
Readers of this journal will certainly be aware that Late Period Egypt offers abundant material for the student of religion. Scholars of Demotic, Hieratic, and Hieroglyphs are both publishing new compositions and making the often rather forbiddingly difficult sources more accessible to non-specialists. Graeco-Roman Period Egyptians enjoyed, of course, an enviable reputation for their oracular skills; one need only think of Nektanebo in the Alexander Romance. *Isis, Das göttliche Kind und die Weltordnung* is the *editio princeps* of an unusually intriguing divination text in Demotic which would certainly have pleased the last of the native Pharaohs.

Stadler publishes the recto of P. Vienna D. 12006, the main witness, as well as two other fragmentary works, P. Vienna D. 12194 (written in Demotic; parallel to 2/4-12) and P. Berlin 23057 (written in Hieratic), which seems to be closely related to this composition. On palaeographical grounds he believes that the same scribe wrote the famous “Lamb of Bocchoris,” (29) firmly dated to the


3 The numerals in parenthesis refer to pages in the book under review.
time of Augustus, specifically 4 A.D.\textsuperscript{4} Palaeography also suggests Soknopaiu Nesos in the Fayum as the provenance for P. Vienna D. 12006 (29). Stadler describes in detailed fashion the damaged papyrus (17-24). There are some eight columns of text; a drawing of the entire papyrus appears on page 20. He closely studies the distinctive features of script and grammar (25-46). Admirably, Stadler endeavors to make his publication user-friendly for the non-Demoticist (17). To this end he separates the “Demotic” commentary from the “content” commentary, supplies an overview chapter on the role of the gods in the text, and offers a continuous translation. Welcome too is the subject index (339-47), a tool which will also enable non-specialists to delve into the book. The Demoticists, for their part, will avidly read the technical discussions and appreciate the photographs with hand-facsimiles (supplemented by a CD of images), and extensive glossary (277-337), which include facsimiles of the individual words. The commentaries on the text abound in useful observations and analysis.\textsuperscript{5} For the purpose of this review, however, I will focus on the content of the composition, rather than on questions of decipherment and reading.\textsuperscript{6}

P. Vienna D. 12006 Recto comprises two basic sections (165). In the first (1/1-ca. 3/39) Isis engages in dialogue with, probably, a divine child.

I translate, following Stadler (52-53), a relatively well preserved passage from this first section in order to convey an impression of the text:

\begin{quote}
(2/7-14) “The question which Isis, the [great] goddess, put, [while she says:] ‘Will I fall through Seth, if he should find me?’ The child spoke to her: ‘The fighter who has armed... fight against [you(?)... ]... the property.
\end{quote}


\textsuperscript{5} Particularly useful lexicographical discussions are, for example: \textit{sn}, “to inquire (in an oracular fashion)” (87-88); \textit{sm}, “omen” (92-93); \textit{\textsection s}, “besonders schwach sein” (101); \textit{s-nht}, “misfortune” (103-06); \textit{tm-sp}-snake (107); \textit{hsx-hr}, “untimely birth” (115); \textit{tm-hq}, (99-100); \textit{t-my.t} (118-19). I note that \textit{thr} (136) also appears in Jasnow and Zauzich, \textit{Book of Thoth}, p. 293.