lines (καλός ... αἰσχρόν ... καλός) highlight the great moral differences between these choices.

Isidorus, Hymn 2:

Isidorus seems to compose his two elegiac hymns in a similar fashion, although with less finesse. He begins the first stanza of Hymn 2 by invoking Isis in her twin roles as the Greek goddess Agathe Tyche and as the local Egyptian deity Hermouthis:

χαϊρε, Τύχη Ἄγαθη, μεγαλώνυμε Ἰσι τεγίστη,
Ἐρμούθι· ἐπὶ σοὶ πάσα γέγηβε πόλις,
ζωῆς καὶ καρπῶν εὐρέτρι<α>, οἶοί τε πάντες
tέρπονταί τε βροτοί σῶν χαρίτων ἑνεκα.
ὁσοί σοι εὑχονται ἐπὶ ἐμπορίην τε παρείναι, (5)
πλουτοῦοι εὐσεβεῖς εἰς τὸν ἀπαντα χρόνων·
καὶ ὥσι ἐν νοῦσοι θανατώδεις μοίρη ἔχονται
σοι εὐξάμενοι ταχέως σῆς ζωῆς ἔτυχον.
ὡς ἔτυμώς ο ἀγαθός δαίμων, Σοκονώτης κραταιός
σύνναος ναεὶ πλουτοδότης ἀγαθός. (10)

Hail, Tyche Agathe of great name, Isis the greatest,
Hermouthis! In you the whole city rejoices;
O discoverer of the crops of life, in which all
mortsals delight on account of your blessings.
Those who pray to you to assist their commerce, (5)

16 I use the text of SEG except where noted. The translation is mine, but dependent on Vanderlip (1972). It is interesting that in the first line Isidorus reverses the usual name Agathe Tyche to Tyche Agathe.
are rich in their piety for all time;
and those who are bound by fate in mortal illnesses,
by praying to you quickly attain life from you.  

How right it is that the Agathos Daimon, mighty Sokonopis,
shares your temple as a good giver of wealth! (10)

Here the divine couple provide the trigger for some obvious ring composition
between the first and fifth couplets: Osiris' Greek name near the beginning of the last
hexameter (9: ὁ ἀγαθὸς δαίμων) recalls Isis' similar sounding name at the
beginning of the first (1: Τύχη Αγαθή) and at the ends of these same verses we find
the Greek renditions of their native Egyptian names, each with a powerful epithet:
Ἰσι μεγίστη (1) and Σοκονώπις κραταιός (9).  

We may see a similar kind of repetition of the word for "life" in the second and
fourth couplets: Isis is identified as the "discoverer of the crops of life" in line 3 (ζωῆς
καὶ καρπῶν εὐρέτρι<α>) and then in line 8 we learn that those who pray to Isis
"obtain life" (ζωῆς ἔτυχου).  And while the first and fifth couplets speak only of the
divine couple, the three internal couplets concern themselves primarily with mortals
and benefits that come with prayer (3-4: πάντες ... τέρπονται τε βροτοί, 5:
όοσοι σοι εὐχονται and 7-8: οοσο ... σοι εὐξάμενοι). The exclamatory final

17 Lit. "your life" (σής ζωῆς). Bernand (1969) ad loc. prints {σ} ἔς ζωῆς and translates "la vie", but Isidorus uses similar expressions in this poem to indicate gifts that come from the goddess, e.g. "your good favors" (22: χάριτας μεγάλας σάς) and "the luxuriousness that comes from you" (28: τῆς παρὰ σοι τε τρυφῆς).

18 Agathe Tyche and Agathos Daimon were commonly paired in Greek religion, for example, Aeschines 3.111 and Lysias 13.16. Fred Brenk points out that the interpretatio graeca here was probably triggered by the fact that in Egyptian representations Hermouthis and Sokonopis were depicted with snake-bodies, just as the Agathos Daimon was in the Greek world.

19 I translate the phrase as a good example of hendiadys, but Bernand (1969) 636 translates it literally ("l'inventrice de la vie et des fruits de le terre") as does Vanderlip (1972) ad loc.
couplet (10: ὡς ἐτύμως....) provides, however, a fitting conclusion to a stanza about the "good" gods (Agathe Tyche and Agathos Daimon), the latter of whom shares Isis' temple and presumably shares with her his trait of being good at giving prosperity (10: πλουτοδότης ἀγαθός). Indeed, given Isidorus' interest in words and text (see the discussion of Hymn 4 below), one wonders if he is using ἐτΥμως here in a more narrowly "etymological" sense, and thus calling attention to the repetition of the word ἀγαθός in the first and last couplets: "How truly (i.e. to his name) the Agathos Daimon …. shares your temple as a good (ἀγαθός) provider of wealth!" Sokonopis is, in short, a perfect roommate for Isis, because she, too, is a “good” deity (1: ΤΥΧΗ Ἀγαθή).

The next stanza focuses on the effect of Isis and her retinue on the world of nature, rather than culture (lines 11-20):

κτίστης καὶ γαίης τε καὶ οὐρανοῦ ἀστερόεντος
καὶ ποταμῶν πάντων κῶκυτάτων τε ροών,
καὶ Ἀγχόης ὁ σῶς υἱός, ὃς οὐρανοῦ αἰθέρα ναίε[ι]
ήλιος ἀντέλλων ἔσθ', ὃς ἐδείξε τὸ φῶς.
όσσοι δὴ ἐθέλουσι γονὴν παιδῶν τε ποιήσαι, (15)
eυξάμενοι ὑμῖν εὕτεκνης ἔτυχον.

Νείλον χρυσὸν ὁς πείθουσ᾿ ἀνάγεις κατὰ [ώρας]
Αἰγύπτου ἐπὶ γῆν ἀνδράσιν εὐτερπίην.
εὐανθεῖ τότε καρπὸς ἄπασι καὶ πᾶσι μερίζεις,
οίς θέλεις, ζωὴν παντοδαπῶν ἀγαθῶν. (20)

For he (i.e. Sokonopis) is the creator of both earth and the starry heaven, and of all of the rivers and the swiftest streams;²¹

²⁰ For ἐτΥμως meaning “etymologically”, see LSJ ad loc. II.

²¹ I have translated the beginning of this couplet (“For he ....”) to reflect the explanatory use of asyndeton here (see Smyth paragraph 2167b); as we saw in Tyrteaus 10.1 and 21 above and as we shall see below twice in Hymn 4, new stanzas often begin in explanatory mode, albeit usually with gar. To do so I punctuate the end of line 10 with a period. This is a minority view:
and Anchoes your son, who inhabits the heights of heaven,
is the rising sun who revealed the light.
Those, indeed, who wish to create offspring, (15)
by praying to you, obtain healthy children.
Persuading the gold-flowing Nile, you lead it in season
over the land of Egypt as a joy for men.
Then all vegetation flourishes and you apportion to all
Whom you favour, a life of all good things. (20)

The internal ring composition is sparse,22 but there is a close responson between this
stanza and the previous one. The third couplets of both stanzas, for instance, begin
have closely parallel syntax:

\[ \text{όσοι σοι εὐχούνται ἔπι έμπορίνην τε παρείναι, (5)} \]
\[ \text{πλουτοῦσ' εὐσεβέες εἰς τὸν ἀπαντα χρόνον·} \]
\[ \text{όσοι δὴ ἐθέλουσι γονὴν παίδων τε ποιῆσαι, (15)} \]
\[ \text{εὐξάμενοι ύμῖν εὐτεκνίης ἔτυχον.} \]

The second couplets of each stanza, moreover, describe a god as "first inventor":
ζωῆς καὶ καρπῶν εὐρέτρι<α> (3) and ὅς ἐδείξε τὸ φῶς (14).23 And finally there
seems to be a cross-lingual parallel at the start of the third hexameter of each stanza:
line 3 begins with the word for life (ζωῆς) and line 13 with καὶ Ἀγχόης, "and the
Living One", a name formed from the Egyptian word for "life" (ankh).24

Vendoni (1952), Bernand (1969) and the editors of SEG all put a comma at the end of line 10 in
their texts. In her Greek text Vanderlip (1972) places a period at the end of line ten and make
11-12 an independent sentence, but in her translation, she places a comma at the end of line 10
and treats 11-12 as a subject clause that is attached to line 10.

22 Isidorus repeats the rhythm and sound in the genitive plurals in the final hemiepes of the
first and last pentameters (2: κῶκυτάτων τε βρών and 10: παντοδαπῶν ἄγαθῶν).

23 Vanderlip (1972) 22-23 takes the aorist verb ἐδείξε as an historical tense (e.g. "who [i.e.
first] revealed"), but I note in passing that Isidorus uses gnomic aorists elsewhere in this hymn.
Anchoes here is presumably Horus, son of Osiris, who is usually associated with the rising son.

24 Vanderlip (1972) 41-42.
The third and final stanza, however, displays the strongest ring composition in the poem and exhibits the most thematic coherence (21-30):

σῶν δώρων μησοβέντες, ὅοις πλοῦτόν τ’ ἀνέδωκας καὶ χάριτας μεγάλας σάς τε ἔχειν δι’ ὅλου, τούτων οἱ μοίραν δεκάτην ἀπένειμαν <ἀ>πάντες, χαίροντες κατ’ ἔτος, οἷς τε πανηγυρῴηποι ἐιτὰ ἐδωρήσω περιτελλομένου ἐνιαυτοῦ (25) αὐτοῖς μηνι Παχών πᾶσιν εἰς εὐφροσύνην. τερπθέντες δ’ εἰς οἰκον τε πανηγυρίσαντες ἐβησαν εὐφήμως πλήρεις τῆς παρὰ σοῦ τε τρυφῆς. σῶν δώρων κάροι μετάδος, Ἑμουθί ἄνασσα, σῶι ικέτη ὀλβον καὶ ἄμα εὐπεκνίην. (30)

Mindful of your gifts, those men to whom you have granted wealth and your great favors to possess for their whole life, they all set aside for you one tenth of these blessings, rejoicing each year in your festival. Therefore you grant them, as the year rolls round, (25) all to rejoice in the month of Pachon. Joyful after your festival, they return home reverently filled with the luxuriousness that comes from you. Grant a share of your gifts also to me, Mistress Hermouthis, to your suppliant, (namely) happiness and healthy children. (30)

The stanza is entirely concerned with gift exchange, a theme that the poet accentuates by repeating the spondaic σῶν δώρων at the very start of the first and last couplets (21 and 29), where he seems to contrast subtly the material "wealth" (21

---

25 One suspects, but cannot prove, that the final stanza of archaic elegiac poems also showed the most internal structure and thematic coherence; see Faraone (2008) 54-56 (the final stanza of Callinus 1) and 156-57 (the final stanza of Callimachus' Aetia Prologue).

26 Bernand (1969) translates ἐδωρήσω passively as "tu reçois les dons" (check).

27 The word ἐρμοῦθι at the end of line 28 is perhaps an odd choice, because it so often has a negative connotation, e.g. "wantonness". Bernand (1969) ad loc. translates it as "plaisir".

28 There follows a brief signature of sorts ("Isidorus wrote this") that we find at the end of all four hymns and then, as a kind of poetic postscript, a single couplet: "The gods heard my prayers and hymns and granted in return to me tranquility (εὐθυμία) as a boon (χαρίτα)." Was
πλούτον) that the goddess "has given" (21 ἀνέδωκας) to other worshippers at
Narmouthis with the more metaphysical "wealth" (i.e. blessedness") that the poet
asks the goddess to "give" to himself (29-30: κάμοι μετάδος ... ὀλβον) as a
suppliant (30: σωι ἰκέτη). Isidorus also places another verb of giving in the fifth
hexameter (25: ἐδωρήσω) in such a way that the syllable δωρ- falls in the same
sedes as the initial syllable of the echoing δώρων in the first and last hexameters.
The three central couplets describe the festival at which the hymn was undoubtedly
recited and they, too, are tied together by a significant repetition between the second
and fourth couplets (24: πανηγυρίη and 27: πανηγυρίσαντες). This stanza is so
well constructed internally that it could easily stand as a poem by itself, a claim that
one cannot make for either of the first two stanzas.

Isidorus' final request for wealth and children (30: ὀλβον καὶ ἀμα εὐτεκνίην)
also pulls together the stanzaic architecture of the whole poem. The first stanza is
primarily concerned with material wealth, as summed up in the third and central
couplet (5-6: ὅσοι σοὶ εὐχονται ἐπὶ ἐμπορίην τε παρεῖναι ... πλούτουο') and
by the description in line 10 of Sokonopis as a god who grants wealth
(πλουτοδότης), whereas the closely responding central couplet of the second stanza
(as discussed above) is entirely concerned with the generation of healthy children (15-
16): ὅσοι δὴ ἔθελουσι γυνὴν παιδὼν τε ποιῆσαι ... εὐτεκνίης ἔτυχον.
Likewise, in his invocation of Hermouthis in the final couplet of the poem (29:
Ἐρμοῦθι ἀνασσα) Isidorus recalls the same vocative in the first couplet (2:

---

this added after Isidorus had in fact been granted the wealth or child he had hoped for?
while his description (in the penultimate couplet) of human delight at the end of her annual festival in Medinat Madi (27-28: τερφθέντες … πλήρεις τῆς παρὰ σοῦ τε τρυφής) recalls the general claim -- note also the initial position of the spondaic verb in the hexameter -- that all mortals take delight because of Isis’ gifts (3-4: πάντες / τέρπονται τε βροτοί σῶν χαρίτων ἐνεκα).

In his second Hymn, then, Isidorus uses stanzas to organize his praise of the goddess Isis from three different angles. As is sometimes the case in archaic elegy, the first and last stanzas contain the most internal structure, while the medial stanza is marked out more by how it differs from or is in parallel with the two stanzas that surround it. Isodorus frames the first stanza with parallel references to the divine couple, Isis and Osiris, in their Greek and Egyptian titulature and then focuses on Isis’ powers over humans and their cultural products: every city (polis) rejoices in her (2); she discovered agriculture (3); she makes trade prosper and men rich (5-6) and she heals the sick (7-8). The second stanza, on the other hand, is concerned with the important roles that Isis and her small family play in the natural world: her partner Sokonôpis created earth, heaven, rivers and streams (11-12); her son Anchoes is the sun that rises daily (13-14); Isis herself helps with the birth of offspring (15-16); and she encourages the annual flooding of the Nile (17-18), which in turn ensures vegetal fertility (19-20). The third stanza concerned with gift-exchange and it shifts the focus of the hymn from divine agency to human, by describing how the people at Narmouthis recall the gifts of Isis and how they reciprocate by offering her a tithe at her festival in the month of Pachon (21-26) and then how they joyfully return to their
homes in reverent bliss (27–28). The hymn closes with the personal plea of Isidorus, who does not name himself in the body of the poem, but one cannot help wonder whether the ring-composition of the words σῶν δῶρων at the start of the first and last couplets (21 and 29) is designed to recall the name of the poet himself whose name is, of course, “the gift of Isis”.

**Isidorus, Hymn 4:**

In his fourth hymn Isidorus describes the temple buildings constructed and the miraculous acts performed by a famous pharaoh, whom he (finally) names as Porramanres (34), the son of Sesoōsis (31), and whom modern scholars identify as Amenemhat III, the son of Senusret III, who ruled during the 12th Dynasty. The first stanza praises this pharaoh because he built the original temple complex at the entrance of which the hymns were set up and where, we presume, they were performed annually (1–10): 30

\[
\text{τίς τόδε ἁγνὸν ἔδειμ' ἱερὸν Ερμοῦθι μεγίστη;}
\text{ποῖς θεὸς ἐμψύχθη πανιεροῦ μακάρων;}
\text{ός αἰτπν καὶ ἄδυτον ἐσθημώσατ 'Ολυμπον}
\text{Δηοὶ υψίστη Ἰσιδι θεομοφόρωι,}
\text{καὶ Ἀγχόῃ υἱῶι καὶ δαίμονι ἁγαθῶι Σοκονώπι[1], (5)}
\text{ἀθανάτωι ὅρμον εὐρε δικαιότατον.}
\text{Αἰγύπτου τινὰ φασὶ γενέσθαι θείον ἀνακτα,}
\text{ὅς πάσης χώρας κύριος ἐξεφάνη,}
\text{πλούσιον, εὐσεβέα, δυνάμει πάσηι τε μεγίστη[1]}
\]

---

29 See Widmer (2002) for discussion.

30 Fantuzzi and Hunter (2002) 360 also treat these five-couplets as a discrete rhetorical unit. Vanderlip (1972) 71 suggests that the first twenty lines are a unit when she says: “the questions of 1-2 are answered in 7-20.”
Who built this holy temple to Hermouthis the greatest?  
What god remembered the all-holy one of the immortals?  
How steep and unapproachable an Olympus he marked out for Demeter the Highest, Isis Thesmophoros, and for Anchoes her son, and for the Agathos Daimon, Sokonopis, for (these) immortals he created a most fitting haven!  
They say he was born a divine ruler of Egypt, who appeared on earth as lord of the whole land, rich, proud and with the greatest power, who had fame and virtue equal to heaven.  

The stanza begins with two questions, which are then answered at the end of the stanza in a way that cleverly fails to mention the builder by name, but instead manages to name and give the titles of the triad of deities worshipped at the temple complex: Isis (= Hermouthis [1], Demeter the Highest, and Thesmophoros [4]); her son Anchoes and her husband Sokonopis, the Agathos Daimon (5), and then two titles of the builder pharaoh himself as the "divine ruler of Egypt" and "lord of the whole land" (7-8). In the final couplet his personal qualities are simply listed without any poetic artifice: wealth, piety, power, fame and virtue (9-10). Isidorus has composed these first five couplets, then, in fully hymnic mode, and although he lavishes more attention on the divine occupants of the temple (1-6) than on its divine builder (7-10), the entire stanza is focalized through the latter: all the verbs in the stanza describe the actions of the pharaoh alone, who built the temple (1), remembered Isis (2), measured out the shrine (3), created a haven (6), was born a

---

31 Vanderlip (1972) 67 understands this last title to mean "lord of the whole earth", but the Greek word here (chôra) must have had (for an Egyptian audience) a more limited designation of "lower Egypt" or "Egypt" alone; see Bernand (1969) 648.
king (7), appeared as a lord; and held fame and virtue (10). This first stanza shows little of the ring-composition discussed above, aside from the repetition of the significant adjective μεγίστη in the dative case at the end of the first and last hexameters, an echo that compares in superlative fashion the yet unnamed builder "with the greatest power" and the central goddess of the shrine: "greatest Hermouthis", a comparison that he reiterates in the final pentameter by saying that the pharaoh, who has built an "Olympus" on earth for Isis and family (3), has himself fame and virtue "equal to heaven" (10: ἱσουράνιον).\(^{32}\)

In the second stanza Isidorus steps away from such high praise and offers instead an explanation for why such praise is appropriate in the case of the pharaoh-builder (11-20):

\[\text{τούτωι γὰρ καὶ γαῖα ὑπήκοος ἦν τε θάλασσα καὶ ποταμῶν πάντων νάματα καλλιρόων, καὶ πνεοί ναύς καὶ ἥλιος, ὃς γλυκύ φέγγος ἀντέλλων φαίνει πᾶσιν ἀριστερόως. καὶ πτημών τε γένη ὁμοθυμαδόν ἐκλευὴν αὐτοῦ (15) καὶ ταῦτ᾽ ἐπιστέλλων πάντα ἐπήκοος ἦν. δῆλον τούτ᾽ ἐστὶν ὅτι ὄρνη ἐκλευὴν αὐτοῦ ὡς οἱ τῶν ἱερῶν γράμμιν ἀναλεξάμενοι φάκοκουσίν ποτε τούτοις ἐπιστείλαντα κορώνην, σὺν τε ἐπιστολίωι ἠλθε φέρουσα φάσιν. (20)\]

For to him both earth and sea were obedient, and the waters of all the beautifully flowing rivers, and the breath of the winds and the sun, which when it rises for all shines sweet light brilliantly. The races of winged creatures with one accord listened to him (15) and he was instructing those attendant creatures.\(^{33}\)

\(^{32}\) For the meaning of ἱσουράνιον see Vanderlip (1972) 68.

\(^{33}\) My translation here is tentative, because the syntax of this line is difficult, in part because of the awkward periphrastic construction (ἐπιστέλλων ... ἦν = ἐπιστέλλε) that Isidorus uses
It is clear that the birds obeyed him, because those who read the script of the holy ones used to assert that once he sent as a messenger a crow, and that she carrying his command with a letter went off. (20)\(^{34}\)

Like the meditative stanzas in Tyrtaeus 10, this one begins with \(\gamma\alpha\rho\) and tells us why, precisely, the pharaoh was so wealthy, famous and virtuous.\(^{35}\) To do so, Isidorus describes how the entire natural world is obedient to him: earth and sea (11), streams and rivers (12), the winds and the sun (13) and all of the birds (15). The stanza closes with a proof within a proof: we know that the birds obeyed him, because he once used a crow as a messenger (19-20).\(^{36}\)

In this stanza, like the first, Isidorus continues to use the past tense to describe the pharaoh's reign at an earlier time, but otherwise the difference in content between the first and second stanzas is stark and quite similar to that noted earlier between the first and second stanzas of Hymn 2: in both poems we have an initial stanza of high praise followed by a stanza of mediation (marked at the start by explanatory asyndeton or \(\gamma\alpha\rho\)) that defends the claims made in the first stanza by pointing to the power of the divinity in question over nature.\(^{37}\) In the first stanza of Hymn 4 there is elsewhere in the hymns; see Vanderlip (1972) 98.

\(^{34}\) Bernand (1969) translates the main verb here differently as "revint".

\(^{35}\) For the alternation between stanzas of meditation and exhortation, see Faraone (2005a), who extends the work of Rossi (1953/54) on Tyrtaeus 10. See also the index to Faraone (2008) s.v. \(\gamma\alpha\rho\).

\(^{36}\) Aelian NA 6.7 tells a very similar story, attributing the miracle to an Egyptian king named Mares; For Aelian’s text and discussion, see Bernand (1969) 649 n. 3.

\(^{37}\) The wording of Hymn 2.11-14 and Hymn 4.11-14 is remarkably similar, especially in line 12 (cf. Hymn 2.12: \(\kappa\alpha\iota\ \pi\omicron\omicron\alpha\tau\omicron\omicron\omicron\ \pi\alpha\nu\tau\omicron\omicron\nu\ \kappa\omicron\omicron\omicron\omicron\omicron\omicron\omicron\ \tau\omicron\omicron\\eta\omicron\omicron\\omicron\)).
a proliferation of divine names, titles and abstract qualities like fame and virtue, and all of the actions are performed by divine agents. In the second stanza, however, we hear about the natural world only and it is the various parts of nature and not the gods who are the agents: earth, sea, rivers, winds and sun "were obedient" (II: ὑπήκοος ἦν); the rising sun "shines" or "appears" (II: φαίνει πᾶσιν); the race of birds "listened" (15 and 17: ἐκλυευ) and "were obedient" (II: ἐπήκοα ἦν); and once upon a time a crow "came" with a letter (20: ἤλθε). This stanza is, moreover, generally concerned with communication, both listening to the spoken word (ὑπήκοος - ἐκλυευ - ἐπήκοα) and reading the written (18: γράμµ' ἀναλεξάμενοι and 20: σύν τε ἐπιστολίωι). There is, in fact, no ring-composition at all in the second stanza, but as was mentioned earlier this is not uncommon in medial stanzas like this one, where (as we saw in the second stanza of Hymn 2) the poet constructs the stanza less by internal structure or ring-composition than by highlighting the boundaries between neighboring stanzas and the contrast between their style and content.

The third stanza, in turn, explains why the divine builder had such power (21-30):

οὐ γὰρ ἐνυ βροτὸς ἀνὴρ, οὐδ' ἐκ βροτοῦ ἦν ἀνακ[τος,
ἀλλὰ θεοὺ μεγάλου ἐγγονος ἀενάου,
Σοῦχου παγκράτορος μεγάλου μεγάλου τε μεγίστου
dαίμονος τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ ὑίου ἀναξ ἐφάνη.
Μητροπάτωρ τούτου δ' ἔστιν ζωῆς ὁ μερ[ιστής, (25)
Ἀμιμων, ὅς καὶ Ζεὺς Ἐλλάδος ἤδ' Ἀσίας.
tούνεκα καὶ τώι πάντα ἐπήκοα, ὅσος ἐπὶ γαίηι
ἔρπετά καὶ πτηνών οὐρανίων τε γένη.
οὖνομα δ' ἦν πατατόν τούτωι; καὶ τίς τόδ' ἐθηκε
κοίρανος ἡ βασιλεύς ἦ ἡ τις ἀθανάτων; (30)
For he was not a mortal man, nor was he the son of a mortal man but rather an offspring of a god, great and eternal, of Souchos (=Sokonopis), all powerful, great, great, the greatest, a son of the Agathos Daimon he appeared as king. The maternal grandfather of this god is the distributor of life, (25) Ammon, who is also Zeus of Hellas and Asia. For this reason, too, all things obeyed him, those that crawl on earth and the races of the winged creatures of the sky. What is the name of this one? What ruler, what king, or who of the immortals determined it? (30)

Like the preceding explanatory stanza, this one begins with γάρ. It surely must be significant that this particle appears only twice in the seventy lines that comprise Hymns 2 and 4 and in both instances at the very start of a stanza. In the second stanza Isidorus argued that the obedience of nature to the pharaoh was proof of the pharaoh's divine status, but here in the third, he shifts his argument to genealogy. After three couplets describing the builder's family (21-26), Isidorus reiterates why all creatures in nature obey him (27-28) and ends the stanza with a pair of questions (29: οὐνομα ... παταπόν; καὶ τίς τὸδ' ἔθηκε/... τίς ἀθανάτων;) that recall the two questions at the very start of the poem (1-2: τίς τόδε ... ἔδειμ'...; ποῖς θεὸς ἐμνήσθη;). 38

The final stanza begins by answering these questions in reverse order (31-40):

38 Vanderlip (1972) 70-71.
The one who nurtured him, Sesoösis, who has gone to the western heaven, gave him a fair name of "Beautifully-Shining Sun". When the Egyptians interpret his name they call him "Porramanres the great, immortal". I have heard from others a paradoxical wonder: How he navigated the mountain by wheels and a sail. Reliably learning these facts from the men who study history, I myself, too, by inscribing all of these things interpreted for the Greeks the power of the god and lord, by showing that no mortal ever possessed equal power.  

There are a few signs of internal ring-composition here in the final stanza. Isidorus does, for example, effectively contrast the double cultures of Hellenistic Egypt (as he did in the first stanza of Hymn 2), when he claims that by inscribing his elegiac hymn publicly he has "interpreted for the Greeks the power of the god and lord" (39: ἡρμήνησσον' Ἑλλησι θεοῦ δύναμιν τε ἀνακτος), echoing the statement at the start of the stanza (with a participial form of the same verb at the very beginning of a hexameter) of how the Egyptians called the founder of the temple Porramanres, "because they interpreted the name" of the god (33: ἡρμηνευσάμενοι δ' Αἰγύπτιοι οὖνομα τούτου).  

And we saw in Tyrtaios 10 and in Isidorus' second Hymn, the final stanza of this elegiac poem echoes the preceding stanzas in significant ways. The final couplet

39 Following Bernand (1969) ad loc.

40 Vanderlip’s translation (1972) 77 suggests that she thought that Porramanres was the Egyptian equivalent to "(the son of) the shining sun" but the full phrase (32: οὖνομ' ἐθηκε καλὸν ἠλίου εὐφεγγέος) suggests that his father gave him "the name of the shining sun", which would
of this fourth stanza nicely summarizes the achievement of this hymn by recalling the first couplet of the third stanza:  

\[ \text{où γάρ ἔην βροτὸς ἀνήρ, οὐδ' ἐκ βροτοῦ ἦν ἄνακ[τος,} \\
\text{άλλα θεοῦ μεγάλου ἐκγονος ἀενάου (21-22)} \]

For he was not a mortal man, nor was he the son of a mortal lord, but an offspring of a god, great and eternal  

\[ \text{ήρμήνηυο' Ἐλλησι θεοῦ δύναμιν τε ἄνακτος,} \\
\text{ὡς βροτὸς οὐδ' ἐτέρος ἔσχεν ἵσην δύναμιν. (39-40)} \]

I interpreted for the Greeks the power of the god and lord, power such as no mortal ever possessed.

Here the closing claim about "the power of the god and lord" (39: θεοῦ δύναμιν τε ἄνακτος) states positively, what Isidorus had denied in the first hexameter of the third stanza (9: οὐδ' ἐκ βροτοῦ ἦν ἄνακ[τος). The final pentameter of the poem, moreover, is clearly designed to echo both the sound and the sense of the final pentameter of the first stanza, especially the second hemiepês:

(10) ὅς κλέος καὶ ἁρετήν ἔσχεν ἱσούρανιον.

(40) ὅς βροτὸς οὐδ' ἐτέρος ἔσχεν ἱσην δύναμιν.

Finally there is evidence that Isidorus constructed this twenty-couplet hymn as two coordinated pairs of stanzas.  

This is most evident in the manner in which he places in parallel position the two most puzzling passages in the poem, which describe the two different "miracles" performed by builder of the temple (17-20 and 35-39):

be appropriate for the Pharaoh as Horus. See Bernand (1969) ad loc. translates "a donné le beau nom du soleil resplendissant”.

41 Vanderlip (1972) 74: "line 40 sounds like a concluding refrain. Cf. 21."
It is clear that the birds obeyed him, because those who read the script of the holy ones used to say that once he sent as a messenger a crow, and that she carrying his command with a letter went off.

I have heard from others a paradoxical wonder: How he navigated the mountain by wheels and a sail. Reliably learning these facts from the men who study history, I myself, too, by inscribing all of these things interpreted for the Greeks the power of the god and lord.

Here, by placing these two passages in parallel positions at the end of the second and fourth stanzas, Isidorus explores the differences between written and oral communication. He knows about the story of the messenger crow, because the people who read the written account of the sacred priests keep repeating the story presumably to the poet among others, whereas in the last stanza Isidorus himself admits that "after he learned (presumably in an oral discussion) from those who study history" the tale of the pharaoh’s ship sailing on land, he himself had the whole account inscribed in the temple. Here, moreover, the description of his

---

42 For use coordinated pairs of stanzas in early elegy, see Faraone (2008) 60-69.
own epigraphic project placed at the end of the penultimate couplet of the fourth stanza (38: πάντ' ἀναγραψάμενος) is clearly meant to recall the wording in parallel at the end of the penultimate couplet of second stanza (18: γράμμ' ἀναλεξάμενοι). It seems, in short, that Isidorus uses the reported testimony of old Egyptian hieroglyphics (which were read to him) to cinch his argument in the second stanza about the obedience of nature to Porramanres.\(^43\) But in the final stanza he boasts that he, in fact, has himself joined the ranks of these Egyptian sages, by setting up his own inscription in Greek "hieroglyphics" (i.e. an inscription on a temple pylon) about the god and by reporting what he learned from the presumably oral folktales about the pharaoh.

**Conclusion:**

Isidorus, then, has composed both Hymn 2 and Hymn 4 as a series of five-couplet elegiac stanzas. The stanzas in the second Hymn show more internal ring-composition and less responson between stanzas, whereas the opposite is true in Hymn 4, which is longer and displays a more sophisticated and well wrought stanzaic architecture. One should perhaps ask at this point why Isidorus chose such an unusual poetic medium for his two elegiac hymns, instead of composing all four of his hymns in the more traditional dactylic hexameter. There are, in fact, some interesting differences in content and style between the hexametrical hymns (1 and 3) and the elegiac ones (2 and 4). The former bear close similarities to the usually

\(^{43}\) Vanderlip (1972) ad loc.
prosaic Isis aretalogies and they generally isolate Isis and proclaim her status as an international or even universal goddess, for example in *Hymn* 1.15-21, where Isidorus rehearses her Syrian, Lycian, Thracian, Greek and Egyptian names, or in *Hymn* 3.12-13, where she is said to rule over Asia and Europe. Both of these hymns, in short, catalogue the goddess' names and titles and then offer brief descriptions of her numerous powers, before ending with a brief personal entreaty from the poet.

The elegiac hymns, on the other hand, are somewhat indifferent to Isis' role as ruler of the world and they focus more tightly on her manifestation as Hermouthis in a triad of local divinities in the bi-cultural Greco-Egyptian world of the Fayum.\textsuperscript{44} Thus, for example, Isidorus frames the first stanza of *Hymn* 2 around the doubly named divine couple Tychê Agathê/Hermouthis (line 1) and Agathos Daimôn/Sokonôpis (line 9), in both cases placing the Greek name before the Egyptian. One should also note the manner (discussed earlier) in which the poet compares and contrasts (towards the end of stanzas 2 and 4 of the fourth *Hymn*) Egyptian and Greek modes of epigraphy and nomenclature. The elegiac hymns are also more personal and urgently rhetorical and this makes sense, since elegy was a well known vehicle for impassioned personal statements, like those, for example, of Archilochus and Mimnermus. The contrast in stanza 3 of the second hymn, for example, between the material wealth (*ploutos*) of others who pray to Isis and Isidorus' own personal plea for blessed happiness (*olbos*) seems quite pointed and his self-designation at this same point as a suppliant (*hiketês*) suggests a much higher

\textsuperscript{44} See, e.g., Bernand (1969) 652.
level of personal involvement. We hear this personal voice even more strongly in **Hymn 4**, which is rhetorically the most sophisticated of all the hymns and which reveals in its final stanza the poet's own understanding of his poetic and epigraphical mission.

I suggest, moreover, that the organizing possibilities of elegiac stanzas were especially useful to Isidorus in **Hymns 2 and 4**, for example in his dyadic comparisons between the Greek and Egyptian features of divine nomenclature. In **Hymn 4**, moreover, the stanzaic format allows the poet to develop his fairly complex argument for why the founder's fame and virtue was equal to the gods and (then) why all of nature obey the founder. **Hymn 4** alone, in fact, contains a high density of rhetorical features, including two pairs of rhetorical questions and a host of explanatory particles and prepositions (11 and 21: γάρ, 17: ὅτι, 27: τοῦνεκα) and rhetorically charged expressions like δῆλον τοῦτ’ ἐστίν (17) and ἀσφαλέως μάθων (37). It is also the only hymn in which Isidorus feels compelled to cite the sources for his paradoxical claims (about the messenger crow and the wheeled ship). The hexametrical hymns, on the other hand, simply state well known Isiac dogma in simple declarative sentences.

Finally, given Isidorus' situation as a poet writing in Greek in the Fayum at the end of the Hellenistic period, one must wonder if he has been influenced in any way by the elegiac poems of Callimachus, who did indeed compose his own hymn-like **Bath of Pallas** in elegiac couplets and who also seems to have organized a sizable part of the poem's introduction in elegiac stanzas in order to enunciate a complicated
series cult aetiologies and to imitate the regular rhythm of a processional hymn. There are, moreover, parts of Isidorus' fourth Hymn that call to mind Callimachus' elegiac masterpiece, the *Aetia*. Especially notable is the way that Isidorus uses the question-and-answer format and how he alludes obliquely to the riddling folktales about the messenger crow and the sailboat in the desert and then offers learned "footnotes" on his sources that contrast and even confound oral and written history.

Throughout the *Aetia*, Callimachus asks his various Muses and interlocutors questions and then records their answers, for example, at the end of the story of Acontius and Cydippe, where Callimachus cites the local Cean historian Xenomedes as his source (*Aetia* fragment 75.53-55): "I heard (53: ἑκλύομεν) of your passion (i.e. that of Acontius and Cydippe) from the ancient Xenomedes, who set down the whole (i.e. history of the) island in a mythological memorial (55: μνήμη ... μυθολόγω)." Isidorus is not, of course, by any stretch of the imagination a poet as learned or as talented as Callimachus, but there is no reason why he would not try to imitate his famous countryman, not only in his choice of elegiac stanzas, but also in his desire to keep in mind both Greek and Egyptian audiences and sensibilities as he composed his hymns. On the other hand, it is also possible that the elegiac hymns of Callimachus and Isidorus might all reflect an otherwise lost tradition of stanzaic hymns used in processions or other rituals -- indeed it may not be coincidental that Callimachus

---

45 Faraone (forthcoming).

46 For the repeated conflation and tension in the *Aetia* between spoken and written words, see Bruss (2004) 53-55.
stages the stanzaic prologue of the Bath of Pallas near the entrance of Athena’s temple in Argos, just as Isidorus has inscribed his hymns at the entrance to the outermost forecourt of Hermouthis' temple, the most likely place, in fact, for them to be performed. In the end, then, even an amateur poet like Isidorus can give us important insights into the generic expectations of his audience with regard to elegiac hymns generally, as well as possible explanations for the use of elegiac stanzas in the performance of processional hymns.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY:**


J. D. Denniston, *Greek Particles*² (Oxford 1954).


47 For a full treatment, see Stephens (2003), who discusses Callimachus' hymns in detail.


F. Rossi, “Studi su Tirteo” AIV 112 (1953/54) 369-437.


V.F. Vanderlip, The Four Greek Hymns of Isidorus and the Cult of Isis (Toronto 1972).

M. Vandoni, “Il tempio di Madînet Mádì e gli inni di Isidoro” Prolegomena: Documenti e Studi Storici e Filologici 2 (1952) 105-122.


