THREE GREEK HYMNS IN THE CORPUS HERMETICUM: AN ANALYSIS OF MARKED LANGUAGE AND FUNCTION

by

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(Under the Direction of Erika T. Hermanowicz)

ABSTRACT

The *Corpus Hermeticum*, a series of 17 Graeco-Egyptian treatises preserved from late antiquity and containing diverse literary forms, contains material in its first, fifth, and thirteenth tractates that the texts themselves identify as hymnic. These 'hymns' are appended to preceding dialogues between characters, usually identified as Hermes Trismegistos and his son, that treat subjects such as god, the cosmos, and the ultimate nature of man. Numerous scholars have remarked on their peculiar structure and lack of apparent quantitative meter. This study interrogates the definition of 'hymn' from the Greek perspective, analyzes the text of the 'hymns' to discover their form and structure, and tries to determine their function within the tractates in which they are embedded.

INDEX WORDS: RELIGION, CLASSICAL STUDIES, GREEK, MAGIC, HERMETICA

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DEDICATION

To my parents, who have always supported me, and for George Hernandez and Linda Varkonda, who were always under the naïve impression that I would actually write this thing.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I mostly would like to acknowledge the improbable fact that I’m still here.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The philosophical *Corpus Hermeticum* is a series of 17 Greek treatises that consider philosophical and religious themes localized around what constitutes true or ultimate knowledge of the world, the cosmos, and the relationship between man, the gods, and the creator. Many of them, although not all, are in the form of a dialogue between a teacher and a student. Included with them is a Latin text, usually referred to as the *Asclepius*, which is thematically linked with the other treatises and is usually assumed to have been translated from a Greek original. The principal characters in the text are or are at least assigned the names of Greek and Hellenized Egyptian gods (e.g., Tat, Thoth, Asclepius). Scholars generally agree that the *C.H.*'s unknown authors produced the 18 treatises somewhere between 1 and 300 CE.[1] Other philosophical Hermetic material, more or less of the same type, appears in Coptic documents discovered at Nag Hammadi, is anthologized in the Stobaeus collection, and was discovered in Armenian translation.[2]

In three of the Greek treatises, *C.H.* I, V, and XIII, passages appear that have been recognized as "hymnic" at least since Richard Reitzenstein initiated modern Hermetic studies with his Poimandres in 1904.[3] Two other texts, the aforementioned Latin *Asclepius* and the

[1] Garth Fowden. *The Egyptian Hermes*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 1-11.
[2] For a discussion of the Armenian text and a translation, see Jean-Pierre Mahé. *Hermès en haute-Egypt : Tome II, Le Fragment du Discours parfait et les Définitions Hermétiques Arméniennes. (*Quebec: Presses de l'Université Laval, 1982).
[3] Richard Reitzenstein. *Poimandres: Studien zur griechisch-ägyptischen und frühchristlichen Literatur*. (Leipzig: Teubner, 1904).

Coptic *Concerning the Ogdoad and the Ennead,*[4] also contain passages with hymnic material. Although, as G. Zuntz observes, there are many passages of a hymnic character scattered throughout the *Corpus Hermeticum*, these passages are the only sections that explicitly announce themselves as "hymns." All of them occur at or towards the end of the treatises in which they appear and represent an abrupt transition from the teacher-student dialogue of the preceding text. With the exception of the hymns in *C.H.* XIII and the *Asclepius*, they appear to be interruptions rather than organic developments in the treatises' argument or narrative structure.

These hymns are interesting for several reasons. Their appearance with and as the culmination of a preceding dialogue is, as far as I know, unique in extant Greek literature. Although either they refer to themselves as "hymns" or are identified as such by their preceding treatises, they do not have any evident quantitative meter, unlike other pagan hymns probably from the same era, such as the Orphic Hymns and the hymns in *Greek Magical Papyri*, which both employ dactylic hexameter. Moreover, their content is ostensibly monotheistic in a way that has few parallels outside of Christian and Jewish hymns.

This uniqueness of genre and form has motivated the present study, which will examine the hymns in the context of Greek hymnic tradition, analyze their linguistic features, and attempt to understand the function they play in their respective treatises. Since the hymns in the *Asclepius* and *Concerning the Ogdoad and the Ennead* are translations into Latin and Coptic, respectively, rather than the Greek originals, their language is rather different and cannot be compared directly to that of the hymns in *C.H.* I, V, and XIII. Consequently, their analysis lies outside the scope of the present study. A short hymnic passage at the end of *C.H.* XIII is also omitted due to its extreme brevity in comparison with the other material.

[4] For the text and a French translation, see Jean-Pierre Mahé. *Hermès en haute-Egypte: Tome I, Les Textes Hermétiques de Nag Hammadi et leurs paralléles Grecs et Latins.* (Quebec: Presses de l'Université Laval, 1978).

The most recent and only comprehensive treatment of all of the hymns, including those in the *Asclepius* and the Coptic material, was a 1985 doctoral thesis by David John Meredith Whitehouse.[5] That thesis examines the hymns' form critically, engaging with the various manuscript traditions, and attempts to establish a *Sitz im Leben* for them. Although Whitehouse does treat the linguistic structure of the hymns and addresses their place within their respective treatises, the focus of his work lies elsewhere. The present study, by virtue of its focus on the three long Greek hymns, will be able to examine the structure of the hymns in *C.H.* I, V, and XIII in finer detail and offer a fuller explanation of how they function in their respective treatises. The assumption of an essential textual unity between the hymns and the treatises in which they are embedded and a decision to follow a single edition of the *Corpus Hermeticum*, that of Nock-Festugière,[6] will further narrow the study's focus and eliminate any potential distractions.

Chapter 1 will situate the material in the historical context of Greek hymnody and examine its language. The latter examination will include analyses of poetic, rhetorical, and other marked language with a focus on syllabic structure and colometry. Chapter 2 will examine the function of the hymns in the context of the wider structure of *C.H.* I, V, and XIII.

[5] David John Meredith White. "The Hymns of the Corpus Hermeticum : Forms with a Diverse Functional History." Th.D diss, (Harvard University, 1985).
[6] Festugière, A. J., *La révélation d'Hermès Trismégiste*, 4 vols. 2nd ed, Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1950.

CHAPTER 2

WHAT IS A HYMN ANYWAY?

The bulk of this chapter will constitute an analysis of the structure of the Greek hymns in *C.H.* I, V, and XIII. Any analysis of a text that comes down to us as potentially damaged and fragmentary as the *Corpus Hermeticum* is tentative by nature. Further adding to the uncertainty are the various attempts at textual criticism that disagree with each other on major points. Reitzenstein,[7] Scott[8], Nock-Festugière,[9] Whitehouse,[10] and Grese,[11] have produced versions of the text that they consider authoritative. Since extensive textual criticism is outside the scope of this study, I have chosen an established text, Nock- Festugière, for my analysis based on the observation that most modern scholars cite it as authoritative. I will note when any other version has been consulted.

Scholars refer to the material under discussion as hymnic because either the text identifies itself as a hymn, as in *C.H.* V and XIII, or the dialogue in which the hymn is embedded uses the term hymn to describe it, as in *C.H.* I. Since this chapter will be discussing the structure of these texts, it is important to understand what is meant by hymn. In English and modern European languages like French and German, speakers use hymn to refer to material

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[7] Richard Reitzenstein. *Poimandres; Studien zur griechisch-ägyptischen und frühchristlichen Literature.* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1904)
[8] Walter Scott. *Hermetica: The Ancient Greek and Latin Writings Which Contain Religious or Philosophical Teachings Ascribed to Hermes Trismegistus.* 4 vols. (London: Dawsons of Pall Mall, 1968).
[9] Arthur D. Nock, and Andre-Jean Festugière. *Hermès Trismegiste: Corpus Hermeticum*. 4 vols. (Paris, Les Belles Lettres, 1945-1954).
[10] David John Meredith Whitehouse "The Hymns of the Corpus Hermeticum : Forms with a Diverse Functional History." Th.D diss, Harvard University, 1985.
[11] William Grese. *Corpus Hermeticum XIII and Early Christian Literature*. (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1976)

encompassing a wide breadth of forms, meters, and melodies.[12] In addition to Greek hymns, there are Christian hymns written in rhyme, Egyptian hymns in an unknown meter, Zoroastrian hymns in metrical prose, Ṛg Vedic hymns in highly regimented quantitative meter, etc. They share neither form nor structure, but have two common characteristics: they ostensibly seek to praise a deity and they contain marked language that places themselves outside the bounds of plain prose.

How did the Greeks define their word ὕμνος? Were they as loose in their definition of 'hymn' as the modern inheritors of the term? Etymologically, the word is opaque. An early theory linked Greek ὕμνος with Vedic Sanskrit *sumná* and the Avestan hapax legomenon *humna*, presupposing a Proto-Indo-European *$*H_1$su-mn-o-s*. *Sumná* is an attractive cognate because it can be used to mean 'a song pleasing to a deity.' Unfortunately, if the standard etymology of *sumná* and *humna* as coming from *$*H_1$su-mn-o-s* is accurate, the expected outcome in Greek would be **eumnos* (**H_1sumnos* > **esumnos* > **ehumnos* > **eumnos*).[13] However, if we assume the Vedic ultima accent is original and that initial laryngeals drop regularly in nominal compounds accented on the final syllable (cf. ὑγιής < *H_1su-g^{w}iH_3-és*), then the problem with the laryngeal disappears.[14] If this is the case, the issue of the initial accent in the Greek remains.

Another promising possibility was to connect ὕμνος with the PIE word for weaving: **u̯ebh*. In this scenario, the PIE form would be something like **ubhnos*, but insoluble phonological issues have prevented this etymology from being accepted. Chief of these is that no other examples of PIE **bhn* becoming Greek **mn* can be found. Beekes cites some other etymological possibilities, including a connection to PIE **sH$_2$ei̯* 'to bind' with cognates in

[12] For the varied material considered 'hymns' in European languages, see the diversity in W. Burkert, & F. Stolz (eds.), *Hymnen der alten Welt im Kulturvergleich* (Gottingen: Vandehoeck & Ruprecht, 1994).
[13] For details of this early etymology, see R. Wunsch *Pauly Wissowa* s.v. Hymnos, 141-142.
[14] For a summary of this theory and an attempt to explain the accental divergence, see Marcello Durrante. *Sulla Preistoria Della Tradizione Poetica Greca. Parte Seconda: Risultanze Della Comparazione Indoeuropea*. (Roma, Edizioni dell'Ateneo, 1976), 155-166

Sankrit *sā́man* 'song of praise'' and Hittite *išḫamai* 'song, hymn.'[15] Vine suggests a background in the root **su̯enH* 'sound, intone,' which has reflexes in Latin *sonāre* and Vedic *asvanīt*. In his formulation, the original form reflects an *o*-grade action noun (**su̯on[H]-mo-* *'sounding,' 'intoning'). With the regular drop of the laryngeal between resonants and **-nm* > **-mn* metathesis, the only issue is the remaining *o*, which is dispatched by the application of Cowgill's Law (**Tu̯oN-* > *Tu̯uN*).[16] As the situation stands, there is a welter of etymological possibilities without a definitive reason for selecting any one of them.

Since etymological considerations are no help, we must turn to usage and the definitions of ancient writers. The next section will proceed chronologically through some authorial definitions of 'hymn.' The first extant textual appearance of ὕμνος is *Odyssey* 8.429, in which Demodocus' performance is described as ἀοιδῆς ὕμνον. Clearly the word is connected to performance, music, and song, but exactly what ὕμνος means here is difficult to tease out.[17] Later on, the term acquired an association with praise. In Plato's *Republic*, a passage links and contrasts hymns with encomia, describing the former as intended for gods and the latter as intended for good men.[18] A passage in the *Laws* attributed to the Athenian Stranger describes a hymn as a type of song (εἶδος ᾠδῆς) that constitutes prayers to the gods (εὐχαὶ πρὸς θεούς).[19] Further on in the same section of *Laws*, the speaker lists threnodies, paeans, and dithyrambs as other varieties of song.[20] Regardless of what this suggests for Plato's own definition of a hymn—the problems that come with assuming that any of Plato's speakers represent an authorial view

[15] Robert Beekes. *Etymological Dictionary of Greek*. (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 1531-1532
[16] Brent Vine "On 'Cowgill's Law' in Greek." in *Compositiones Indogermanicae in memoriam Joachem Schindler*, eds.Heiner Eichner and Hans Christian Luschützky (Praha: enigma corporation GmbH, 1999), 576.
[17] A 'weaving' of song, drawing upon the etymology cited earlier, is something many scholars still cite. It's an attractive interpretation except for the phonological improbability already mentioned. For the textual argument, see Gregory Nagy. *Homer the Classic*. Hellenic Studies Series 36. (Washington, DC: Center for Hellenic Studies, 2008), 229-230.
[18] *Republic* 10.607a: ὕμνους θεοῖς καὶ ἐγκώμια τοῖς ἀγαθοῖς
[19] *Laws* 700 b1-2: καί τι ἦν εἶδος ᾠδῆς εὐχαὶ πρὸς θεούς, ὄνομα δὲ ὕμνοι ἐπεκαλοῦντο
[20] *Laws* 700 b3-5 καὶ τούτῳ δὴ τὸ ἐναντίον ἦν ᾠδῆς ἕτερον εἶδος – θρήνους δέ τις ἂν αὐτοὺς μάλιστα ἐκάλεσεν – καὶ παίωνες ἕτερον, καὶ ἄλλο, Διονύσου γένεσις

will be avoided—the passage implies that at least some speakers of Greek thought of hymns as a form of song distinct from paeans, dithyrambs, and other cultic forms. Later on, in the 2nd century B.C.E., Dionysios Thrax defines ὕμνος as a poem containing encomia/praise of the gods and heroes with thanksgiving (μετ᾽ εὐχαριστίας).[21] By the 4th century C.E. Menander Rhetor, in a way similar to the passage in the Republic cited above and likely referring to it, defines the hymnic form in opposition to encomia, stating that while encomia are addressed to men, hymns are addressed to gods.[22] Around the same period, in a Christian example, Gregory of Nyssa, possibly writing soon after the composition of the *Corpus Hermeticum* (4th century C.E.), distinguishes hymns from psalms, odes, prayers, and other similar forms by focusing on elements of praise and of thanksgiving. He writes that the "hymn is praise (εὐφημία) dedicated to God for our good circumstances" (τοῖς ὑπάρχουσιν ἡμῖν ἀγαθοῖς).[23]

Furley and Bremer, drawing upon their own store of ancient authorities, acknowledge that there may have existed at one point a specific hymnic form separate from other songs dedicated to gods, but argue that there was also another, generic definition of ὕμνος that either came later or existed alongside the specific, formal definition.[24] For ancient corroboration, they cite a late passage that appears in Photius' *Bibliotheca* that is attributed to Proclus: "they call in general all things written to the gods hymns. That's why they appear to relate the prosodion and other examples discussed before to the hymn as a species to a genus."[25] Furley and Bremer explain this meaning of 'hymn' has having been derived from methods of Alexandrian classification. Any songs of praise to the gods that the Alexandrians couldn't easily identify as

[21]Thrax 451.6 Hilgard: ὕμνος ἐστὶ ποίημα περιέχον θεῶν ἐγκώμια καὶ ἡρώων μετ᾽ εὐχαριστίας
[22] Menander Rhetor. 331, 19f: ἔπαινος δέ τις γίνεται, ὁτὲ μὲν εἰς θεούς, ὁτὲ δὲ εἰς τὰ θνητά· καὶ ὅτε μὲν εἰς θεούς, ὕμνους καλοῦμεν
[23] *In inscriptiones Psalmorum* 100:3: ὕμνος δὲ ἡ ἐπὶ τοῖς ὑπάρχουσιν ἡμῖν ἀγαθοῖς ἀνατιθεμένη τῷ θεῷ εὐφημία
[24] William D. Furley, and Jan Maarten Bremer. *Greek Hymns*, 2 vols. (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001), 1: 10-11
[25]Photius *Bibliotheca* 320a12-15 Henry: Ἐκάλουν δὲ καθόλου πάντα τὰ εἰς τοὺς ὑπερόντας γραφόμενα ὕμνους· διὸ καὶ τὸ προσόδιον καὶ τὰ ἄλλα τὰ προειρημένα φαίνονται ἀντιδιαστέλλοντες τῷ ὕμνῳ ὡς εἴδη πρὸς γένος·

being addressed to a particular deity in a particular form, for example paeans, dithyrambs, parthenia, were assembled into collections entitled 'hymns,' which may as well have been called 'miscellaneous hymns.'[26]

All of this suggests that by the time of Proclus, the 5th century C.E., the hymn is considered a genre of song in praise of gods, possibly with thanksgiving as a motive. This is a sufficiently narrow definition for content, but what of the form of the hymn? As we have seen, Dionysius Thrax defined a hymn as a ποίημα. Certain Greek writings define a ποίημα in opposition to prose, the key difference being the presence of meter. For example, Isocrates, in his *Evagoras*, sets up a sharp distinction between poetry and prose, writing, "They [i.e., the poets] make all things with rhythm and meter (μετὰ μέτρων καὶ ῥυθμῶν), but they [orators] have no share of these things."[27] Gorgias, too, in *Encomium to Helen* 8-9 simply distinguishes prose from poetry by saying that poetry is speech with meter (λόγον ἔχοντα μέτρον). This distinction, however, proved slippery and difficult to maintain, as the example of Aristotle, who discusses the relationship between poetry and prose widely in the *Poetics*, demonstrates. While meter is a factor in his analysis, content and other stylistic factors seem to also be important—possibly more so. For example, in one passage he complains that,

"People, joining together the making of poetry with meter, call those who make elegiac poetry elegiac poets and those who make epic poetry, epic poets, as though they were calling them poets not due to mimesis, but according to common meter. Even if something on medicine or physics were metrical, they ought not to call them such. Homer and Empedocles are nothing

[26] Furley and Bremmer 1: 11

[27] Isocrates, *Evagoras* 10.5 -10.6: οἱ μὲν μετὰ μέτρων καὶ ῥυθμῶν ἅπαντα ποιοῦσιν, οἱ δ'οὐδενὸς τούτων κοινωνοῦσιν· For more context, see the whole of *Evagoras* 8 – 10.

alike except in that they are metrical. Therefore, it is appropriate to call the former a poet and the latter a physicist rather than a poet."[28]

This is not the only passage in which Aristotle problematizes the rote ascription of 'poetry' to material written in meter, seeming to judge poetry as a genre by different criteria than Isocrates and Gorgias. For example, in *Poetics* 1451a36-1451b10, he makes a similar point about historical material, noting that "history and poetry do not differ in that one is uttered metrically and the other without meter."[29] His criterion for generic difference lies in poetry's greater capacity for creative mimesis rather than its formal structure. Regardless, we can't be certain that Aristotle still doesn't see meter as a necessity for poetry, only that to constitute poetry, material/speech must contain certain other elements *in addition to* meter. The matter is complex, so perhaps it's best to tentatively surmise from the material available to us that many, if not most Greeks considered poetry to be connected to meter. After all, Aristotle's objection to "language with meter" as a definition of poetry seems to be in direct opposition to a plurality of 'opponents' who *do* maintain that definition.

Still, even if a hymn is a poem and a poem can be counted on to have meter, by which meter would we define it? Greek poets employed a large number of meters, each of which had ties and associations with specific genres. For example, epic poets wrote dactylic hexameter, whereas tragedians commonly--but not exclusively--wrote dialogue in iambic trimeter. Material described as hymnic as it has been transmitted to us is often in dactylic hexameter. The Homeric hymns, in keeping with the practice of their eponymous epicist, are composed of dactylic hexameters. Callimachus wrote five of his six hymns in hexameter. The Orphic poet(s) and most

[28] *Poetics* 1447b 14-20*:* πλὴν οἱ ἄνθρωποί γε συνάπτοντες τῷ μέτρῳ τὸ ποιεῖν ἐλεγειοποιοὺς τοὺς δὲ ἐποποιοὺς ὀνομάζουσιν, οὐχ ὡς κατὰ τὴν μίμησιν ποιητὰς ἀλλὰ κοινῇ κατὰ τὸ μέτρον προς αγορεύοντες· καὶ γὰρ ἂν ἰατρικὸν ἢ φυσικόν τι διὰ τῶν μέτρων ἐκφέρωσιν, οὕτω καλεῖν εἰώθασιν· οὐδὲν δὲ κοινόν ἐστιν Ὁμήρῳ καὶ Ἐμπεδοκλεῖ πλὴν τὸ μέτρον, διὸ τὸν μὲν ποιητὴν δίκαιον καλεῖν, τὸν δὲ φυσιολόγον μᾶλλον ἢ ποιητήν

[29] *Poetics* 1451b.1 ἱστορικὸς καὶ ὁ ποιητὴς οὐ τῷ ἢ ἔμμετρα λέγειν ἢ ἄμετρα διαφέρουσιν

of the hymnodists whose work has been preserved in the *Greek Magical Papyri* also used hexameter verse. If we employ the word 'hymn' to encompass paeans, dithyrambs, and other cultic songs to gods, as Proclus does in his above-cited definition of hymn as a genre rather than a type, what constitutes a hymn is much expanded. Each type of 'hymn' had its own meter and style associated with it. Moreover, Furley and Bremer's collection of Greek hymns features diverse meters in addition to those already mentioned.

Notwithstanding whether hymns must be in a particular type of meter, there is evidence for a type of hymn that isn't strictly metrical at all—at least not in the way meant by Isocrates or Aristotle. There are extant aretologies of Isis, possibly translated from an Egyptian original, that certainly seem hymnic in nature.[30] More prominently, however, in the middle of the 2nd century C.E., the rhetorician Aelius Aristides wrote pieces as part of a practice that he explicitly describes as composing hymns "without meter."[31] Since he goes out of his way to highlight his lack of meter, in a case of the exception proving the rule, this suggests that either he or at least some of his 3rd century audience expected hymns to be metrical. Aristides' prose hymns, of which 9 survive, are essentially epideictic orations composed in honor of various deities. His work is used a century later by Menander Rhetor as the exemplar of a prose hymn.[32]

Menander Rhetor, writing after Aelius Aristides in the 4th century, retroactively expands the prose hymn category to include some of Plato's prose in the *Symposium* and the *Phraedrus*.[33] Possibly using Menander as a guide, a 20th century commentator, Eduard Norden also suggests that Plato's 'hymns' point to a prose hymn genre that pre-dates Aristides' efforts. Norden, however, is looking not for a source for Aristides' style, but rather for precursors and models for

[30] For a bibliography on Isis aretologies in Greek, see Furley and Bremmer 1: 49
[31] Aelius Aristides or. *43*. 1.11-12: ὑπισχνούμενος ὕμνον ἐρεῖν Διὸς, καὶ ταῦτα ἄνευ μέτρου
[32] see J.M. Bremer. "Menander Rhetor on Hymns". In *Greek Literary Theory After Aristotle*, edited by J.G.J. Abbenes Sr. & I. Sluiter. (Amsterdam: VU University Press, 1995): 58-74
[33] Bremer 63-64

the earliest Christian hymns.[34] Although scholars and believers alike have long known from *Colossians* 3.16 about the early Christian custom of singing 'hymns' of a certain variety, it has only been within the last century or two that scholars began to suspect that traditional hymnic material might be embedded in the New Testament.[35] The late recognition of these passages as hymnic is in part due to their structure. They are not composed of quantitative meter, but rather constitute alternating lines of elevated or poetic language that seems set off from the style of the rest of the text. These lines are divided by comparisons, conceptual oppositions, and parallelism. These devices, especially the parallelism, are associated more with Semitic poetry than Greek, which brings us to the Psalms and other poetic material in the Hebrew Bible, which may have influenced Greek hymns through its translation in the *Septuagint*.

The idea of parallelism as the axis around which poetic material in the Biblical Old Testament revolves is attributed to 18th century scholar Robert Lowth. Adele Berlin quotes a fairly precise definition of the phenomenon from Lowth's 1778 introduction to *Isaiah*:

"The correspondence of one Verse, or Line, with another, I call Parallelism. When a proposition is delivered and a second is subjoined to it, or drawn under it, equivalent, or contrasted with it, in Sense; or similar to it in the form of Grammatical Construction; these I call Parallel Lines; and the words or phrases answering one another in the corresponding Lines Parallel Terms."[36]

This parallelism, usually referred to as *parallelismus membrorum* in the literature, can be complex, and its definition in toto is outside the parameters of this study. Berlin—non-

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[34]Eduard Norden. *Die antike Kunstprosa vom VI. Jahrhundert v. Chr. bis in die Zeit der Renaissance. Band II.* (Berlin : Teuber, 1898), 844-845

[35] For a fuller description of the process, see Matthew E. Gordley. *New Testament Christological Hymns: Exploring Texts, Contexts, and Significance*. (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2018), 7-37 or Jack T. Sanders. *The New Testament Christological Hymns: Their Historical Religious Background.* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971) 1-5.

[36] See the later, published version in Robert Lowth. *Isaiah, a New Translation with a Preliminary Dissertation and Notes*. (London: Wm Tegg, 1848) quoted in Adele Berlin. *The Dynamics of Biblical Parallelism*. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), 1

exhaustively—lists "types and subtypes" discovered by Biblical scholars as "synonymous, antithetic, synthetic" and "incomplete parallelism, staircase parallelism, janus parallelism, metathetic parallelism, and so on."[37] In spite a wide-encompassing series of subcategories that lends the criteria for identifying parallelism a certain confusing potential for specificity, the concept is useful, and because it is a conceptual technique rather than an entirely linguistic one, it survives in the *Septuagint*'s translation of the Psalms and goes on to influence New Testament hymnic material.

Since parallelism exists not only in Biblical poetry, but also in prose, and what qualifies as 'poetic language' varies, some scholars have questioned this way of analyzing Hebrew poetry and lent some doubt to the methodology behind even identifying certain New Testament passages as hymnic.[38] However, no scholar, to my knowledge, believes that parallelism isn't a significant feature of Hebrew poetry and its translation in the *Septuagint* or that certain passages of the New Testament aren't genuinely hymnic. In addition to the 'Psalmic' hymns of the New Testament, early Christians did write hymns in classical meters, including dactylic hexameter, but we have no examples of them until relatively late. Gregory of Nyssa and Gregory Nazianzus, for example, wrote hymns in a variety of meters, including hemiambs and anacreontics. Even among Gregory Nazianzus' hymns, however, there are examples of hymns that scholars have been unable to categorize using quantitative methods, namely *carmen* 1.1.32 and 2.1.3.[39]

To return to Norden, he recognizes in both early Christian hymns and some other examples, including the hymns of the *Corpus Hermeticum*, an Eastern flavor that he considers non-Greek. The characteristics of this style are the address of the God directly in the form of

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[37] Berlin 2

[38] For the argument, see Michael Peppard. "Poetry', `Hymns' and `Traditional Material' in New Testament Epistles or How to Do Things with Indentations." *Journal for The Study of The New Testament* (2008): 319-342

[39] Vassiliki Frangeskou. *The Hymns of Gregory of Nazianzus and their Place in the History of Greek and Early Christian Hymnography*. (PhD Diss. University of Leeds, 1984)

"you," which from his analysis has come to be known as the Du Stil. This form of hymnody is characterized by a rapid and paratactic style in which one grammatically unconnected line follows another, an abundance of *parallelismi membrorum*, and a focus on connecting the second person singular pronoun of the deity with attributes via the copula ("Thou Art…"). He claims that in "reinhellenischen Texten" gods are praised through their feats.[40]

Further afield, but perhaps useful for analyzing hymnic language, Calvert Watkins, in his pioneering study on comparative Indo-European poetics, *How to Kill a Dragon*, recognized a style of Indo-European religious poetry without the earliest material's characteristic quantitative meter. His examples are a harvest prayer in Cato the Elder's *de agri cultura*, the Umbrian Iguvine tablets, the *Yasna Haptaŋhāiti*, and more relevant for the present study, the Orphic gold leaves. According to Watkins, the characteristics of this style, which he calls the "strophic style" are:

> "demarcated strophic structures which can be broken into relatively short lines which correspond to syntactic units. These lines are often ornamented by alliteration and other phonetic figures, and may and usually do exhibit characteristic rhetorical and grammatical figures. The lines commonly involve counting entities, for example sequences of dyads followed by a triad or a monad. The entities counted are usually stressed words, accompanied or not by enclitic elements." [41]

In the same section, he says that although this language has been referred to as "rhythmic prose," that category isn't necessarily appropriate given how extensively the material's structure deviates from regular language. The texts Watkins analyzes are not hymns in that they do not praise divinities, but they are religious nonetheless.

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[40] Eduard Norden. *Agnostos Theos: Untersuchungen zur Formengeschichte religiöser Rede*. (Berlin: Damstadt: Teubner, 1913), 221-222.

[41] *Calvert Watkins. How to Kill a Dragon : Aspects of Indo-European Poetics. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995),* 229

As the results of this survey suggest, the Greek conception of hymn was diverse and most likely became more liberal as time went on, eventually expanding by the 4th century to include prose hymns and other innovations. In Proclus' 5th century C.E. definition, 'hymn' is a type of genre that seems to have no other feature besides the religious function of bestowing praise upon a deity or deities. By this time, Aelius Aristides had already written his prose hymns, Menander Rhetor had codified them and thereby expanded the definition of hymn, and, if scholars are correct about hymnic material in the New Testament, Christians had been writing hymns without quantitative meter for centuries.

The passages in the *C.H.* that are marked off as hymnic are not hymns if we define hymns as poetry and poetry as speech with meter—at least if we narrowly define meter as the quantitative meter of early Greek and Roman poetry. As has been shown, however, certain Greek thinkers did not consider meter as the defining characteristic of poetry. Even if the hymns in the *C.H.* do not have quantitative meter, they display abundant marked language that is uncommon in prose, such as parallelism. In addition, they use rhetorical techniques that wouldn't be out of place in "Asianic" or Gorgianic rhetoric, such as isocola, parisa, homioteleuta, and alliteration, in addition to standard classical rhetorical fare such as anaphora.[42]

In the next section of this chapter, I will go through the structure of the hymnic material in the Corpus *Hermeticum*, noting its rhetorical, rhythmic, and poetic features. As chapter two will focus on the relationship of the hymns to the dialogues in which they are placed, here I will only comment on content and meaning as they are relevant to structure. I will demonstrate that these texts are built on parallelisms similar to those found in the New Testament hymnic material

[42] For the various types of Gorgianic rhetoric, see John Cunningham Robertson. *The Gorgianic Figures in Early Greek Prose.* (PhD. Diss. Johns Hopkins, 1891), 4-7

and the *Septuagint*, rhetorical forms, and a rhythmic arrangement of lines around imprecise syllable counts.

An important antecedent to this study is Whitehouse's 1985 PhD dissertation, *The Hymns of the Corpus Hermeticum: Forms with a Diverse Functional History*.[43] His is the first, and to my knowledge, the only previous attempt at analyzing the hymns for their linguistic structure. His analyses, although sometimes in agreement with what follows, tend to focus on the hymns' structure in the service of establishing the essential unity of the hymns and establishing a *Sitz im Leben*. This central focus leads him to engage in textual criticism and to give only minimal attention to the 'marked' language of the hymns. This chapter, by virtue of its brevity and narrow focus as well as its assumption that the lines of the hymns 'belong together', is able to analyze the linguistic structure more granularly and to take a closer look at colometry.

When defining and analyzing hymns, classicists often cite Eduard Norden's *Agnostos Theos*. Norden propounded a tripartite sequential structure for Greek hymns.[44] The first section, the *epiclesis*, contains the deity's name, epithets, cultic toponyms, and relevant genealogical information. Next, the *eulogia* details the deity's many powers, great works, and privileges. Finally, the *euche* constitutes the hymnist's own requests of the deity, which are often framed as a "*do ut des*" transaction, a sort of divine quid pro quo. Since the hymns of the *Corpus Hermeticum*, although addressing an unnamed creator or father deity, more or less conform to this schema, I will refer to it throughout as a potentially useful interpretative framework.

Before I begin the analysis proper, I will rehearse previous attempts at structuring the hymns, of which there have been surprisingly few, and explain the principles behind my own attempt at colometry.

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[43] Whitehouse
[44] Norden 1913, 168

PREVIOUS METHODS OF STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS

The hymns do not seem to have quantitative meter, and I know of no scholar who has been able to formulate such a system for them. However, Scott[45] and, following him, Zuntz,[46] thought that they saw an early version of accentual meter in the hymns in *C.H. XIII*. The meter on which they based this observation was that of Byzantine hymns. In the hymns that Scott cites, the structure is based on alternating lines of equal syllabic length whose accents match each other exactly. As an example, Scott uses material from the Byzantine hymnist Romanos. An illustrative example follows:

"ἡ παρθ**έ**νος σ**ή**μερον τὸν ὑπερ**ού**σιον τ**ί**κτει

και ἡ γ**ῆ** τὸν σπ**ή**λαιον τῷ ἀπροσ**ί**τῳ προσ**ά**γει."[47]

In this accentual schema, each line consists of 15 syllables and 2 cola, one of 7 syllables and the other of 8. The accents on articles are not counted and acute and circumflex accents on all other words are treated as equal. Scott also cites another hymn, but that hymn's accentual and strophic pattern is more complex than the one he saw in *C.H.* XIII, so I will omit it. [48]
Taking this Byzantine material as a guide, Scott attempted to apply certain accentual and syllabic rules to *C.H.* XIII. A quick, abbreviated summary are those rules are as follows: 1) each couplet contains an equal number of syllables 2) every circumflex or acute accent denotes a stress except for those on articles 3) the last stress in both lines in each couplet must correspond, but variation

[45] Scott *Hermetica* 2 :409-418
[46] G. Zuntz. "On the Hymns in Corpus Hermeticum XIII". *Hermes* 83 .1 (1955): 68-92
[47] Scott *Hermetica* 2: 410
[48] Scott *Hermetica* 2: 409-411

is permitted in other positions 4) long and short syllables are irrelevant. Although Scott had some success with his model, it was mainly due to the license he took with the text. I will demonstrate his successes with a few nonconsecutive couplets:

"μέλλω γὰρ ὑμνεῖν τὸν κτίσαντα τὰ πάντα
τὸν πήξαντα τὴν γῆν κ'οὐρανὸν κρεμάσαντα"

"οὗτ**ό**ς ἐστιν ὁ τοῦ νοός μου ὀφθαλμ**ό**ς
καὶ δ**έ**ξαιτο τῶν δυνάμεων μου τὴν φων**ή**ν"[49]

His schema works well in the first couplet. The only change that Scott must make from the manuscript is the elision of the vowel in καὶ before an unaspirated initial vowel. More changes are necessary for the second couplet: νοῦ > νοός ,an extra μου is added to the first line, and εὐλογίαν > φωνήν. These are relatively minor changes, but taken as a whole, his revisions are extensive. For example, view Scott's doctored version next to Nock's treatment of the first section:

Scott:

" ἀνοιγήτω μοι ἅπας μυχὸς τοῦ κόσμου
ἡ φύσις προσδεχέσθω μου τὴν ἀκοήν. τοῦ ὕμνου"[50]

Nock:

[49] for both selections, Scott *Hermetica* 2: 413
[50] Scott *Hermetica* 2: 412

“πᾶσα φύσις κόσμου προσδεχέσθω τοῦ ὕμνου τὴν ἀκοήν. ἀνοίγηθι γῆ, ἀνοιγήτω μοι πᾶς μοχλὸς ὄμβρου.”

Even with Scott’s radical textual emendation, the couplet doesn’t quite work with his metrical scheme. He admits that, “there ought to be a stress on μοι and one more syllable in the last colon.” This inexactitude and willingness to commit to major alterations of the material as it has been handed down to us are constant features of his analysis and colometry. He changes, deletes, and rearranges words and phrases with an enviable confidence. Still, he has to posit gaps and corruptions to make his interpretation work.

Zuntz, writing in response to Scott’s analysis, acknowledges that Scott’s “observations are penetrating and helpful,” but complains that “his attempts at complete reconstruction are marred, as is so much of his devoted work, by the excessive violence of his criticism.” He goes on to attempt a similar reconstruction based on accentual meter and syllable length, but this time based on phrasal clusters that share the same number of syllables. A passage typical of his analysis runs as follows:

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“ἀνοίγητε οὐρανοί, (7) 14

ἄνεμοί τε στ**ῆ**τε. (7)

ὁ κύκλος ὁ ἀθάνατος (8) 16

προσδεξάσθω μου τὸν λ**ό**γον· (8)

μέλλω γὰρ ὑμν**εῖ**ν (5) 12

τὸν κτίσαντα τὰ πάντα (7)

τὸν πήξαντα τὴν γ**ῆ**ν (6) 14

καὶ οὐρανὸν κρεμάσαντα (8)

καὶ ἐπιτάξαντα (6) 6

ἐκ τοῦ ὠκεανοῦ (6) 14

τὸ γλυκὺ ὕδωρ ὑπ**ά**ρχειν (8)

εἰς διατροφὴν αἰ κτίσιν (8) 16

πάντων τῶν ἀνθρ**ώ**πων (8)"[51]

Zuntz makes very few changes from the manuscripts, and his text is very similar to Nock's as a result. He removes τοῦ θεοῦ from the second couplet, getting rid of 3 syllables and balancing it, and he erases *εἰς τὴν οἰκουμένην καὶ ἀοίκητον* between *ὕδωρ* and *ὑπάρχειν* in the penultimate. Notwithstanding the incorrect counting of syllables in the second line of the first couplet (it should be 6, as it's written here and in Zuntz's text), his balanced analysis is attractive. However, it also leaves καὶ ἐπιτάξαντα as a 6-syllable orphan that can only be met by its equally Zuntz-orphaned repetition a few couplets down. Additionally, regardless of the sense of εἰς τὴν οἰκουμένην καὶ ἀοίκητον or the way it allegedly breaks up the rhythm of the hymn, it's a binary opposition and a parallelism entirely in keeping with its context.

[51] Zuntz, 89

ANALYSIS AND COLOMETRY

Like Scott and Zuntz, I see a very rough correlation between the number of syllables in certain adjacent and usually related lines and sometimes in lines that are structurally or semantically related but rather far apart. I also see alternations of long lines of similar length with shorter lines of parallelisms. Unlike Scott and Zuntz, I do not see a consistent accentual scheme, although adjacent lines do seem to share their final accents more than one might expect by chance. Absent quantitative or accentual meter, what constitutes a line can be arbitrary. Considering this, I will start my analysis with the first three "strophes" of *C.H.* I 31-32. Their anaphoric structure means that line breaks are easy to spot and difficult to argue against.

1. ἅγιος ὁ θεὸς καὶ πατὴρ τῶν ὅλων. 12
2. ἅγιος ὁ θεὸς, οὗ ἡ βουλὴ τελεῖται ἀπὸ τῶν ἰδίων δυνάμεων. 22
3. ἅγιος ὁ θεός, ὃς γνωσθῆναι βούλεται καὶ γινώσκεται τοῖς ἰδίοις. 23
4. ἅγιος εἶ, ὁ λόγῳ συστησάμενος τὰ ὄντα. 15
5. ἅγιος εἶ, οὗ πᾶσα φύσις εἰκὼν ἔφυ.13
6. ἅγιος εἶ, ὃν ἡ φύσις οὐκ ἐμόρφωσεν. 13
7. ἅγιος εἶ, ὁ πάσης δυνάμεως ἰσχυρότερος.16
8. ἅγιος εἶ, ὁ πάσης ὑπεροχῆς μείζων. 13
9. ἅγιος εἶ, ὁ κρείττων τῶν ἐπαίνων. 11

The first line has 12 syllables, and the next two have 22 and 23, respectively. In my analysis of the hymn below, I note the strong structural affinities between lines 2 and 3 in content

and word choice. In the next strophe, the first line has 15 syllables and the next two each have 13. Lines 5 and 6, similar to 2 and 3, have a semantic link in their varied use of the same word /concept. The final strophe has 16 syllables in its first line, 13 in its second, and 11 in its final line. Although this doesn't suggest a rigorously upheld pattern, it does suggest a concern for a certain rhythmic parallelism in which the first line of the second two strophes is slightly longer rhythmically and the next two lines are more or less the same. In the first strophe, the relationship is reversed: the first line is rhythmically shorter than the 2 related lines that follow.

A similar or at least adjacent structure can be seen throughout the hymns. Like Scott and Zuntz, I think it's sometimes obscured by textual difficulties. Unlike Scott, however, I would prefer not to make changes to the text transmitted to us to make my reading fit. I am also not certain whether this analysis that I have performed has uncovered anything more rhythmically tight and structured than what would be expected from an artful prose text.

Although my analysis is tentative, I have performed my own colometry on the hymns based on my observation that syllable length matters to their rhythm and structure. Sometimes lines of equal or near equal syllables follow each other, and usually this indicates an agreement of content or a parallelism or some sort. In other instances, a rhythmic pattern is produced by the introduction of a relatively long line followed by extremely short parallel lines. Usually, these structures are repeated at least once throughout the hymn, suggesting that they are deliberate rather than chance occurrences.

ANALYSIS OF C.H. I 31-32

1. ἅγιος ὁ θεὸς καὶ πατὴρ τῶν ὅλων. 12

2. ἅγιος ὁ θεὸς, οὗ ἡ βουλὴ τελεῖται ἀπὸ τῶν ἰδίων δυνάμεων. 22

3. ἅγιος ὁ θεός, ὃς γνωσθῆναι βούλεται καὶ γινώσκεται τοῖς ἰδίοις. 23

4. ἅγιος εἶ, ὁ λόγῳ συστησάμενος τὰ ὄντα. 15

5. ἅγιος εἶ, οὗ πᾶσα φύσις εἰκὼν ἔφυ.13

6. ἅγιος εἶ, ὃν ἡ φύσις οὐκ ἐμόρφωσεν. 13

7. ἅγιος εἶ, ὁ πάσης δυνάμεως ἰσχυρότερος.16

8. ἅγιος εἶ, ὁ πάσης ὑπεροχῆς μείζων. 13

9. ἅγιος εἶ, ὁ κρείττων τῶν ἐπαίνων. 11

10. δέξαι λογικὰς θυσίας ἁγνὰς ἀπὸ ψυχῆς καὶ καρδίας πρὸς σὲ 20

11. ἀνατεταμένης, ἀνεκλάλητε, ἄρρητε, σιωπῇ φωνούμενε. 21

12. αἰτουμένῳ τὸ μὴ σφαλῆναι τῆς γνώσεως τῆς κατ' οὐσίαν ἡμῶν ἐπίνευσόν μοι 25

13. καὶ ἐνδυνάμωσόν με,7

14. καὶ τῆς χάριτος ταύτης φωτίσω τοὺς ἐν ἀγνοίᾳ τοῦ γένους ἀδελφούς υἱοὺς δὲ σοῦ 26

15. διὸ πιστεύω καὶ μαρτυρῶ 9

16. εἰς ζωὴν καὶ φῶς χωρῶ 7

17. εὐλογητὸς εἶ, πάτερ 7

18. ὁ σὸς ἄνθρωπος συναγιάζειν σοι βούλεται 14

19. καθὼς παρέδωκας αὐτῷ τὴν πᾶσαν ἐξουσίαν.

The hymn at the concluding section of *C.H. I* introduces the deity addressed as "God and father of all things" in its first line. Immediately preceding this identification, the hymnist describes the deity as "holy" or ἅγιος in the Greek. This opening line begins an introductory sequence in which ἅγιος stands at the head of 8 subsequent lines after the first.

The word choice speaks to the hymn's late origin and lends it a very Christian feel. It's easy to see how early Christians, encountering the hymn, would have accepted it unquestioningly as from their tradition. Although common in later Christian texts as a descriptor of God, ἅγιος rarely appears in Classical Greek expressions of worship as a descriptor of divinities themselves. Rather, ἅγιος more often refers to sacred locations, implements, objects, and animals.[52] The threefold repetition of ἅγιος ὁ θεὸς has obvious parallels with the Trisagion,[53] an early Christian prayer that may have been derived from a passage from the cry of the angels in Isaiah 6:3.[54] The Trishagion, however, has ἅγιος ὁ θεὸς only once and afterwards replaces ὁ θεὸς first with the adjective ἰσχυρός and subsequently ἀθάνατος. Although ἰσχυρός appears in its comparative form ἰσχυρότερος, ἀθάνατος is nowhere to be found in *C.H. I.*

The seemingly clear relationship that the 9 lines of this poem have with the Trishagion has led some commenters to compare it to Jewish liturgy. Birger Pearson goes to great lengths to demonstrate the Jewish character of this section,[55] even going so far as to connect the structure of the entire *C.H. I* with that of the Book of Enoch. This eagerness to identify this passage with Jewish materials is connected to the strong use of anaphora in addition to the use of the word

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[52] Joseph Henry Thayer, Carl Ludwig Wilibald Grimm, and Christian Gottlob Wilke. *A Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: being Grimm's Wilke's Clavis Novi Testamenti*. (New York: American Book Co, 1889), s.v. ἅγιος.

[53] Ἅγιος ὁ Θεός, Ἅγιος ἰσχυρός, Ἅγιος ἀθάνατος, ἐλέησον ἡμᾶς

[54] *Isaiah 6:3*: καὶ ἐκέκραγον ἕτερος πρὸς τὸν ἕτερον καὶ ἔλεγον ἅγιος ἅγιος ἅγιος κύριος σαβαωθ πλήρης πᾶσα ἡ γῆ τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ.

[55] Birger A. Pearson. "Jewish Elements in Corpus Hermeticum I (Poimandres)." *In Gnosticism, Judaism, and Egyptian Christianity*. (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990).

ἅγιος.[56] However, as Versnal has shown—surprisingly without even referring to the passage in question—this type of anaphora is not unknown in pagan sources.[57]

Regardless of its origins, this opening sequence, which serves as both an *epiclesis* in which the deity is invoked and a *eulogia*, is structured around units of 3. Each sequence of 3 consecutive lines seems to form a strophe of a sort, creating 3 strophes of 3 lines each. The line of each strophe begins with a 3-word anaphoric phrase. The first strophe's tripartite anaphoric phrase, ἅγιος ὁ θεὸς, is self-evident, but the subsequent 2 strophes contain an unchanging 2-word anaphora (ἅγιος εἶ) with a case-varying relative pronoun (ὸν, οὗ) or the definite article in the nominative (ὁ) as its third member. In a tightly constructed hymn such as this, that is unlikely to be an accidental arrangement. Perhaps coincidental is that ἅγιος ὁ θεὸς is composed of 6 syllables, beginning with the 3-syllable ἅγιος Still more speculative, but worth mentioning, is that all instances of the ἅγιος εἶ + relative pronoun/article result in 6 morae if the long syllable is counted except for ἅγιος εἶ, οὗ, which is too long by a single mora.

Each strophe is tightly constructed based an alternating pattern of case order and semantics. Although they feature a different anaphoric phrase at the head, the first two strophes are loosely parallel. The first line of each comprises the anaphoric phrase followed by a copular construction, which in line 1 is a syndetic noun phrase (καὶ πατὴρ τῶν ὅλων) and line 4 an appositional participial phrase (ὁ λόγῳ συστησάμενος τὰ ὄντα). The middle line of each strophe links the anaphoric phrase with a genitive relative clause (οὗ). The third lines feature relative clauses beginning with two different cases, the first nominative and the second accusative, which at first seems to rule out any form of parallelism. However, both relative pronouns are the only

[56] For more comparanda for the ἅγιος anaphora and the question of Jewish influence, see Whitehouse's treatment of the issue in Whitehouse: 103-106.

[57] H. Versnel, H. *Ter unus. Isis, Dionysos, Hermes. Three Studies in Henotheism Inconsinstencies in the Greek and Roman Religion*. (Leiden/New York: Brill, 1990), 210-211.

ones with a vowel consonant construction, rendering them rhythmically similar, and both final lines feature God in a patient relationship within a verb phrase (passive subject in line 3 and direct object of a negated verb in line 6).

The first two lines answer a question about what God is in relationship to all things: he is the father and the sustainer. They are mainly appositional. The middle lines, containing a genitive relative clause, are about attributes of God: his will and his image. The third lines are then about the hypothetical ways that God's creation does or does not interact with him. These parallels form an ABC ABC structure that is artful and compelling. Moreover, a conceptual parallel obtains in the final lines of the first two strophes. Lines 2 and 3 describe God's will. It is accomplished by his own powers and his will is that he be known. Lines 5 and 6 describe nature. It is God's image, but it does not change him in any way.

The final three lines link the anaphoric phrase with comparative phrases. The comparative phrases of the first two lines follow the same order: genitive phrase of comparison followed by the comparative adjective. As a variatio, the concluding line of the strophe places the comparative adjective at the front. The use of the same adjective at the head of the genitive phrase of comparison in the first two lines of strophe 3 creates a second layer to the anaphora and further links them. The word order and the extension of the anaphora in the first two lines produces a DDE pattern entirely separate from the stylistic marks used in the first 3 strophes.

The section after the triple trisagion is the *euche* or the part of the hymn in which the hymnist sets up the traditional bargain between mortals and divinities: I'll give something to you if you give me something in return (*do ut des*). Here, the hymnist asks that God accept his holy sacrifice in words. As Whitehouse noted, there seems to be a deliberate rhyming structure here

with three genitives side by side: λογικ**ὰς** θυσί**ας** ἁγν**ὰς.**[58] The three subsequent genitives describing the heart and soul of the giver stretched towards God also form a triad, although only of case since one of them has an alpha rather than an eta. The tail end of this triplet constitutes an alliterative triad when placed with **ἀ**νατεταμένης, **ἀ**νεκλάλητε, **ἄ**ρρητε. Still another unit of three is the epithets ascribed to God, ἀνεκλάλητε, ἄρρητε, σιωπῇ φωνούμενε, which also rhyme due to their shared vocative case. These also form a unit in that they mean essentially the same thing: ineffable, unspeakable, being spoken by silence.

The structure of this next section, in which the focus turns to the hymnist, constitutes the second half of the *euche* or the *ut des* section, where the speaker asks for something in return for the praise and adoration. In comparison with the rest of the poem as it appears in Nock-Festugière the final part seems less carefully constructed. The meaning is clear. The hymnist is asking that deity and he or she not fail in the task of reaching knowledge that somehow relates to mankind's essence. The expression is enclosed within two datives (αἰτουμένῳ, μοι) referring to the hymnist and depends upon an imperative verb (ἐπίνευσόν). καὶ ἐνδυνάμωσόν με is best taken separately due to the change in the verb. Additionally, the next meaningful unit (καὶ τῆς χάριτος ταύτης φωτίσω τοὺς ἐν ἀγνοίᾳ τοῦ γένους μοῦ ἀδελφούς υἱοὺς δὲ σοῦ) then becomes a balanced phrase with the initial request (the first containing 25 syllables and the second 26). καὶ ἐνδυνάμωσόν με then becomes rhythmically balanced with the next three units of meaning, most of which contain an equal number of syllables (7). These phrases are congruent except for the line with διὸ, which has 9 syllables instead of 7. Whitehouse has noticed a triplet here: the hymnist employs 3 verbs in the 2nd person singular for his petition to the deity (δέξαι, ἐπίνευσόν, ἐνδυνάμωσόν). [59]

[58] Whitehouse 109
[59] Whitehouse 110

The next two lines, 15 and 16, take over from line 14 (καὶ τῆς χάριτος ταύτης φωτίσω τοὺς ἐν ἀγνοίᾳ τοῦ γένους ἀδελφούς υἱοὺς δὲ σοῦ), which, being about enlightening ignorant men, refers back to the final section of *C.H.* I in which the narrator is given an evangelical mission. Line 15, two first person singular verbs connected with a conjunction, is nicely balanced by the next line, which a single verb connects two conjoined nouns. The three verbs (πιστεύω, μαρτυρῶ, χωρῶ) add to the theme of triplication throughout the text, and the couplet is connected throughout by a strong assonance based on ω (διὸ πιστεύ**ω** καὶ μαρτυρ**ῶ** εἰς ζ**ω**ὴν καὶ φ**ῶ**ς χ**ω**ρ**ῶ**) that is highlighted by the μαρτυρ**ῶ**/χωρ**ῶ** end rhyme. Although εὐλογητὸς εἶ, πάτερ seems like an orphan phrase at first, it serves as a way of recalling the first 9 lines, bringing the attention of the reader/listener back to the divinity and his status and recalling the first line by repeating πάτερ.

The last part can be interpreted as either one long section of 29 syllables closing off the hymn or as two lines split between a main clause and a subordinate clause. In the latter case, they fit the structure of the rest of the poem, with the first containing 14 syllables and the last line 15. The penultimate phrase aligns the speaker's will with God's will (βούλεται), recalling the content of lines 2 and 3, and stressing that as God's will is accomplished, so must God accomplish that of the hymnist. As Scott and Festugière both note, συναγιάζειν usually means to "make holy," but here in conjunction with σοι it must mean something like "to be holy with you" or "to be made equally holy."[60] The last line is an unproblematic request for evangelical authority (ἐξουσία).

[60] Scott *Hermetica* 2: 73, Nock-Festugière 1: 28

ANALYSIS OF C.H. V 10-11

1. Τίς οὖν σε εὐλογήσαι; 7

2. ὑπὲρ σοῦ ἢ πρὸς σέ; 6

3. ποῦ δὲ καὶ βλέπων εὐλογήσω σε, 9

4. ἄνω, κάτω, ἔσω, ἔξω; 8

5. οὐ γὰρ τρόπος, οὐ τόπος ἐστὶ περὶ σέ 12

6. οὐδὲ ἄλλο οὐδὲν τῶν ὄντων 9

7. πάντα δὲ ἐν σοί, πάντα ἀπὸ σοῦ 10.

8. πάντα δίδως καὶ οὐδὲν λαμβάνεις. 10

9. πάντα γὰρ ἔχεις, καὶ οὐδὲν ὃ οὐκ ἔχεις. 12

10. πότε δὲ σὲ ὑμνήσω; 7

11. οὔτε γὰρ ὥραν σοῦ οὔτε χρόνον καταλαβεῖν δυνατόν. 17

12. ὑπὲρ τίνος δὲ καὶ ὑμνήσω; 9

13. ὑπὲρ ὧν ἐποίησας, ἢ ὑπὲρ ὧν οὐκ ἐποίησας; 16

14. ὑπὲρ ὧν ἐφανέρωσας, ἢ ὑπὲρ ὧν ἔκρυψας; 15

15.διὰ τί δὲ καὶ ὑμνήσω σέ; 9

16. ὡς ἐμαυτοῦ ὤν, ὡς ἔχων τι ἴδιον, ὡς ἄλλος ὤν; 16

17. σὺ γὰρ εἶ ὃ [ε]ἂν ὦ, 6/7

18. σὺ εἶ ὃ ἂν ποιῶ 6

19. σὺ εἶ ὃ ἂν λέγω. 6

20. σὺ γὰρ πάντα εἶ καὶ ἄλλο οὐδὲν ἔστιν 12

21. ὃ μὴ ἔστι, σὺ εἶ. 6

22. σὺ πᾶν τὸ γενόμενον 7

23. σὺ τὸ μὴ γενόμενον,7

24. νοῦς μέν, νοούμενος 6

25. πατὴρ δέ δημιουργῶν 7

26. θεὸς δέ, ἐνεργῶν, 6

27. ἀγαθὸς δέ καὶ πάντα ποιῶν. 9

28. ὕλης μὲν γὰρ τὸ λεπτομερέστερον ἀήρ, 13

29. ἀέρος δὲ ψυχή, 8

30. ψυχῆς δὲ νοῦς 6

31. νοῦ δὲ ὁ θεός 6

The hymn of *C.H. V* is an *epiclesis* and *eulogia* without the *euche*. The structure, similar to the *epiclesis*/*eulogia* amalgam at the head of the hymn of *C.H. I*, is based on a series of repetitions. Here, the repetitions are questions about how the hymnist might hymn or praise the deity. While the initial questions employing the verb εὐλογεω only number two, questions with ὑμνήσω are repeated three times, constituting a triad that it is tempting to compare with the triple triadic strophes of *C.H. I.* Given this distribution, it's also hard not to wonder whether a third section with εὐλογεω might not be missing, but alas, there's no indication of this. The temptation is especially attractive since lines 1 and 10 (Τίς οὖν σε εὐλογήσαι/ πότε δὲ σὲ

ὑμνήσω;) echo each other with 7 syllables and then 12 (ὑπὲρ τίνος δὲ καὶ ὑμνήσω;) and 15 (διὰ τί δὲ καὶ ὑμνήσω σέ;) balance each other at 9.

The first two questions are posed one after the other before any answer: who might say blessings about you or in front of you and looking where (i.e., in what direction) might I praise you, up, down, inside, outside? The questions are not answered positively, but expanded upon by attributes that serve both to underscore the hopelessness of the task and to fulfill its requirements (i.e., by saying complimentary things). There is no turning (i.e., nowhere to face)[61] because there is no place around God. The next 4 lines serve to answer the question of who (Τίς) might do the praising. First, the hymn states, "nor is there is anything other than the things that are " (οὐδὲ ἄλλο οὐδὲν τῶν ὄντων). The next 3 lines constitute balanced *parallelismus membrorum* constructions anchored by the repetition of πάντα, first at the beginning of both membra of line 7 and then as initial anaphora in lines 8 and 9: All things are in God and all things are from God (πάντα δὲ ἐν σοί, πάντα ἀπὸ σοῦ). Giving all things, God takes nothing (πάντα δίδως καὶ οὐδὲν λαμβάνεις). God has all things and there is nothing that God does not have (πάντα γὰρ ἔχεις, καὶ οὐδὲν ὃ οὐκ ἔχεις). The first two πάντα lines are 10 syllables each, with each half of the parallelism (e.g., πάντα δὲ ἐν σοί/πάντα ἀπὸ σοῦ) consisting of 5 syllables. The last line of the strophe is 12 syllables and is divided into a parallelism comprised of 5 and 7 syllables. The next strophe, as the first, contains two questions. The hymnist asks when (πότε) s/he might hymn the divinity: there is no season (ὥραν) or time (χρόνον) that can contain God. The next part, echoing the structure of the first strophe, consists of a question followed by elaborations of that question with parallel structures. "For what, or why, (ὑπὲρ τίνος) should the hymnist praise God?" is the

[61] οὐ γὰρ τρόπος here could also be understood as meaning "for there is no manner or way. "Nock-Festugière and Scott seem baffled by the construction, finding it a meaningless doublet of τόπος. I, in turn, am baffled by this bafflement, given the semantic range of τρόπος and the adverb of manner (ποῦ) and adverbs of direction (ἄνω, κάτω, ἔσω, ἔξω) in the question preceding it.

question. The parallelisms consist of two mostly balanced verb phrases, one with a total of 16 syllables with 8 syllables per expression: “for the things you did/or the things you didn’t do?” (ὑπὲρ ὧν ἐποίησας/ ἢ ὑπὲρ ὧν οὐκ ἐποίησας). The other parallel phrase is not quite as well balanced with 8 syllables for “because of the things you made apparent” (ὑπὲρ ὧν ἐφανέρωσας) followed by a 7 syllable verb phrase “or because of the things you have hidden” (ἢ ὑπὲρ ὧν ἔκρυψας).

Scott and Nock-Festugière have a problem with διὰ τί at the beginning of the 3rd stanza. Scott says that the line must mean “why should I praise you?” and that it would imply that “all adoration is useless.”[62] Nock-Festugière says that it should be properly ὑπὲρ τίνος,[63] but that cannot be the original since the previous question employs ὑπὲρ τίνος and uses ὑπὲρ in its subsequent anaphoric phrases. The parallel constructions that follow are clear in meaning: the hymnist is asking in what manner or with what relationship in mind should he praise God. Should he praise God as belonging to him (ὡς ἐμαυτοῦ), as having something uniquely its own (ὡς ἔχων τι ἴδιον), or as being other (ὡς ἄλλος ὤν)? Structurally, this strophe is similar to the ones preceding it in that the first line is immediately followed by a longer line (e.g., πότε δὲ σὲ ὑμνήσω/οὔτε γὰρ ὥραν σοῦ οὔτε χρόνον καταλαβεῖν δυνατόν). The question is 9 syllables and then the subsequent, longer line is 16, which makes both exactly a syllable shorter than their counterparts in the second strophe, which weigh in at 10 and 17 respectively. Unlike the previous two strophes, this strophe follows the question and its elaboration with further explanation for why the question is necessary.

The hymnist explains that God is whatever he is (σὺ γὰρ εἶ ὃ [ε]ἂν ᾖ), whatever he does (σὺ εἶ ὃ ἂν ποιῶ), and whatever he says (σὺ εἶ ὃ ἂν λέγω). If the insertion of ε before the first ἂν

[62] Scott *Hermetica* 2: 167
[63] Nock-Festugière, 68

is ignored, these statements are isosyllabic, each containing 6 syllables. Although the next line doesn't begin with a question, and it continues the thought contained in the previous parallel structures, I've chosen to make it the start of a new strophe for the following reason: it continues the hymn's pattern of setting up a longer line with successive shorter lines consisting of parallelisms. If we take the final line as a genuine part of the hymn with eccentric doctrine, it continues the pattern. The meaning of this line is plain: "you are all things and there is nothing other" (σὺ γὰρ πάντα εἶ καὶ ἄλλο οὐδὲν ἔστιν). The next lines are all parallelisms beginning with "[even?] what is not, you are" (ὃ μὴ ἔστι, σὺ εἶ). This first parallelism moves the σὺ εἶ of previous lines to the end of the line for variation. That God is what is not seems like a curious doctrine, but the hymnist doubles down on it in the following lines with the parallelism: "you are what is happening/becoming/you are what is not happening/becoming" (σὺ πᾶν τὸ γενόμενον/σὺ τὸ μὴ γενόμενον). Both halves of the parallelism are 7 syllables each.

Although ὃ μὴ ἔστι, σὺ εἶ, at 6 syllables balances out the next 6-syllable line "cognition and the what is being cognized" (νοῦς μέν, νοούμενος), the latter, the beginning of a μέν… δέ, construction, clearly goes with πατὴρ δέ δημιουργῶν "constructing father." The logical relationship between the two phrases is unclear, but even so the hymnist continues to put forth unlikely parallels: "and God in activity/being in motion" (θεὸς δέ, ἐνεργῶν) "and the good also doing all things" (ἀγαθὸς δέ καὶ πάντα ποιῶν). The syllables here are unbalanced (7/6/9), but close enough that the rhythm doesn't suffer too much. The final section seems like a sort of doctrinal statement divorced from the rest of the hymn, even if it begins with μὲν γὰρ. The 13th line "for on the one hand air is lighter than matter" (ὕλης μὲν γὰρ τὸ λεπτομερέστερον ἀήρ) is followed by the oppositions "and soul than air/and mind than soul/and God than mind" (ἀέρος δὲ ψυχή/ψυχῆς δὲ νοῦς/νοῦ δὲ ὁ θεός). Scott has identified this final elemental explanation as an

intrusion from another part of the text,[64] but rhythmically, if not logically or conceptually, it does not seem out of place.

ANALYSIS OF C.H. XIII 16-20

1. πᾶσα φύσις κόσμου προσδεχέσθω τοῦ ὕμνου τὴν ἀκοήν. 17

2. ἀνοίγηθι γῆ 5

3. ἀνοιγήτω μοι πᾶς μοχλὸς ὄμβρου, 10

4. τὰ δένδρα μὴ σείεσθε. 7

5. ὑμνεῖν μέλλω τὸν τῆς κτίσεως κύριον,καὶ τὸ πᾶν καὶ τὸ ἕν. 17

6. ἀνοίγητε οὐρανοί 7

7. ἄνεμοί τε στῆτε. 6

8. ὁ κύκλος ὁ ἀθάνατος τοῦ θεοῦ, προσδεξάσθω μου τὸν λόγον· 19

9. μέλλω γὰρ ὑμνεῖν τὸν κτίσαντα τὰ πάντα 12

10. τὸν πήξαντα τὴν γῆν 6

11. καὶ οὐρανὸν κρεμάσαντα 8

12. καὶ ἐπιτάξαντα ἐκ τοῦ ὠκεανοῦ τὸ γλυκὺ ὕδωρ 17

13. εἰς τὴν οἰκουμένην καὶ ἀοίκητον ὑπάρχειν 14

14. εἰς διατροφὴν καὶ κτίσιν πάντων τῶν ἀνθρώπων 14

15. τὸν ἐπιτάξαντα πῦρ φανῆναι 10

16. εἰς πᾶσαν πρᾶξιν θεοῖς τε καὶ ἀνθρώποις 12 .

[64] Scott *Hermetica* 2: 168

17. δῶμεν πάντες ὁμοῦ αὐτῷ τὴν εὐλογίαν, 13

18. τῷ ἐπὶ τῶν οὐρανῶν μετεώρῳ, 11

19. τῷ πάσης φύσεως κτίστῃ. 8

20. οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ τοῦ νοῦ ὀφθαλμός 10

21. καὶ δέξαιτο τῶν δυνάμεων μου τὴν εὐλογίαν. 15

22. αἱ δυνάμεις αἱ ἐν ἐμοί, ὑμνεῖτε τὸ ἓν καὶ τὸ πᾶν·16

23. συνᾴσατε τῷ θελήματί μου πᾶσαι αἱ ἐν ἐμοὶ δυνάμεις 19

24. γνῶσις ἁγία, φωτισθεὶς ἀπὸ σοῦ, 11

25. διὰ σοῦ τὸ νοητὸν φῶς ὑμνῶν 10

26. χαίρω ἐν χαρᾷ νοῦ. 6

27. πᾶσαι δυνάμεις ὑμνεῖτε σὺν ἐμοί. 11

28. καὶ σύ μοι, ἐγκράτεια, ὕμνει. 9

29. δικαιοσύνη μου, τὸ δίκαιον ὕμνει δι' ἐμοῦ.13

30. κοινωνία ἡ ἐμή, τὸ πᾶν ὕμνει δι' ἐμοῦ·14

31. ὕμνει ἀλήθεια τὴν ἀλήθειαν. 10

32. τὸ ἀγαθόν, ἀγαθόν, ὕμνει· 9

33. ζωὴ καὶ φῶς, ἀφ' ὑμῶν 7

34. εἰς ὑμᾶς χωρεῖ ἡ εὐλογία.10

35. εὐχαριστῶ σοι, πάτερ, ἐνέργεια τῶν δυνάμεων. 16

36. εὐχαριστῶ σοι θεέ, δύναμις τῶν ἐνεργειῶν μου 16

37. ὁ σὸς Λόγος δι' ἐμοῦ ὑμνεῖ σέ. 10

38. δι' ἐμοῦ δέξαι τὸ πᾶν λόγῳ λογικὴν θυσίαν 15

39. ταῦτα βοῶσιν αἱ δυνάμεις αἱ ἐν ἐμοί· 13

40. τὸ πᾶν ὑμνοῦσι,5

41. τὸ σὸν θέλημα τελοῦσι, 8

42. σὴ βουλὴ ἀπὸ σοῦ ἐπὶ σέ, 9

43. τὸ πᾶν Δέξαι ἀπὸ πάντων λογικὴν θυσίαν 14

44. τὸ πᾶν τὸ ἐν ἡμῖν, σῷζε ζωή, 10

45. φώτιζε φῶς, † πνεῦμα † θεέ· 8

46. Λόγον γὰρ τὸν σὸν ποιμαίνει ὁ Νοῦς. 10

47. πνευματοφόρε, δημιουργέ 9

48. σὺ εἶ ὁ θεός. 5

49. ὁ σὸς ἄνθρωπος ταῦτα βοᾷ 9

50. διὰ πυρός, δι' ἀέρος, διὰ γῆς,11

51. διὰ ὕδατος, διὰ πνεύματος, 10

52. διὰ τῶν κτισμάτων σου. 7

53. ἀπὸ σοῦ Αἰῶνος εὐλογίαν εὗρον 12

54. καί ὃ ζητῶ βουλῇ τῇ σῇ ἀναπέπαυμαι. 13

55. εἶδον θελήματι τῷ σῷ τὴν εὐλογίαν ταύτην λεγομένην 19

The first part of this hymn (lines 1-19) is more of a preamble than a proper beginning. The hymnist, presumably while hymning, bids various aspects of nature (γῆ, μοχλὸς ὄμβρου, πᾶσα φύσις κόσμου, τὰ δένδρα, οὐρανοί, τὰ δένδρα) to get ready and announces his intention to begin. This necessitates 7 imperatives, the first 4 alternating between 3rd person (προσδεχέσθω, ἀνοιγήτω) and 2nd person (ἀνοίγηθι, μὴ σείεσθε) and the next 3 beginning with 2nd person plural

imperatives (ἀνοίγητε, στῆτε) and ending with a 3rd person singular (προσδεξάσθω). The hymn begins with a command to nature, "receive the sound of my hymn" (πᾶσα φύσις κόσμου προσδεχέσθω τοῦ ὕμνου τὴν ἀκοήν), and then subdivides nature into various parts in subsequent lines. This section is entirely paratactic and asyndetic, creating a forceful and rapid effect that increases the dramatic force of the commands. Further intensification is accomplished by the sustained rhythm of a long command (πᾶσα φύσις κόσμου προσδεχέσθω τοῦ ὕμνου τὴν ἀκοήν) followed by short commands of similar syllable length (ἀνοίγηθι γῆ,/ἀνοιγήτω μοι πᾶς μοχλὸς ὄμβρου,/τὰ δένδρα μὴ σείεσθε).

The following lines retain a semblance of this rhythm, although the 2nd longer phrase is no longer an imperative, but a statement: "I am about to hymn the lord of creation, the one and the all" (ὑμνεῖν μέλλω τὸν τῆς κτίσεως κύριον καὶ τὸ πᾶν καὶ τὸ ἕν). Each of the longer lines has approximately the same number of syllables, the first two (πᾶσα φύσις κόσμου προσδεχέσθω τοῦ ὕμνου τὴν ἀκοήν and ὑμνεῖν μέλλω τὸν τῆς κτίσεως κύριον,καὶ τὸ πᾶν καὶ τὸ ἕν) having 17 and the next (ὁ κύκλος ὁ ἀθάνατος τοῦ θεοῦ, προσδεξάσθω μου τὸν λόγον) having 19. The longer commands both request that the addressee receive the song of the singer. In the first the "listening" or presumably "sound" (τὴν ἀκοήν) of the hymn (τοῦ ὕμνου) is emphasized and in the other, the singer's utterance (μου τὸν λόγον) is highlighted. The structure of these two lines is approximately parallel: nominative phrase, genitive, third person singular imperative, genitive, accusative noun phrase. However, the noun/adjective order in the initial noun phrases is reversed.

Line 5, in which the singer says h/she is about to hymn (ὑμνεῖν μέλλω τὸν τῆς κτίσεως κύριον καὶ τὸ πᾶν καὶ τὸ ἕν), is tightly packed with alliteration, both initial and internal. The mu in ὑμνεῖν echoes the initial mu in μέλλω and tau and kappa weave themselves throughout (**τ**ὸν

τῆς **κ**τίσεως, **τ**ὸ, **τ**ὸ and **κ**τίσεως **κ**ύριον, **κ**αὶ, **κ**αὶ). The next two imperative phrases (ἀνοίγητε οὐρανοί,/ ἄνεμοί τε στῆτε) are approximately equal in syllables (6 and 7, respectively) and exhibit the same pattern as the previous short commands: the hymnist enjoins a part of nature to open (first the earth and whatever the entire bar of rain means: ἀνοίγηθι γῆ,/ἀνοιγήτω μοι πᾶς μοχλὸς ὄμβρου then the sky: ἀνοίγητε οὐρανοί) and then asks a lesser natural feature to settle down: don't be shaken, trees (δένδρα μὴ σείεσθε)! ; stand still winds (ἄνεμοί τε στῆτε)!

In lines 9-16, the singer returns to announcing that the hymn is about to begin (μέλλω γὰρ ὑμνεῖν τὸν κτίσαντα τὰ πάντα), but in doing so describes the deeds of the divinity, effectively beginning the hymn even as the hymn itself denies that commencement. The hymnist outlines God's deeds with attributive participles, starting out with short participial phrases that take the accusative: I am about to hymn the one who created all things, the one who fixed the Earth and hung the sky (τὸν κτίσαντα τὰ πάντα/ τὸν πήξαντα τὴν γῆν/ οὐρανὸν κρεμάσαντα). The next attributive participial phrase (καὶ ἐπιτάξαντα ἐκ τοῦ ὠκεανοῦ τὸ γλυκὺ ὕδωρ/
εἰς τὴν οἰκουμένην καὶ ἀοίκητον ὑπάρχειν) is more complicated and its meaning is disputed. Clearly the hymnist is trying to say that God orders fresh water (γλυκὺ ὕδωρ) from the ocean to go into habited and uninhabited lands (τὴν οἰκουμένην καὶ ἀοίκητον). Scott denounces the latter part as meaningless and absurd since why would it matter whether fresh water were led to uninhabited lands? Still, the contrast is of a piece with the other parallelisms in this strophe: earth and sky (lines 11 and 12: τὴν γῆν καὶ οὐρανὸν), sustenance and creation (line 14: διατροφὴν καὶ κτίσιν), and gods and men (line 16: θεοῖς τε καὶ ἀνθρώποις). The full sequence is intended to praise God by sketching a rough creation myth. First the hymnist says that God is the one who makes all things, then s/he lists specific examples of those things: namely heaven and Earth. This leads to the second of part of the creation myth in which God creates man (line 14: πάντων τῶν

ἀνθρώπων) and produces the conditions for him to thrive, the introduction of fresh water in lines 12-3 and the presentation of fire in line 15 (τὸν ἐπιτάξαντα πῦρ φανῆναι). The hymnist states that God caused fire to appear for the entire activity of gods and men (εἰς πᾶσαν πρᾶξιν θεοῖς τε καὶ ἀνθρώποις), but why the gods need fire (perhaps for sacrifices?) isn't elaborated.

The next stanza, lines 17-34, is begins and ends with lines terminating in blessing (δῶμεν πάντες ὁμοῦ αὐτῷ τὴν εὐλογίαν/ εἰς ὑμᾶς χωρεῖ ἡ εὐλογία). The hymnist uses a 1st person plural imperative here (δῶμεν) to summon everyone together to give a blessing to God (αὐτῷ). Lines 18 and 19 are appositives dependent on that initial pronoun. τῷ and its descriptor (μετεώρῳ, κτίστῃ) surround genitive phrases, one with a preposition (ἐπὶ τῶν οὐρανῶν) and the other without (φύσεως κτίστῃ). This last phrase is a repetition of the theme of God being the creator, which starts with lord of creation (κτίσεως κύριον) and continues with the one who created all things (τὸν κτίσαντα τὰ πάντα). The αὐτῷ, τῷ, τῷ construction followed by οὗτός is curious, but not in in a way that is suggestive: "Let us together give praise to him, the one high in the heavens, the creator of all things. That one is the eye of the mind." The last line sets up the theme of the next section and for the first time exhorts God himself to do something "Let him receive the blessing of my powers." The powers mentioned are intimately connected to the content of *C.H.* XIII and will be explored in more depth in the next chapter. The hymnist orders the powers within him (αἱ δυνάμεις αἱ ἐν ἐμοί) to praise the one and the all (τὸ ἓν καὶ τὸ πᾶν), which recalls the first part of the hymn. Scott and Zuntz would like to excise this part due to repetition, but it's difficult to see why that repetition isn't simply a part of the hymn's structure considering that other words and phrases are recalled throughout.

Another asyndetic imperative clause follows in line 23 (συνάσατε τῷ θελήματί μου πᾶσαι αἱ ἐν ἐμοὶ δυνάμεις). The hymnist once again addresses the powers, this time specifying them as

a full unit (πᾶσαι) invoking them through the hymnist's will (τῷ θελήματί μου). In another parallel construction , αἱ δυνάμεις begins the first imperative clause in line 22 and then δυνάμεις finishes the next. Whitehouse noted this chiastic arrangement of "powers," but also tried to link ἐμοὶ and μου together by producing a clever stichometry:

αἱ δυνάμεις αἱ ἐν ἐμοί,
ὑμνεῖτε τὸ ἓν καὶ τὸ πᾶν
συνάσατε τῷ θελήματί
μου πᾶσαι αἱ ἐν ἐμοὶ δυνάμεις

Unfortunately, cutting up syntactic units in this way, separating nominative phrases from their predicates, doesn't work out systematically throughout the rest of the hymn. [65] An even more definitive objection to this arrangement is the placement of μου at the beginning of a line: μου is a clitic and can never function as a line initial unit.

In line 20, the hymn mentions the eye of the mind (οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ τοῦ νοῦ ὀφθαλμός), and on some level this stanza seems to be concerned with νοῦς and knowledge. Lines 24 and 25 treat holy knowledge (γνῶσις ἁγία). This knowledge is illuminated by God (φωτισθεὶς ἀπὸ σοῦ) and the light of hymns (φῶς ὑμνῶν) is cognizable (νοητὸν) through him διὰ σοῦ. These two lines (γνῶσις ἁγία, φωτισθεὶς ἀπὸ σοῦ,/διὰ σοῦ τὸ νοητὸν φῶς ὑμνῶν) form a kind of imperfect anadiplosis in which "from you" (ἀπὸ σοῦ) completes the first line and is taken up in the following line in "through you" (διὰ σοῦ). Both lines are also linked through figura etymologica (φωτισθεὶς, φῶς). The final line has a nice alliteration with chi, a letter that doesn't make much

[65] Whitehouse 308

of an appearance in this hymn, and is particularly short, only 6 syllables: I rejoice in the grace of mind (χαίρω ἐν χαρᾷ νοῦ).

In the next section of the stanza, the hymnist returns to the powers, enjoining them to hymn with him (πᾶσαι δυνάμεις ὑμνεῖτε σὺν ἐμοί.). This sets up a partial list of the δυνάμεις, all of which the hymnist enjoins to "hymn." The power, self-control (μοι ἐγκράτεια), is cleverly introduced with καὶ σύ μοι immediately after σὺν ἐμοί, creating an imperfect anadiplosis that is reminiscent of lines 24-25. Similar to the conjuration of ἐγκράτεια, the hymnist continues to list some of the powers by name. Lines 29 and 31 (δικαιοσύνη μου, τὸ δίκαιον ὕμνει δι' ἐμοῦ/ ἀλήθεια τὴν ἀλήθειαν) rely on figura etymological between a power (δικαιοσύνη, and a neuter instantiation of that power (τὸ δίκαιον). The hymnist enjoins the powers to hymn their respective concrete examples through him (ὕμνει δι' ἐμοῦ). In lines 32-33, the hymnist makes similar claims, but in line 32, s/he uses an etymologically unrelated, but conceptually appropriate word as the real world manifestation of the power, linking community with the all, which has been used for God throughout the hymn (κοινωνία ἡ ἐμή, τὸ πᾶν ὕμνει δι' ἐμοῦ). In line 33, the good is apparently identical in name with its power (τὸ ἀγαθόν, ἀγαθόν, ὕμνει). (δικαιοσύνη μου, τὸ δίκαιον ὕμνει δι' ἐμοῦ. Taken together, lines 31 and 32 (ὕμνει ἀλήθεια τὴν ἀλήθειαν/τὸ ἀγαθόν, ἀγαθόν, ὕμνει) create a chiastic structure that echoes similar structures in previous lines, but stands as a more sophisticated example of the technique. The pair of light and life appears in lines 33 and 34 as powers (ζωὴ καὶ φῶς with the same verb (χωρεῖ) as it did in the hymn in *C.H.* I (εἰς ζωὴν καὶ φῶς χωρῶ) only this time, the blessing goes from the powers into the powers (ἀφ' ὑμῶν εἰς ὑμᾶς) rather than the hymnist going to/into them.

The beginning of the next stanza, lines 35-36 (εὐχαριστῶ σοι, πάτερ, ἐνέργεια τῶν δυνάμεων/εὐχαριστῶ σοι θεέ, δύναμις τῶν ἐνεργειῶν μου) are perfectly balanced, each starting

with εὐχαριστῶ σοι and following it with a vocative (πάτερ, θεέ), a noun (ἐνέργεια, δύναμις), and a genitive phrase (τῶν δυνάμεων, τῶν ἐνεργειῶν). The composer of these lines was careful to ensure that each contained 16 syllables, adding a final μου to make up for the loss of the epsilon in the first line's genitive phrase. ὁ σὸς Λόγος begins the next line, recalling ὁ σὸς ἄνθρωπος from the penultimate line of the hymn in *C.H.* I. In line 37 "through me hymns you" (δι' ἐμοῦ ὑμνεῖ σέ) continues the structure in the previous stanza and provides a bridge to the next line: "through me (δι' ἐμοῦ) receive (δέξαι) with the word (λόγῳ), the sacrifice in words (λογικὴν θυσίαν)". As with the δυνάμεις and the ζωὴ καὶ φῶς, this is a clear reference to *C.H. I* (or *C.H. I* is referencing this passage). By line 39, the hymnist cannot contain the powers in him (αἱ δυνάμεις αἱ ἐν ἐμοί). No longer are they in need of summoning, but rather they are present, and they shout (βοῶσιν) these things (ταῦτα), they hymn the all (τὸ πᾶν ὑμνοῦσι), and they accomplish God's desire (τὸ σὸν θέλημα τελοῦσι). God's plan is from him and (presumably) going to him (σὴ βουλὴ ἀπὸ σοῦ ἐπὶ σέ,). Referring to God as the all again, the hymnist repeats the request that the deity receive the sacrifice in words, this time from all things (τὸ πᾶν Δέξαι ἀπὸ πάντων λογικὴν θυσίαν). The meaning of the next two lines, although an echo of the line 33, which also mentions life and light (ζωὴ καὶ φῶς), is a bit obscure. From the figura etymologica of the second line, φώτιζε φῶς (light, illuminate!), it can be inferred that the hymnist sees some sort of etymological connection between σῷζε and ζωή. σῷζε ζωή, φώτιζε φῶς, however, is a nice chiastic phrase with impressive unity and pleasing alliteration and assonance. Both Scott and Nock put πνεῦμα in daggers here, but I think it can be read as an apposite vocative with θεέ. τὸ πᾶν is used to refer to God throughout the hymn, and in the line after the subsequent line, God is referred to as the spirit-bearer (πνευματοφόρε). This in addition to the chiasmic structure of the

couplet suggests that τὸ πᾶν, at the beginning of the couplet, plays the same role as πνεῦμα towards its end (i.e., vocative).

Line 46 "for the mind shepherds your word" (Λόγον γὰρ τὸν σὸν ποιμαίνει ὁ Νοῦς), is of a pair with line 37, "your word hymns you through me" (ὁ σὸς Λόγος δι' ἐμοῦ ὑμνεῖ σέ), both in length and in structure. They are each 10 syllables long and complement each other. The former places "your word" (Λόγον… τὸν σὸν) in the accusative case at the beginning and its subject (ὁ Νοῦς) at the end, while the latter puts "your word" (ὁ σὸς Λόγος) in the beginning as the nominative and ends with an accusative (σέ). In *C.H.* I, Νοῦς, God, and Poimandres are compared many times,[66] so Νοῦς and σέ are likely to be in the same semantic, position, and case relationship as Λόγος and Λόγον, nominative and accusative nouns referring to the same entity and transposed in location. Ποιμαίνει, 'shepherd,' with its ending in νεῖ stands parallel to ὑμνεῖ. Additionally, it points to a play on words with the name Poimandres, which is often taken to mean "shepherd of men." The hymnist calls upon God with two vocatives, the air/spirit bearer (πνευματοφόρε) and the demiurge (δημιουργέ), before stating plainly "you are God" (σὺ εἶ ὁ θεός). The unequal couplet, σὺ εἶ ὁ θεός./ὁ σὸς ἄνθρωπος ταῦτα βοᾷ, opposes God and man and highlights the subservience of the latter to the former by ensuring that man is related to God by the possessive σὸς. The latter line also recalls line 38, in which the powers themselves shout (ταῦτα βοῶσιν αἱ δυνάμεις αἱ ἐν ἐμοί).

The litany of elements that the hymnist shouts in lines 50-52, "through, fire, air, earth, water, and spirit" (διὰ πυρός, δι' ἀέρος, διὰ γῆς/ διὰ ὕδατος, διὰ πνεύματος/
διὰ τῶν κτισμάτων σου) ends the hymn with the elemental and natural concerns that the hymnist displays at the beginning (lines 1-19). The first 3 lines of the hymn reference earth (line 2: ἀνοίγηθι γῆ), water (in line 3's reference to rain: πᾶς μοχλὸς ὄμβρου), and air (in line 4's

[66] See chapter 2 for an interpretation of the relationship between the two tractates.

command for the trees to stop moving: τὰ δένδρα μὴ σείεσθε, which is followed up by line 7, in which the winds are invoked specifically: ἄνεμοί τε στῆτε). The hymnist doesn't mention fire until line 15 (τὸν ἐπιτάξαντα πῦρ φανῆναι), but that still remains in the opening section. Interestly, the order of the elements in 52-50 the reverse of the order in which they appear in 1-19.

Finally, the hymnist claims to shout through God's creations (διὰ τῶν κτισμάτων σου).

Lines 53-55 (ἀπὸ σοῦ Αἰῶνος εὐλογίαν εὗρον/ καί ὃ ζητῶ, βουλῇ τῇ σῇ ἀναπέπαυμαι/εἶδον θελήματι τῷ σῷ τὴν εὐλογίαν ταύτην λεγομένην) have been diversely interpreted as either being part of the hymn or as part of the next section of *C.H.* XIII. Grese and Scott are uneasy with the hymnist "seeing" (εἶδον) the praise that was said (τὴν εὐλογίαν ταύτην λεγομένην),[67] but it doesn't fit well enough with the next part of the dialogue to move it there without other problems. Since it makes a certain quasi-mystical, synesthetic sense, I think it can be left in the hymn. Furthermore, lines 53-55 are relatively balanced phrases at 12 and 13 syllables each. If line 55 is taken as one long 19-syllable line, it ends the hymn by forming a ring structure with the 17-19 syllable lines at 1, 5, and 8. Grese's solution to place τὴν εὐλογίαν ταύτην λεγομένην with Tat's dialogue[68] also leaves "I saw with your will" (εἶδον θελήματι τῷ σῷ) hanging without an object.

[67] Grese, 185, Scott *Hermetica* 2: 404-405
[68] Grese, 185

CONCLUSION

The hymnic material of the *C.H.*, although not metrical in the sense of classical quantitative meter, is artfully and deliberately arranged, containing alliteration, anaphoric phrases, parallelism, chiasmus, and other poetic and rhetorical techniques that mark it apart from 'plain' language. Moreover, it is are arranged based on a shifting and often imprecise rhythm predicated on the number of syllables per lines and syntactic units. In these ways, it is similar to the texts Watkins described as belonging to the PIE "strophic style" of religious language. However, unlike Watkins' texts, the hymns avoid entirely the use of clitic conjunctions, and they tend not to involve numerical units beyond 3. The text's reliance on longer lines followed by a quick succession of short, syllabically balanced lines based on semantic and structural parallels makes chanting seem the ideal medium for their recital.

The hymns share stylistic features with other types of poetry, rhetoric, and prose hymns, but there are really no other texts extant—or at least known to me—to which this type of composition may be compared. The translations of the *Psalms* in the *Septuagint* and the hymnic material scholars have identified in the New Testament are the closest, but they don't share the hymn's characteristic attention to syllable length.

CHAPTER 3

WHAT ARE THESE HYMNS DOING HERE ANYWAY?

The following chapter will analyze the roles that the hymns at the end of *C.H.* I, V, and XIII play in context of their respective treatises. Whitehouse performed a similar study, but his work focused mainly on establishing the text of the hymns, determining whether their individual parts were composed together, and trying to establish a potential *Sitz im Leben* for them outside of the tractates. This study will note Whitehouse's observations, but ultimately it will assume that the text established by Nock-Festugière contains tractates and hymns that were written together.

To begin the chapter, I will briefly touch on genres and texts to which the *C.H.* material may be compared and note why they are not perfect analogues. These hymns and their tractates are presented as single compositional units rather than a patchwork of sources cobbled together, thus representing a hybrid genre that unites dialogue and hymn. In certain Greek and Latin novels, verse appears in sections in which characters recite poetry. Of these, most relevant to the *Corpus Hermeticum* is the *Golden Ass*, which contains a hymn to Isis.[69] Considering that characters in the *C.H.* describe themselves as 'hymning,' these novels probably provide the closest analogue in 'classical' literature to the literary form of these tractates. However, since the tractates are dialogues and not third person narratives, this comparison is minimally useful. Whitehouse has also noted that Clement of Alexandria's *Paidagogus*, which contains a hymn immediately following a lecture, also provides a good point for comparison. In the *Paidagagus*, however, there is no dialogue. The voice is always that of Clement. The analogy is apt, however,

[69] *Met*. 11.2

in that the hymn at the end of the *Paidogagus* both summarizes the preceding lecture and offers praise and thanks to the God mentioned in that lecture, which is something Whitehouse also recognized.[70]

Jewish and Syriac literature translated into Greek also contains hymns mixed with prose. In addition to the standard translated 'poetic' material in the *Septuagint*, such as the song of Moses in *Deuteronomy*,[71] the *Song of Solomon*, and the *Psalms*, the *Book of Tobit* contains an original hymn, which Tobit sings in thanksgiving after the angel, Raphael, disappears.[72] In some manuscripts of the *Book of Daniel*, the three young men whom Nebuchadnezzar throws into the furnace also sing a hymn of praise and thanksgiving after they are rescued.[73] *The Acts of Thomas*, which was originally written in Syriac, contains two hymns, among them the famous *Hymn of the Pearl.*[74] These are only some of the examples scattered throughout the *Septuagint*, but they are characteristic. While these certainly feature the intrusion of hymnic language into prose texts, neither their content or context is aligned.

Another generic point of reference is the 'mystical' dialogue between a God-man or a spiritual being that appears in many of the Christian Apocrypha and the Coptic Gnostic Texts discovered at Nag Hammadi.[75] In the latter, Jesus often plays a role similar to Hermes in *C.H.* V and XIII and Poimandres in *C.H.* I, dispensing cryptic wisdom and doctrinal and cosmogonic descriptions to an audience that exists to ask questions or to respond in wonder. Various hymns are scattered throughout these compositions, for example in the *Holy Book of the Great Invisible*

[70] Whitehouse, 38-140
[71] *Deuteronomy*, 32:1-12
[72] *Tobit*, 13-15
[73] *Daniel*, 3: 23-91
[74] For a treatment of the *Hymn of the Pearl* and discussion of its original language, see Gerard Rouwhorst, "Hymns and Prayers in the Apocryphal Acts of Thomas," in *Literature or Liturgy?: Early Christian Hymns and Prayers in their Literary and Liturgical Context Antiquity*, ed. Clemson Leonhard and Helmut Löhr (Tübingen : Mohr Siebeck, 2014).
[75] For a brief introduction to the Nag Hammadi Library, see James M Robinson, and Richard Smith. *The Nag Hammadi Library in English*. (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1988), 1-26.

Spirit,[76] *The* (*Second*) *Revelation of James*,[77] and the *Pistis Sophia.*[78] These works and the hymns they contain are outside the scope of this study, since they are extant only in Coptic versions. Moreover, these hymns are not, as far as I can tell, comparable to those of the *C.H.* in terms of structure or their placement in the texts in which they are embedded.

The *Acts of John*, which is included in the standard Christian Apocrypha, contains a hymn that is structurally reminiscent of the hymns of the *C.H.*, but it resembles them little in context. Jesus sings or chants the hymn while the disciples gather around him in a circle, join hands, and dance. Although Jesus here is clearly a teacher in the mold of a Hermes or a Poimandres, the content of the hymn is unrelated to teachings before and after it, consisting of generic praise (e.g., Δόξα σοι πάτερ) and statements that alternate the desire to perform an action actively with a desire to undergo that action passively (e.g., "I want to be saved and I want to save" σωθῆναι θέλω καὶ σῶσαι θέλω).[79]

The doctrinal and cosmological content of the treatises, as has long been noted, is an interesting mixture of various Neoplatonic, Gnostic, Judaic, and Christian elements.[80] *C.H.* I's discussion of a higher God's relationship to a lower creator God with the mediating element of the Logos is of a piece with the cosmology of Numenius of Apamea, Plotinus, Proclus, Iamblichus, and various other Platonic conceptions of the universe that posit a triadic scheme of universal power.[81] The powers and the seven governors that rule the realm of matter, described in *C.H.* I and *C.H.* XIII, are reminiscent of Irenaeus and Hippolytus' descriptions of the doctrine

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[76] See. R. van den Broek. *Gnostic Religion in Antiquity* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 50-51 for more information on this text.
[77] van den Broek, 67-68
[78] van den Broek ,69-70 and C. Schmidt. *Pistis Sophia*, trans. V. MacDermot (*NHS* 9; Leiden: Brill, 1978).
[79] *ActsJohn*, 94-95. For a background and bibliography on the hymn, see Hans-Josef Klauck, *The Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles: an Introduction*, trans. Brian McNeil (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2005), 33-35.
[80] For a concise and detailed look at this hybrid cosmology, see Nicola F. Denzey, *Cosmology and Fate in Gnosticism and Graeco-Roman Antiquity* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 109-126 .
[81] These formulations are incredibly complex; for a detailed summary, see John D. Turner, *Sethian Gnosticism and the Platonic Tradition.* (Louvain: Les Presses de L'Université Laval, 2001), 409-446.

of Valentinus and his followers.[82] In Valentinian Gnosticism, there are seven heavens, corresponding to the seven planets, which exist underneath an eighth, the sphere of the fixed stars, or the Ogdoad. The Aeons that compose the Ogdoad in this Valentinian conception include Νοῦς, Λόγος, Αλήθεια, and Ζωή, words which appear prominently and represent cosmological and spiritual forces throughout *C.H.* I and *C.H.* XIII.[83] A closely linked concept, found in various formulations in Orphism, Middle and Neoplatonism, and other systems of Gnosticism, is that the soul, descending from God, acquires negative qualities from each of the seven planets as it passes them on its way.[84] In spite of this similarity of doctrine and even, sometimes, the manner of doctrinal exposition, none of the works in which these philosophies and religious schemes occur are structured in the same way as the tractates in the *C.H.*, and certainly none take the form of a dialogue culminating in a hymn.

While some of the texts and genres mentioned above contain hymns with surrounding prose and/or narrative—or even hymns and mystical dialogue—the position of the hymns in *C.H.* I, V, and XIII makes them imperfect points of comparison. As this chapter will argue, the hymns at the end of *C.H.* I, V, and XIII appear at the end of their respective treatise and, in part, perform a summative function. This places them outside the generic bounds of texts, Abrahamic, Gnostic, Platonic, and otherwise, with which they share doctrine and content. For this reason, this study will consider the unity of hymn and dialogue in C.*H.* I, V, and XIII mostly in isolation, only offering a minimal amount of comparison with outside texts where interest or clarity demands it.

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[82] For their description and how it squares with extant Coptic sources, see. Gilles Quispel. "The Original Doctrine of Valentinus the Gnostic." *Vigiliae Christianae* 50, 4 (1996): 327-52.
[83] For a treatment of intermediary powers in Gnostic and Neoplatonic texts and their relationship to *C.H.* I and XIII, see Festugière 1990 III:158-174
[84] Gilles Quispel. "Hermes Trismegistus and the Origins of Gnosticism." *Vigiliae Christianae* 46, 1 (1992): 9

With these generic concerns out of the way, a brief plan for the chapter can be given. This study will take the form of three sections, each of which will concern a single hymn and its tractate. The sequence will follow the possibly arbitrary order of the most common manuscripts. An attempt will be made to position each within the narrative of its tractate and to analyze the functional relationship between the tractate and the hymn.

ANALYSIS OF C.H. I

Before analyzing the relationship of the hymn at the end of *C.H.* I and its tractate, this study must address the objection that such a relationship might only exist in the mind of a compiler who placed them together. The hymn is unique among the hymns treated in this study in that two witnesses for it exist independently of the manuscripts in which the *Corpus Hermeticum* has otherwise been preserved. All of it, more or less corresponding to the text Nock-Festugière has prepared, is featured in a collection of Christian prayers found in Berlin Papyrus 9794.[85] Additionally, Campbell Bonner found a fragment of the hymn, significantly altered from other versions, on an amulet in the British museum.[86] Since a precise date can be set for neither the manuscript version of the hymn nor the other two witnesses,[87] an argument could be made that the hymn as it exists in *C.H.* I was composed separately from its tractate and added later. However, this study will follow the lead of Scott, [88] Dodd,[89] and later Whitehouse,[90] in assuming that it was composed for *C.H.* I based on the numerous correspondences between its vocabulary,

[85] C Wessley. "Les plus anciens monuments du christianisme écrits sur papyrus, II." *Patrol. Orient* 18 (1924), 249
[86] Campbell Bonner. "Liturgical Fragments on Gnostic Amulets." *Harvard Theological Review* 25 (1932), 362
[87] cf. Whitehouse, 85-87 for dating issues for all 3
[88] Scott, *Hermetica* 2: 69
[89] Dodd, 202
[90] for the full argument, see Whitehouse, 85-95

themes, and content. Not only will the subsequent analysis be conducted with the essential unity of the work in mind, but that analysis will provide more evidence for that unity.

In beginning the analysis, it will be necessary to give a description of the whole tractate. The first tractate of the *C.H.* is the description of a supernatural experience in which an unnamed narrator encounters a mysterious being while in a meditative state. The being identifies himself as Poimandres, the narrator's mind, and God, and reveals a creation myth that explains how man's immaterial soul became trapped in a material world. The structure of the encounter is a dialogue between the narrator and Poimandres, but the narrator very rarely gets a chance to speak, and Poimandres does not search for his or her input, but rather lectures, asks questions about the lecture, and corrects the narrator when appropriate. The culmination of Poimandres' speech is the teaching that the physical world can be overcome through gnosis.

After Poimandres/ Νοῦς /God completes his revelation, he imbues the narrator with mysterious powers and charges him/her with the task of preaching the way of gnosis and liberation to the race of man. In a peculiar in-text escalation of events, the narrator describes going about that evangelical mission, including a short and vague sermon about how his/her audience can rouse itself from ignorance. Finally, the narrator, feeling overjoyed at having been blessed with what he/she requested at the beginning of the tractate, announces the intention to thank the deity for its bounty. Here the hymn of *C.H.* I begins.

The reader of the tractate is unlikely to be surprised by the narrator's instinct to hymn since hymning and thanking God are referenced not infrequently. The narrator thanks Poimandres, who is identified with both mind and God throughout, explicitly twice with εὐχαριστῶ.[91] In describing the activities of saved men who have arrived at the Ogdoad, which is either the highest Hermetic heaven or the penultimate stage before it, Poimandres notes that

[91] *C.H.* I 6.8 and 20.4

these souls, "propitiate the father lovingly and give thanks, blessing and hymning in an orderly way before him with love."[92] Poimandres goes on to describe a soul that, after having been denuded of the last aspects of the physical world, "hymns the father with beings" (ὑμνεῖ σὺν τοῖς οὖσι τὸν πατέρα)[93] and listens to the powers above the Ogdoad "hymning God with some sweet sound."[94] Based on these passages, as Whitehouse also notes,[95] the hymn fulfills the structure of salvation and 'Hermetic' ascent suggested in the tractate. The narrator, who had been imbued with the powers and given an evangelical mission by God/mind/Poimandres, hymns and praises the deity as part of that salvational process.

Whitehouse also recognizes that the hymn has the effect of summarizing and completing the preceding tractate,[96] but only provides a few examples from the text. In fact, the hymn serves as an excellent way for the reader to recall the material presented in the tractate, referencing its content both explicitly and implicitly. Many words that appeared throughout the tractate are employed strategically in the hymn to recall certain sections or points of doctrine; however, there are also portions of the hymn that are purely original expressions of thanksgiving and requests for personal aid. To demonstrate that the hymn refers to the preceding tractate throughout, I will go through the numerous allusions that certain words and word phrases constitute. For ease of reference, I will place the appropriate passage before my analysis.

1. ἅγιος ὁ θεὸς καὶ πατὴρ τῶν ὅλων.

2. ἅγιος ὁ θεὸς, οὗ ἡ βουλὴ τελεῖται ἀπὸ τῶν ἰδίων δυνάμεων.

3. ἅγιος ὁ θεός, ὃς γνωσθῆναι βούλεται καὶ γινώσκεται τοῖς ἰδίοις.

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[92] *C.H.* I 22.6-22.7: τὸν πατέρα ἱλάσκονται ἀγαπητικῶς καὶ εὐχαριστοῦσιν εὐλογοῦντες καὶ ὑμνοῦντες τεταγμένως πρὸς αὐτὸν τῇ στοργῇ

[93] *C.H.* I 26.1-26.3

[94] *C.H.* I 26.5-26.6: ἀκούει καί τινων δυνάμεων ὑπὲρ τὴν ὀγδοατικὴν φύσιν φωνῇ τινι ἡδείᾳ ὑμνουσῶν τὸν θεόν

[95] Whitehouse, 26-127

[96] Whitehouse, 116

The hymn opens with the identification of the divinity as πατὴρ τῶν ὅλων (ἅγιος ὁ θεὸς καὶ πατὴρ τῶν ὅλων). Poimandres identifies himself as "ἐγὼ Νοῦς ὁ σὸς θεός" in *C.H.* I 6.3. In *C.H.* 8.1, again Νοῦς is connected with πατὴρ θεός. In *C.H.* I 9.1, Νοῦς is directly referred to with the same epithet as θεός is in the first line of the hymn, "the father of all things" (ὁ πατὴρ τῶν ὅλων). Later on, in 12.1, the same expression is used, but with a synonymous word for "all" (πάντων πατὴρ).

The next two lines (ἅγιος ὁ θεὸς, οὗ ἡ βουλὴ τελεῖται ἀπὸ τῶν ἰδίων δυνάμεων/ ἅγιος ὁ θεός, ὃς γνωσθῆναι βούλεται καὶ γινώσκεται τοῖς ἰδίοις.) consider will or desire. (βουλὴ). Will/desire is important throughout the tractate, both that of the nameless narrator and that of the divinity. In the beginning, Poimandres asked what the narrator wants to hear and to see (Τί βούλει ἀκοῦσαι καὶ θεάσασθαι), and the narrator's response is expressed with βούλομαι.[97] When Poimandres is asked whence the elements of nature arise, he answers, "from the will of God" (Ἐκ βουλῆς θεοῦ).[98] In *C.H.* I 13.2, the act of fashioning the physical world is expressed as a result of will: Νοῦς "itself wanted to create" (ἠβουλήθη καὶ αὐτὸς δημιουργεῖν). After creation, matter lacks animating spirit, and so the Λόγος descends upon creation through energy that 'happened' by the will of God.[99]

Line 2 states that God's will is accomplished through his own 'powers.' That God is associated with δυνάμις, or multiple δυνάμεις, is established early on in the tractate. The narrator looks up, and sees "in my mind, light among innumerable powers."[100] Poimandres has already established that he himself and God (θεός) are synonymous with φῶς. These powers are

[97] *C.H.* I 1.6-3.3
[98] *C.H.* I 8.2
[99] *C.H.* I 14.10: ἅμα δὲ τῇ βουλῇ ἐγένετο ἐνέργεια
[100] *C.H.* I 7.3: ἐν τῷ νοΐ μου τὸ φῶς ἐν δυνάμεσιν ἀναριθμήτοις ὄν

associated with the highest state of being, appearing multiple times in a passage describing the ascent to the Godhead.[101] They also seem to have some sort of salvational function. As was previously mentioned, Poimandres imbues the narrator with the powers before giving him his evangelical charge.[102]

Line 3 is about the knowledge of God. Knowing God is already a concern from the earliest part of *C.H.* I. Whitehouse rightly connects the hymn's reference to knowing God and the narrator's request to "learn things and grasp nature with the mind and know God."[103] Elsewhere, when Poimandres provides the narrator with his/her first vision, it asks if s/he understood it, and the narrator responds. "I will know."[104] After identifying itself with the light the narrator saw, suggesting that what the narrator will know is God, Poimandres exhorts the narrator to "know the one seeing and hearing in you, the word of the lord, the mind, father God." [105] Finally, after explaining to the narrator what will happen to a soul undergoing an 'ascent' in 26.1-26.10, Poimandres says that this is "the good result for those having knowledge."[106] The hymn here reminds the reader or the listener that throughout the tractate God, in the form of Poimandres, has wanted to be known and that ultimately, it is known by its own people.

5. ἅγιος εἶ, οὗ πᾶσα φύσις εἰκὼν ἔφυ.

6. ἅγιος εἶ, ὃν ἡ φύσις οὐκ ἐμόρφωσεν.

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[101] *C.H.* I: 26.1-26.10: καὶ τότε γυμνωθεὶς ἀπὸ τῶν τῆς ἁρμονίας ἐνεργημάτων γίνεται ἐπὶ τὴν ὀγδοατικὴν φύσιν, τὴν ἰδίαν δύναμιν ἔχων, καὶ ὑμνεῖ σὺν τοῖς οὖσι τὸν πατέρα· συγχαίρουσι δὲ οἱ παρόντες τῇ τούτου παρουσίᾳ, καὶ ὁμοιωθεὶς τοῖς συνοῦσιν ἀκούει καί τινων δυνάμεων ὑπὲρ τὴν ὀγδοατικὴν φύσιν φωνῇ τινι ἡδείᾳ ὑμνουσῶν τὸν θεόν· καὶ τότε τάξει ἀνέρχονται πρὸς τὸν πατέρα, καὶ αὐτοὶ εἰς δυνάμεις ἑαυτοὺς παραδιδόασι, καὶ δυνάμεις γενόμενοι ἐν θεῷ γίνονται. τοῦτό ἐστι τὸ ἀγαθὸν τέλος τοῖς γνῶσιν ἐσχηκόσι, θεωθῆναι. λοιπόν, τί μέλλεις; οὐχ ὡς πάντα παραλαβὼν καθοδηγὸς γίνῃ τοῖς ἀξίοις, ὅπως τὸ γένος τῆς ἀνθρωπότητος διὰ σοῦ ὑπὸ θεοῦ σωθῇ;

[102] *C.H.* I 27.1-27.2: ταῦτα εἰπὼν ὁ Ποιμάνδρης ἐμοὶ ἐμίγη ταῖς δυνάμεσιν

[103] *C.H.* I 3.1-3.2: Μαθεῖν θέλω τὰ ὄντα καὶ νοῆσαι τὴν τούτων φύσιν καὶ γνῶναι τὸν θεόν

[104] *C.H.* I 6.1-6.2: ὁ δὲ Ποιμάνδρης ἐμοί, Ἐνόησας, φησί. τὴν θέαν ταύτην ὅ τι καὶ βούλεται; καὶ, Γνώσομαι, ἔφην ἐγώ

[105] *C.H.* I 6.5-6.6: Οὕτω γνῶθι· τὸ ἐν σοὶ βλέπον καὶ ἀκοῦον, λόγος κυρίου, ὁ δὲ νοῦς πατὴρ θεός.

[106] *C.H.* I 26.9-26: τοῦτό ἐστι τὸ ἀγαθὸν τέλος τοῖς γνῶσιν ἐσχηκόσι

Lines 5-6 treat nature (φύσις) and God's relationship to it. φύσις appears many times throughout the Poimandres in many ways. The narrator wants to know nature (φύσις), and in providing the narrator with that knowledge, Poimandres tells a creation myth in which φύσις is used liberally. The trope that the world is in God's image recalls the section in which man is fashioned in the father deity's image (τὴν τοῦ πατρὸς εἰκόνα).[107] The word ιδίος and the word μορφή are connected in a passage in which God is said to love his own form ("ὄντως γὰρ καὶ ὁ θεὸς ἠράσθη τῆς ἰδίας μορφῆς). [108] Given the context of μορφή in *C.H.* I, it seems that this line not only serves to summarize doctrine, but also to prophylactically correct any mistaken ideas that certain passages might engender in the tractate's readers. For example, man is referred to as having God's own image in C.*H.* I 12-3-12-4 and the beautiful form of God is shown to lower matter in C.H. I14.3-14.4 (ἔδειξε τῇ κατωφερεῖ φύσει τὴν καλὴν τοῦ θεοῦ μορφὴν). In spite of God's association with nature and form in the text, the hymn emphasizes that those things don't affect the deity at all.

7. ἅγιος εἶ, ὁ πάσης δυνάμεως ἰσχυρότερος.

8. ἅγιος εἶ, ὁ πάσης ὑπεροχῆς μείζων.

9. ἅγιος εἶ, ὁ κρείττων τῶν ἐπαίνων.

Lines 7-9 are original expressions of piety that don't seem to have an obvious relationship to the rest of the tractate. They are fairly standard expressions of the unsurpassing greatness of God for which any number of parallels could be cited in Christian, Pagan, Gnostic, or Manichaean literature. Curiously, ἅγιος, the word that is repeated 9 times anaphorically at the

[107] *C.H.* I: 12.3
[108] *C.H.* I: 12.3-12.4

beginning of the first 9 lines doesn't appear very often elsewhere. In fact, it only appears twice, both times describing the logos: once when the holy word falls into previously inanimate or soulless nature (λόγος ἅγιος ἐπέβη τῇ φύσει)[109] and once in announcing the speech God/mind gives to the newly created beings of the Earth on multiplication.[110]

10. δέξαι λογικὰς θυσίας ἁγνὰς ἀπὸ ψυχῆς καὶ καρδίας πρὸς σὲ

That the hymnist bids the deity to accept the "holy sacrifices in words" (δέξαι λογικὰς θυσίας ἁγνὰς) is an explicit acknowledgment of the hymn's function of thanksgiving, which was previously discussed as part of the passage on the tractate's foreshadowing of the hymn to come. Since sacrifice is a type of thanksgiving and often goes along with hymns, it is perhaps unsurprising that the hymnist uses θυσία, or sacrifice, as a metonymous figure for an offering of praise and thanksgiving. Mary Depew directly connects the two in her work on hymns and genre, observing that, "hymns are not prayers, but are, like sacrifices and libations, offerings to a God."[111] Most of this line (δέξαι λογικὰς θυσίας ἁγνὰς ἀπὸ ψυχῆς καὶ καρδίας πρὸς σὲ) is an original expression of reaching towards the deity in thanksgiving, but ψυχή has important associations with an early passage. Namely, a section in which one of the *C.H.'s* familiar doctrinal 'sayings' or 'formulations' is expressed: "man arises from life and light into soul and mind, from life to soul, and from light, mind."[112] These are few and far between in the Poimandres, but they are abundant throughout other tractates, and Mahé believes that they may form the structure around which the tractates were first written. This explains why the hymn may

[109] *C.H.*: I 5.1-5.2
[110] *C.H.*: I18.5
[111] "Mary Depew. "Enacted and Represented Dedications: Genre and Greek Hymn" in *Matrices of Genre: Authors, Canons, and Society* ed. Mary Depew & Dirk Obbink. (Cambridge : London: Harvard University Press, 2000), 63
[112] *C.H.* I 17.5-17.8

take the time out for such a seemingly insignificant allusion. Additionally, and probably less important for prospective Hermeticists, ψυχή recalls that creation was partially accomplished through born souls (γεννημάτων ψυχῶν)[113] and is of a piece with the intent of the narrator before he/she begins the hymn to give a blessing "from [my] soul and my [whole strength] to father God."[114]

11. ἀνατεταμένης, ἀνεκλάλητε, ἄρρητε, σιωπῇ φωνούμενε.

The heart and the soul of the hymnist stretching up towards God (ἀπὸ ψυχῆς καὶ καρδίας πρὸς σὲ /ἀνατεταμένης) recalls in both verbal form and direction the vision of Poimandres as light that the narrator sees at the beginning of the tractate (ἀνανεύσαντος δέ, θεωρῶ ἐν τῷ νοΐ μου τὸ φῶς ἐν δυνάμεσιν ἀναριθμήτοις ὄν).[115] The narrator must lift his or her head to see light mixed with the powers. The triple epithets of the indescribable and mysterious nature of God, inexpressible, ineffable, and spoken by silence (ἀνεκλάλητε, ἄρρητε, σιωπῇ φωνούμενε), are evocations of a trinitarian motif and do not seem to have much of a summarizing purpose. Instead, they are artful ornaments that add to the piety and devotion expressed in the hymn.

12. αἰτουμένῳ τὸ μὴ σφαλῆναι τῆς γνώσεως τῆς κατ' οὐσίαν ἡμῶν ἐπίνευσόν μοι
13. καὶ ἐνδυνάμωσόν με,
14. καὶ τῆς χάριτος ταύτης φωτίσω τοὺς ἐν ἀγνοίᾳ τοῦ γένους ἀδελφούς υἱοὺς δὲ σοῦ
15. διὸ πιστεύω καὶ μαρτυρῶ

[113] *C.H.* I 8.5
[114] *C.H.* I 30.9: διὸ δίδωμι ἐκ ψυχῆς καὶ ἰσχύος ὅλης εὐλογίαν τῷ πατρὶ θεῷ
[115] *C.H.* I 7.2-7.3

When the hymnist asks that God approve of his or her not failing in the knowledge according to our (presumably human) nature (αἰτουμένῳ τὸ μὴ σφαλῆναι τῆς γνώσεως τῆς κατ' οὐσίαν ἡμῶν ἐπίνευσόν μοι), the reference seems to be to *C.H.* I 26.9 in which Poimandres mentions that the good ending (τὸ ἀγαθὸν τέλος) for those holding knowledge (τοῖς γνῶσιν ἐσχηκόσι) is apotheosis or to be deified (θεωθῆναι). The only other reference to the word γνῶσις is *C.H.* I 27.5, in which the narrator, after having been given his or her missionary charge, begins to preach to men the beauty of piety and knowledge (τὸ τῆς εὐσεβείας καὶ γνώσεως κάλλος). The reference in the hymn probably is intended to suggest both the hymnist's striving for knowledge and to bring to the reader's mind the evangelical mission that ends the tractate. This dual allusion is further confirmed by the following request to be empowered (καὶ ἐνδυνάμωσόν με) and the sudden shift to the matter of proselytizing "and with this grace I will enlighten the brothers of my race in ignorance, your sons" (καὶ τῆς χάριτος ταύτης φωτίσω τοὺς ἐν ἀγνοίᾳ τοῦ γένους ἀδελφούς υἱοὺς δὲ σοῦ). In the missionary section directly before the hymn, the narrator entreats his listeners to repent in terms of ignorance and light, "those being joined to ignorance, exchange darkness with light" (καὶ συγκοινωνήσαντες τῇ ἀγνοίᾳ· ἀπαλλάγητε τοῦ σκοτεινοῦ φωτός).[116] "Because I believe and I testify" (διὸ πιστεύω καὶ μαρτυρῶ) is a continuation of this theme, reinforcing the conviction with which the narrator is going to testify and establishing it in the mind of the reader.

16. εἰς ζωὴν καὶ φῶς χωρῶ

17. εὐλογητὸς εἶ, πάτερ

18. ὁ σὸς ἄνθρωπος συναγιάζειν σοι βούλεται

19. καθὼς παρέδωκας αὐτῷ τὴν πᾶσαν ἐξουσίαν

[116] *C.H.* I: 28.5

As Whitehouse has noted,[117] the life and light pairing of "I go into life and light (εἰς ζωὴν καὶ φῶς χωρῶ) appears numerous times throughout the text.[118] Oftentimes God, Noῦς, and the logos seem either to be light or made of light. For example, in the creation narrative, Noῦς, is described as "God, being male and female, consisting of life and light."[119] God is again called light and life in 21.5 (φῶς καὶ ζωή ἐστιν ὁ θεὸς καὶ πατήρ). Poimandres at one point explicitly connects the knowledge of man's nature as light and life as necessary so that one may come to life again (i.e., be reborn).[120] As was previously quoted, Poimandres speaks a series of cryptic equations about the nature of man, again reiterating that man is from light and life, but stating that from light and life, he went into soul and mind, from light to soul, from light to mind. [121] Further on, when Poimandres asks the narrator about what s/he's learned, he/she says that it was the logos that "God, father of all things, created from life and light, from which man arose."[122]

The first part of the hymn's final couplet (ὁ σὸς ἄνθρωπος συναγιάζειν σοι βούλεται) references the way that Poimandres introduces itself towards the beginning of the tractate (ἐγὼ Noῦς ὁ σὸς θεός). While God states to him/her that it is "your God," the hymnist/narrator at this point, replies through the hymn that he/she is "your man (ὁ σὸς ἄνθρωπος).

Authority (ἐξουσία) in the ending line not only produces an association with the evangelical mission with which the narrator has been tasked, but also evokes a description of the natural state of man, who "is mortal, having authority (ἐξουσία) over all things, yet suffers

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[117] Whitehouse, 89

[118] ζωή καὶ φῶς as a metaphor or a description of God is extremely common, seemingly modeled on *John* 1.4, and appears often in Gnostic, Manichaean, and Neoplatonic literature. For a study on how the use of light in the *C.H.* relates to other religious texts from Late Antiquity, see. Jörg Büchli. *Der Poimandres: ein pagansiertes Evangelium.* (Tubingen: Mohr Siebek, 1987), 51-53.

[119] *C.H.* I 9.1: ὁ δὲ Noῦς ὁ θεός, ἀρρενόθηλυς ὤν, ζωὴ καὶ φῶς ὑπάρχων

[120] *C.H.* I 21.5- 21-7: φῶς καὶ ζωή ἐστιν ὁ θεὸς καὶ πατήρ, ἐξ οὗ ἐγένετο ὁ Ἄνθρωπος ἐὰν οὖν μάθῃς αὐτὸν ἐκ ζωῆς καὶ φωτὸς ὄντα καὶ ὅτι ἐκ τούτων τυγχάνεις, εἰς ζωὴν πάλιν χωρήσεις.

[121] *C.H.* I 17.5-17.8: ὁ δὲ Ἄνθρωπος ἐκ ζωῆς καὶ φωτὸς ἐγένετο εἰς ψυχὴν καὶ νοῦν, ἐκ μὲν ζωῆς ψυχήν, ἐκ δὲ φωτὸς νοῦν

[122] *C.H.* I: 21.3-21.4: Ὅτι ἐκ φωτὸς καὶ ζωῆς συνέστηκεν ὁ πατὴρτῶν ὅλων, ἐξ οὗ γέγονεν ὁ Ἄνθρωπος

mortal cares, subject to fate."[123] That this type of authority is necessary to effect change in the mortal world is evident in *C.H.* I 13.3-13.4, when Noῦς descends to the realm of the demiurge in order to have all authority ("γενόμενος ἐν τῇ δημιουργικῇ σφαίρᾳ, ἔξων τὴν πᾶσαν ἐξουσίαν). A few lines down from this, Noῦς is said to have "all authority over mortals of the cosmos and reasonless beings."[124] Still later, at the end of the tractate, the narrator reminds his audience of his preaching, saying that they have the authority of immortality (ἐξουσία τῆς ἀθανασίας).[125]

Taken together, these references suggest that the hymn had a summarizing and mnemonic function. Presumably a disciple would have memorized the hymn in order to better retain the content and doctrine of the preceding tractate. Another function is obvious and based on the in-text function of the hymn. The narrator, a character in the tractate, says s/he wishes to praise and thank God for his or her transformation, the mixing with the powers, and his or her evangelical mission. This, plus the in-hymn description of itself as a "sacrifice in words" suggests that thanksgiving and praise is the function the hymn plays in the narration.

The simple piety of the hymn points to another role that it plays in the tractate. At the beginning, Poimandres asks the narrator what he wants to know. The narrator says that one of her main desires is to know God ("γνῶναι τὸν θεόν").[126] The revelation that follows is certainly about God, and Poimandres makes many identifying statements about the deity; however, these statements, although they may have been perfectly understandable within the context of an ideal reader's knowledge of Hermetic doctrine, seem strange and even contradictory to the uninitiated. For example, Poimandres self-identifies with the deity, claiming that he is "mind, your God" (Noῦς, ὁ σὸς θεός)[127] and instructs the narrator, "look and listen in yourself; it is the word of the

[123] *C.H.* I: 15.4: ἀθάνατος γὰρ ὢν καὶ πάντων τὴν ἐξουσίαν ἔχων, τὰ θνητὰ πάσχει ὑποκείμενος τῇ εἱμαρμένῃ.
[124] *C.H.* I: 4.1-4.2: ὁ τοῦ τῶν θνητῶν κόσμου καὶ τῶν ἀλόγων ζῴων ἔχων πᾶσαν ἐξουσίαν
[125] *C.H.* I: 28.3
[126] *C.H.* I: 3.2
[127] C.H I: .6.3

lord and the mind is God the father."[128] Further on, Poimandres describes the creation of a second νοῦς, created by the first νοῦς and identified as the δημιουργός. This νοῦς is also referred to as a God, one of fire and spirit, and it creates 7 governors (διοικητάς τινας ἑπτά) as well as a governing force known as fate (διοίκησις αὐτῶν εἱμαρμένη καλεῖται).[129] The maker deity then makes the world, and something referred to as the word of God (ὁ τοῦ θεοῦ Λόγος) jumps into the pure creation thing of nature (τὸ καθαρὸν τῆς φύσεως δημιούργημα) and unites itself with the demiurgic νοῦς. Still later in the tractate, Poimandres describes souls that, having sloughed off their mortal form, go towards God, give themselves to the powers, and ultimately become the powers, which is said to be a type of apotheosis (a becoming God or θεωθῆναι). "[130]

The result of Poimandres, a self-described θεός, discussing multiple levels of θεός, Λόγος, and Noῦς with the narrator, who, according to Poimandres will one day be θεός, being commanded to spread some sort of message about θεός is a complex theology with no clear boundaries. The details of this theology are either cognate with or influenced by theological and cosmological conceptions in various Gnostic and Neoplatonic treatises,[131] and would certainly have been familiar to some readers of this text; however their lack of originality does not make them any easier to understand, and the reader, who is presumably a potential Hermetic disciple, may have been minimally familiar with such philosophy. After having interacted with Poimandres, the narrator is enjoined to spread the revelation he's just received, and the reader, having received the message secondhand from the narrator, may also feel compelled to share that message. But what exactly is that message? Is the Poimandres separate from the narrator? Is the narrator separate from the reader? Do the reader and the narrator share a quality that is

[128] *C.H.* I: 6.4-6.5: "τὸ ἐν σοὶ βλέπον καὶ ἀκοῦον, λόγος κυρίου, ὁ δὲ νοῦς πατὴρ θεός"
[129] *C.H.* I: 9.2 -9.3
[130] *C.H.* I: 26.6-26.9: ἀνέρχονται πρὸς τὸν πατέρα, καὶ αὐτοὶ εἰς δυνάμεις ἑαυτοὺς παραδιδόασι, καὶ δυνάμεις γενόμενοι ἐν θεῷ γίνονται. τοῦτό ἐστι τὸ ἀγαθὸν τέλος τοῖς γνῶσιν ἐσχηκόσι, θεωθῆναι
[131] cf. the discussion of the treatises' content and the notes on pages 3-4 of this chapter

synonymous with Poimandres, θεός, Λόγος, and Νοῦς? Regardless of the *Sitz im Leben* of the text, both tractate and hymn, a reader looking for guidance is left unmoored and disconcerted unless he or she is familiar with philosophical works that arguably explain the interrelationships between the deity and various cosmological elements in greater depth and with more clarity.

A middlebrow Hellenic Egyptian, not necessarily knowing arguments from Porphyry or Plotinus in detail—or possibly at all--would presumably be looking for piety of a more popular sort. Deities in the Greek and Egyptian worlds were complex and multifaceted, possessing multiple, seemingly contradictory identities and qualities; however, there do not seem to be philosophical texts detailing the specifics of those identities and qualities nor their origins. There can be a Zeus or a Hermes of multiple locations, each having their own qualities and stories, or a tripartite Goddess, but no attempt to account for these devotional practices reasonably or discursively survive. *C.H.* I takes the appearance of a philosophical dialogue, albeit an untraditional dialogue between a spirit-like being and a narrator in a trance or meditative state. Arguably however, this dialogue uses the language of Greek philosophy more extensively than other texts in related genres, such as the dialogues and gospels found at Nag Hammadi. The reader, due to the dialogic form paired with the philosophical vocabulary, is cued to think rationally and to expect arguments.

When these arguments are revelatory rather than reasonable and religious rather than philosophical, the reader is disconcerted, but the philosophical jargon likely prevents the reader from shutting off her critical faculties. Thus, the multiple identifications of God throughout the text and the vertiginous shifts of God's location (coextensive with Poimandres, outside Poimandres, in the narrator, coextensive with the narrator) are unlikely to be forgotten by the tractate's conclusion, and the reader looking for religious or philosophical truth may feel

uncertain and disquieted. That is where the unitive function of the hymn in *C.H.* I emerges most clearly. As Whitehouse suggested and this study has demonstrated, the hymn does indeed function as a summary of the tractate's contents as well as a thanksgiving for its epiphanies.

Beyond these textual strategies, however, is its task of reassurance and unification. All paradoxical or difficult definitions of the divinity are set aside to produce a single object of worship. In the hymn, God is one, a creator and father divinity who built everything, in whose image everything is made, and who is unchanged by the natural world that it built. The hymn's structure implicitly refers back to Hermes Trismegistos through its abundance of triplets, but overall the message is simple. The hymn concludes the dialogue and summarizes it, but it also resolves all the potentially contradictory statements it contains and the philosophical and cosmological questions it raises in a steady flow of feeling directed at a simple target.

ANALYSIS OF C.H. V

C.H. V is identifiably a dialogue since the speaker addresses Tat in the first line[132] and throughout the text; however, the absence of any extant lines for the speaker's interlocutor effectively renders it a monologue. The speaker goes through a series of doctrinal points, teaching Tat that it is necessary that, since it made all things, God itself is not apparent and that apparent things are born and mortal, while invisible things are eternal. Since God is not visibly apparent, Tat must apprehend God through the 'eyes of the mind.'

If Tat needs evidence of God, the speaker instructs him to look to creation, to the sun, the moon, the stars, the sea, and the earth. God made all those things and established their rules and boundaries. The speaker wishes that Tat might ascend to the sky on wings of a bird to see the

[132] *C.H.* V 1.1: τόνδε σοι τὸν λόγον, ὦ Τάτ, διεξελεύσομαι,

magnificence of God's creation. He then enumerates the many feats that God performed in creating the human body in its own image. Directly before the hymn, a section of praise appears in which God is described in expansive and pantheistic terms. The only signal that the speaker has begun to hymn rather than to speak is the change in person from third person descriptions of God to second person address and the references to blessings/hymns in the hymn itself.

The switch to what has been accepted as the hymnic material from the main tractate is especially difficult to detect since, of the three tractates with which this study is concerned, *C.H.* V appears most similar in language to the *C.H.*'s hymns. The narrator consistently uses rhetorical language throughout, employing balanced clauses of positive words or phrases followed by their negation, paradoxical antitheses, alliteration, isocola, anaphora, and other rhetorical strategies. Examples of these can be found in the first passage, which, it should be stressed, is from the body of the tractate and not from what has usually been recognized as hymnic:

ὅτι ἀφανὴς θεὸς φανερώτατός ἐστιν Καὶ τόνδε σοι τὸν λόγον, ὦ Τάτ, διεξελεύσομαι,29
ὅπως μὴ ἀμύητος ᾖς τοῦ κρείττονος θεοῦ ὀνόματος. 18
σὺ δὲ νόει πῶς τὸ δοκοῦν τοῖς πολλοῖς ἀφανὲς φανερώτατόν σοι γενήσεται. 24
Οὐ γὰρ ἂν ἦν <ἀεὶ> εἰ <μὴ> ἀφανὲς ἦν· 11
πᾶν γὰρ τὸ φαινόμενον γεννητόν· ἐφάνη γάρ· 13
τὸ δὲ ἀφανὲς ἀεί ἐστι τοῦ γὰρ φανῆναι οὐ χρῄζει· ἀεὶ γάρ ἐστι. 22
καὶ τὰ ἄλλα πάντα φανερὰ ποιεῖ, αὐτὸς ἀφανὴς ὤν, 17
ὡς ἀεὶ ὢν φανερῶν αὐτὸς οὐ φανεροῦται, <γεννᾷ>, οὐκ αὐτὸς γεννώμενος, 24
ἐν φαντασίᾳ δὲ <οὐκ ἔστι> πάντα φαντασιῶν. 15
ἡ γὰρ φαντασία μόνων τῶν γεννητῶν ἐστίν. 14

οὐδὲν γάρ ἐστιν ἢ φαντασία ἡ γένεσις.[133] 14

Since this passage is usually considered to be straight prose rather than 'marked' in any way, it will be necessary to consider its poetic and rhetorical features in detail to establish its poetic and rhetorical qualities. The "unapparent, most apparent " (ἀφανὴς φανερώτατός) description of God is an already a paradoxical juxtaposition of antitheses, and the speaker of the tractate uses this association to great effect. S/he states that "it would not be eternal, if it were not unapparent" (Οὐ γὰρ ἂν ἦν <ἀεὶ> εἰ <μὴ> ἀφανὲς ἦν) and uses the same logic to repeat and alternate ways of expressing that idea. The speaker goes through an argument in which s/he tries to establish that God is most present not despite its invisibility, but because of it. The gist of the dialogue is that God does not appear because he is present in all things, and that if he did appear, he wouldn't be eternal. Variations of the same words appear throughout, or at least words with the same roots. More specifically, various forms, both nominal and verbal, of φαίνω (φανερώτατός, φαινόμενον, ἐφάνη, ἀφανὲς, φανερῶν, φανεροῦται), γένεσις (γεννητόν, γεννώμενος, γένεσις, γεννᾷ, γεννητῶν), and φαντασία (φαντασιῶν, φαντασίᾳ) in phrases containing seemingly paradoxical material such as "he makes all other things apparent, he himself being inapparent" (καὶ τὰ ἄλλα πάντα φανερὰ ποιεῖ, αὐτὸς ἀφανὴς ὤν). Even balanced isocola with a type of chiastic structure emerge, such as "ἡ γὰρ φαντασία μόνων τῶν γεννητῶν ἐστίν/ οὐδὲν γάρ ἐστιν ἢ φαντασία ἡ γένεσις," ("for appearance is of born things alone/ for birth is nothing other than appearance"). Both phrases have 14 syllables and ἐστίν and φαντασία are transposed in the second. This is not the only passage in C.H. V that features this sort of marked prose.

[133] *C.H.* V 1.1-1.10

Later on in the treatise, the speaker directs Tat to look at man if he wishes to see God. This section is lengthy, and unlike the previously cited section, does feature the lines of evenly balanced syllables. Keep in mind that this passage, like the previous passage cited above, is not material that has been marked as 'hymnic' in treatments of *C.H.* V, but rather is part of the principal text:

1. εἰ θέλεις καὶ διὰ τῶν θνητῶν θεάσασθαι τῶν ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς καὶ τῶν ἐν βυθῷ 23

2. νόησον, ὦ τέκνον, δημιουργούμενον ἐν τῇ γαστρὶ τὸν ἄνθρωπον 20

3. καὶ τοῦ δημιουργήματος ἀκριβῶς τὴν τέχνην ἐξέτασον, 18

4. καὶ μάθε τίς ὁ δημιουργῶν ταύτην τὴν καλὴν καὶ θείαν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου εἰκόνα. 24

5. τίς ὁ τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς περιγράψας; 10

6. τίς ὁ τὰς ῥῖνας καὶ τὰ ὦτα τρυπήσας; 12

7. τίς ὁ τὸ στόμα διανοίξας; 9

8. τίς ὁ τὰ νεῦρα ἐκτείνας καὶ δεσμεύσας; 12

9. τίς ὁ ὀχετεύσας τὰς φλέβας; 9

10. τίς ὁ τὰ ὀστέα στερροποιήσας; 11

11. τίς ὁ δέρμα τῇ σαρκὶ περιβαλών; 10

12. τίς ὁ τοὺς δακτύλους διελών; 9

13. τίς ὁ τοῖς ποσὶ βάσιν πλατύνας; 10

14. τίς ὁ διορύξας τοὺς πόρους; 9

15. τίς ὁ τὸν σπλῆνα ἐκτείνας; 8

16. τίς ὁ τὴν καρδίαν πυραμοειδῆ ποιήσας; 14

17. τίς ὁ τὰ † νεῦρα † συνθείς; 7

18. τίς ὁ τὸ ἦπαρ πλατύνας; 8

19 τίς ὁ τὸν πνεύμονα σηραγγώσας; 9

20. τίς ὁ τὴν κοιλίαν εὐρύχωρον ποιήσας; 13

21 τίς ὁ τὰ τιμιώτατα εἰς τὸ φανερὸν ἐκτυπώσας καὶ τὰ αἰσχρὰ κρύψας; [134] 23

Even at first glance, this passage very much resembles hymnic material. Still, to establish that relationship beyond a doubt, another detour into chapter one's granular analysis may be useful. At the beginning of this excerpt, rather lengthy lines of 23 and 24 syllables enclose two shorter lines of 20 and 18 syllables. Line 2 begins with an imperative (νόησον) and line 3 ends with an imperative (ἐξέτασον). The first line has obvious alliteration (**θ**έλεις καὶ διὰ τῶν **θ**νητῶν **θ**εάσασθαι) and the root for 'to fashion' shows up in three different variations in three successive lines (δημιουργούμενον, δημιουργήματος, δημιουργῶν). The next 17 questions are anaphoric, starting with τίς ὁ (who is the one..?) and, with limited variation, some version of the definite article in a type of polyptotic anaphora. Nearly all the questions end in nominative aorist participles ending in -ας, creating an end rhyme to complement the initial anaphora. Two lines end with orphan endings, πόρους and συνθείς, and two lines end with present nominative singular participles that mirror and echo each, εριβαλών and διελών. Still one other follows the majority in end rhyme, but not in form, ending with the accusative plural noun φλέβας. The two lines that follow the line and the couplet with unique endings echo each other, using the same participle at the end (τίς ὁ τοῖς ποσὶ βάσιν πλατύνας;/ τίς ὁ τὸ ἦπαρ πλατύνας;). Much like the lines in *C.H.* XIII's hymn, the lines here seem to alternate syllable length in semi-predictable ways, with the 6th line and the 8th line being equal, the 7th and the 9th then the 11th and the 13th, the 12th and the 14th, and so forth. This whole passage is encircled by 2 lines of 23 syllables.

[134] *C.H.* V 6.1-6.15

These poetic and rhetorical techniques, although present in *C.H.* I and *C.H.* XIII, are not nearly so dense as they are in *C.H.* V. In fact, if the entire tractate consisted of lines as balanced as those cited above, it would be tempting to suggest that much, if not all, of *C.H.* V is itself intended to be a hymn or a type of prose poem. For this reason, the hymn at the end of *C.H.* V seems not so much like an intrusion into an otherwise straightforward prose text, as it does in *C.H.* I and XIII, but rather an organic development of the preceding material. The 'hymnic' or poetic nature of *C.H.* V has also been noticed by Chlup.[135] Chlup, however, also mentions a few other tractates as containing this type of language, which is certainly true, but the material that Chlup mentions lacks the attention to syllable length that certain passages, such as the one analyzed above, in *C.H.* V display.

In his section on this hymn, Whitehouse suggests that it, much like the hymn at the end of *C.H.* I, functions as both a summary of the tractate in which it appears and an offering of thanksgiving after the tractate has been shared.[136] Certain sections of the hymn do seem like they could serve as a way for a disciple to recall the lessons from the tractate. As in my analysis of the first hymn, I will go through these correspondences systematically.

1. Τίς οὖν σε εὐλογήσαι;
2. ὑπὲρ σοῦ ἢ πρὸς σέ;

The first section seems to deal with both the inadequacy of the hymnist to come before God ,"Τίς οὖν σε εὐλογήσαι;" (who would [be able to] hymn you?), which recalls section of the tractate 2.5-2.8 in which the narrator instructs Tat "to pray so that he might be able to think on

[135] Chlup 137
[136] Whitehouse, 270

so great a God." That the narrator assumes that Tat may not be able to do so suggests that only a person at a particular level of skill or favor might approach the deity.

3. ποῦ δὲ καὶ βλέπων εὐλογήσω σε,

4. ἄνω, κάτω, ἔσω, ἔξω;

5. οὐ γὰρ τρόπος, οὐ τόπος ἐστὶ περὶ σέ

6. οὐδὲ ἄλλο οὐδὲν τῶν ὄντων

7. πάντα δὲ ἐν σοί, πάντα ἀπὸ σοῦ

8. πάντα δίδως καὶ οὐδὲν λαμβάνεις.

9. πάντα γὰρ ἔχεις, καὶ οὐδὲν ὃ οὐκ ἔχεις.

Lines 3-9 are concerned with space.[137] The hymnist asks "Looking where will I bless/hymn you? Up, down, inside, outside?" and explains that "there is no turning [i.e., no place to turn], for there is no place around you." This question and concern with space and place recalls *C.H.* V 3-4's focus on the deity's establishing the earth and the heavens and marking boundaries between the two. Furthermore, the question concerns sight, and the reader is reminded of the section at the beginning in which the tractate establishes that God is himself invisible to sight and "cognition alone sees the unapparent, itself being unapparent."[138] The line "all things are in you and from you" refers to *C.H.* V 3-4, which highlights the deity's role as

[137] This expression of the impossibility of approaching God has many parallels in other texts, including Chapter 2 of Augustine's *Confessions*. It is associated with negative theology, for which see Michael Williams. "Negative Theologies and Demiurgical Myths in Late Antiquity," in *Gnosticism and Later Platonism: Themes, Figures, and Texts*, ed. John D. Turmer and Ruth Majercik. (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2000), 277-302.

[138] *C.H.* V 2.8-2.9: νόησις γὰρ μόνη ὁρᾷ τὸ ἀφανές, ὡς καὶ αὐτὴ ἀφανὴς οὖσα

"maker of all things,"[139] and the introduction to the tractate (*C.H.* 1.1-1.10), which states that God makes all things apparent.

10. πότε δὲ σὲ ὑμνήσω;

11. οὔτε γὰρ ὥραν σοῦ οὔτε χρόνον καταλαβεῖν δυνατόν.

Although there is no part of the tractate that deals with time explicitly as time, the section of the hymn that concerns God's timelessness (when shall I hymn you?), may be intended to bring the reader back to God's creation of the heavens, the stars, the sun, and the sea. In *C.H.* V 3.2-33, the speaker instructs Tat to keep in mind the sun, the course of the moon, and the order of the stars" (νόησον τὸν ἥλιον, νόησον τὸν σελήνης δρόμον, νόησον τῶν ἀστέρων τὴν τάξιν).[140] All these heavenly bodies and the sea are mechanisms by which time is expressed. Furthermore, since God is identified with the sun,[141] the ultimate marker of time, it stands to reason that he must not be subject to it. The second set of antitheses that expand the question "for what reason should I praise you?" are clearly references to the hidden God who makes all things apparent of the first section, whereas the first set, in which the hymnist questions whether s/he should praise the divinity for the thing it has made or not made (ὑπὲρ ὧν ἐποίησας, ἢ ὑπὲρ ὧν οὐκ ἐποίησας;) alludes to the strange section in which even those things that have not been made or ordered are said to have a master.

15.διὰ τί δὲ καὶ ὑμνήσω σέ;

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[139] *C.H.* V: 4.5 ὁ τούτων πάντων ποιητὴς

[140] *C.H.* V 3.1-5.10, but characteristic is C.V. 4.3- 4.4 in which the speaker asks who established the boundaries of the sea and made the Earth: "τίς ὁ τῇ θαλάσσῃ τοὺς ὅρους περιβαλών; τίς ὁ τὴν γῆν ἑδράσας;"

[141] Extended metaphor at *C.H.* V.:3.4-3.10

16. ὡς ἐμαυτοῦ ὤν, ὡς ἔχων τι ἴδιον, ὡς ἄλλος ὤν;

17. σὺ γὰρ εἶ ὃ [ε]ἂν ὦ,

18. σὺ εἶ ὃ ἂν ποιῶ

19. σὺ εἶ ὃ ἂν λέγω.

In lines 16-19, after line 15's question of "why should I hymn you," the pantheistic identification of God with the speaker, all the things the speaker does, all the things the speaker says, all things which are, all things which are not, and everything happening and not happening recalls two passages of the tractate directly before the hymn. In *C.H.* V 9.6-9.8, the speaker states about God, "for there is nothing in all this [i.e., everything], which is not him, and that one is even all things himself and all the things that aren't."[142] Later, in *C.H.* V 10.4-10.5, the same formula is rephrased, "there is nothing which that one is not, for all things are what that one is."[143] This seems to be an example of the hymn elaborating on the tractate rather than tersely referencing it.

24. νοῦς μέν, νοούμενος

νοῦς μέν, νοούμενος sends the reader (or the listener) back to the passage in the tractate where Tat is told that God must be grasped by the mind rather than seen ("first pray to the lord and father singular and not one that you might be able grasp such a God in your mind").[144]Tat is then instructed to think on God with the eyes of the mind.[145] Although God is not referenced as

[142] οὐδὲν γάρ ἐστιν ἐν παντὶ ἐκείνῳ ὃ οὐκ ἔστιν αὐτός. ἔστιν οὗτος καὶ τὰ ὄντα αὐτὸς καὶ τὰ μὴ ὄντα.
[143] οὐδέν ἐστιν οὗτος ὃ οὐκ ἔστι· πάντα γὰρ <ἃ> ἔστι καὶ οὗτός ἐστι
[144] *C.H.* V 2.5-2.7: εὖξαι πρῶτον τῷ κυρίῳ καὶ πατρὶ καὶ μόνῳ καὶ οὐχ ένί…ἵνα δυνηθῇς τὸν τηλικοῦτον θεὸν νοῆσαι
[145] *C.H.* V: 2.9-2.10: εἰ δύνασαι, τοῖς τοῦ νοῦ ὀφθαλμοῖς φανήσεται, ὦ Τάτ·

νοῦς anywhere in *C.H.* V, this short line reminds the Hermetic disciple that what s/he has been taught to consider in the tractate, namely God, is cognition itself.

25. πατὴρ δέ δημιουργῶν

26. θεὸς δέ, ἐνεργῶν

27. ἀγαθὸς δέ καὶ πάντα ποιῶν.

Lines 25-27 of the hymn refer back to the tractate's lengthy passages about God's creation of the world and its creatures. *C.H.* V 7.5 explicitly identifies the unseen God as the one involved in demiurgy (ὁ ἀφανὴς θεός, τῷ ἑαυτοῦ θελήματι πάντα δημιουργήσας), and the passage below it, *C.H.* V 8.1-8.10, describes the extreme impiety inherent in saying that created things occurred without a creator in three different ways.[146] The idea of God as maker with ποιέω occurs a number of times in this passage on creation, but characteristic is *C.H.* V in which it is stated that "it is impossible that anything happens without a maker" (χωρὶς τοῦ ποιοῦντος ἀδύνατόν ἐστι γενέσθαι τι).

28. ὕλης μὲν γὰρ τὸ λεπτομερέστερον ἀήρ,

29. ἀέρος δὲ ψυχή,

30. ψυχῆς δὲ νοῦς

31. νοῦ δὲ ὁ θεός

[146] *C.H.* V 8.2 is representative of the structure: τοῦτο δὲ τὸ δημιούργημα χωρὶς δημιουργοῦ γέγονεν;

The final lines, 28-31, are difficult to see as anything other than a reference to doctrine that is no longer extant. Mahé, in his discussion on the Armenian translation of Hermetic sayings, suggested that the core structure of Hermetic texts was scaffolded by gnomic sayings such as this, so it may be the case that these lines represent important doctrine that a disciple encountering this text would already have been familiar with.[147] In any case, its syllabic structure is apt for ending the hymn, but its contents are a little difficult to square with the rest of the tractate. Regardless of the origin of the final part about air being lighter than matter and so on, much of the hymn's function seems to be mnemonic and summarizing. It refers back to the previous tractate both explicitly and in veiled references and would possibly have been memorized in order to aid doctrinal retention.

As has been demonstrated above, passages of the tractate employ strikingly marked language, both poetic and rhetorical. This makes it difficult to demarcate exactly where the tractate ends and the 'hymn' proper begins. The standard practice since Norden has been to begin the hymn at the point when the speaker switches from 3rd to 2nd person, moving from the Er Stil to the Du Stil. However, as is apparent from *C.H.* I, Hermetic hymns did not necessarily stick to one or the other mode of address. Given this background, the material immediately preceding the question "who should hymn you" begins to look an awful lot like the beginning of the hymn. Consider the following lines:

1. οὗτος ὁ θεὸς ὀνόματος κρείττων 11

2. οὗτος ὁ ἀφανής, 6

3. οὗτος ὁ φανερώτατος 8

4. ὁ τῷ νοῒ θεωρητός, 7

[147] Mahé, Hermès 2: 407-408

5. οὗτος ὁ τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς ὁρατός· 10

6. οὗτος ὁ ἀσώματος, 7

7. ὁ πολυσώματος, 6

8. μᾶλλον δὲ παντοσώματος. 8

9. οὐδέν ἐστιν οὗτος ὃ οὐκ ἔστι· 10

10. πάντα γὰρ <ἃ> ἔστι καὶ οὗτός ἐστι, 11

11. καὶ διὰ τοῦτο ὀνόματα ἔχει ἅπαντα, 14

12. ὅτι ἑνός ἐστι πατρός, 8

13. καὶ διὰ τοῦτο αὐτὸς ὄνομα οὐκ ἔχει, 13

14. ὅτι πάντων ἐστὶ πατήρ. 8[148]

If, as has been suggested, the function of the hymn at the end of these tractates is to be a summary of the preceding material, lines 1-5 are an excellent example of the type. Rather than indirectly or conceptually allude to the content of *C.H.* V, which is the practice in the standard 'hymn,' these lines state everything plainly. "That one is the God better than all names" (οὗτος ὁ θεὸς ὀνόματος κρείττων) is a direct repetition of part of the tractate's first paragraph. The next two lines, "that one is the inapparent/that one is the most apparent" restates the thesis of *C.H.* V 1.1-1.10, which was quoted earlier in this analysis. The next two lines "the one seen by the mind/that one is seen by the eyes" allude to *C.H.* V 2.9, where the speaker enjoins Tat to consider God through the eyes of the mind. Lines 6-8 continue to stress the paradoxically insubstantial, but ever present nature of God that the tractate emphasizes throughout, but especially at the beginning, calling God "bodiless, but many bodied/and even all bodied" which is an expansion and an embellishment of the inapparent/apparent distinction.

[148] *C.H.* V 10.1-10.8

Lines 9-10, “There is nothing which is not that one/for all things are also that one” echoes the pantheistic conclusion of the hymn and refers back to *C.H.* V 9.6-9.8 “for there is nothing in this whole which is not him/That one is all things that are and all things that are not.” The last four lines describe God’s status as being better than all names (and because of this he has all names/because they are of one father,/and because of this, he himself does not have a name/because he is the father of all), which both alludes to the beginning of the tractate again, and closes off this strophic passage by ending on the same topic as presented in its first line (οὗτος ὁ θεὸς ὀνόματος κρείττων).

The structure of this section is also firmly of a type with material in the *C.H.* already established as hymnic. The first 9 lines recall the first 9 lines of *C.H.* I’s hymn in their initial anaphora (οὗτος ὁ), although lines 4, 7, 8 and 9 don’t technically begin with that wording. Still, two of those lines follow the structure without οὗτος “the one seen by the mind/the multi-bodied” (ὁ τῷ νοῒ θεωρητός/ ὁ πολυσώματος), line 8 is an expansion on a triple structure (μᾶλλον δὲ παντοσώματος), and line 9 contains οὗτος ὃ embedded within it (οὐδέν ἐστιν οὗτος ὃ οὐκ ἔστι).

Lines 11 and 13 are parallel syllabically and structurally (καὶ διὰ τοῦτο ὀνόματα ἔχει ἅπαντα/ καὶ διὰ τοῦτο αὐτὸς ὄνομα οὐκ ἔχει), the first having 14 syllables and the second 13. They begin with a three-word anaphoric phrase (καὶ διὰ τοῦτο) and are based on the antithetical parallelism that all things have a name, but God does not have a name. Lines 12 and 14 respond to 11 and 13, but also correspond to each other perfectly in syllable length and share the same initial word: ὅτι. Although both lines end in case variations on πατήρ, their second position is occupied by antithetical quantitative nouns in the genitive: one and all (ἑνός, πάντων).

The beginning of the first 9 lines shares the same number of syllables as the beginning of the next thought (οὗτος ὁ θεὸς ὀνόματος κρείττων/ πάντα γὰρ <ἃ> ἔστι καὶ οὗτός ἐστι,), where οὗτος has moved final position, ceding place to πάντα. Lines 2-4, which contain the triplet inapparent, most apparent, and seen by the mind (ἀφανής, /φανερώτατος/τῷ νοῒ θεωρητός) seem to be of a piece with lines 6-8, which contains the threefold description bodiless, many bodied, and all-bodied (ἀσώματος/ πολυσώματος/ παντοσώματος). This pairing contains alternating lines of 6, 7, and 8, although it's not easy to see exactly how they correspond. It is tempting to match them by comparative or superlative degree, but only οὗτος ὁ φανερώτατος/μᾶλλον δὲ παντοσώματος line up semantically and syllabically. Both contain 8 syllables, and one is superlative in morphology and the other in meaning (all-bodied). Lines 5 and 9 are also equal in syllables (10), giving every line in this formation a syllabic twin.

If this new hymnic material is accepted, then the hymn's function as a summarization of the preceding tractate is assured. Unlike *C.H.* I.'s hymn, however, the hymn in *C.H.* V is not a sharp break from the language of the tractate, but rather a subtle shift from common prose material alternating with more marked language to completely rhythmic or hymnic prose. Appropriately for a deity described in antitheses and contradictions in the tractate, the hymn is questioning and tentative, seeming to despair of praising God even as it accomplishes that task. The function is not creating a safe place for the reader to laud the divinity without experiencing the confusion of seemingly irreconcilable doctrinal points, but rather of allowing him or her to experience the majesty of a contradictory and difficult mystery.

ANALYSIS OF C.H. XIII

As both Whitehouse and Bull note[149], out of all the hymns in the *Corpus Hermeticum*, the hymns in XIII have been worked on most. The reason for this scholarly attentiveness is, in part, due to tractate XIII's seemingly clear insight into the practices of Hermetic groups. The text, it has often been argued, is a glimpse into a Hermetic initiation in which the master brings the disciple into deeper mysteries and realization. Another factor in *C.H.* XIII's relative interest is its obvious filiation with *C.H.* I. Both texts use similar language to describe similar things, both end with hymns that themselves seem to contain corresponding material, and *C.H.* XIII is the only tractate outside of I to mention Poimandres by name. [150]

The structure of the tractate is built around an initiatory discourse: the disciple, identified as Tat, asks his master, who is identified as his father, Hermes, to tell him about insights about rebirth that had previously been hidden from him. Hermes tells Tat that he will reply, and then does so in a manner that Tat finds increasingly difficult to understand. Hermes describes how he, at the grace of God and not out of any effort, found himself born again into a body that is no longer mortal and cannot be seen with physical eyes, but rather only through the Nous. Tat becomes ever more worked up, saying that Hermes is maddening him and that he (Hermes) isn't treating Tat like a true son by replying so evasively. Hermes then details how 10 powers sent from God purify 12 negative powers, which usually rule men's souls and cause them unspeakable torture. Finally, either through Hermes' replies or some Godly grace hidden from the reader, Tat undergoes the rebirth that he so desperately craves. At this, Hermes launches into

[149] Whitehouse ,272 and Bull, 244
[150] *C.H.* XIII 15.1-15.

a hymn of rebirth, which the manuscript calls the "hidden hymn." After Hermes' hymn, Tat, after some corrections by his master, sings his own four-line hymn.

As in *C.H.* I, the tractate establishes the importance of hymning before the reader arrives at the hymn. Tat says that he wants a blessing through a hymn like those that Hermes heard sung by the powers when he traveled to the Ogdoad, presumably after his rebirth.[151] This priming of the reader for the hymnic conclusion isn't as obvious as in *C.H.* I, but this may be because the reader or the listener of *C.H.* XIII may already be expected to be familiar with *C.H.* I. The reasoning behind that assertion will be more apparent as the analysis continues. Again, I will provide the sections of the hymn under discussion for reference.

1. πᾶσα φύσις κόσμου προσδεχέσθω τοῦ ὕμνου τὴν ἀκοήν. 17
2. ἀνοίγηθι γῆ
3. ἀνοιγήτω μοι πᾶς μοχλὸς ὄμβρου,
4. τὰ δένδρα μὴ σείεσθε.

5. ὑμνεῖν μέλλω τὸν τῆς κτίσεως κύριον,καὶ τὸ πᾶν καὶ τὸ ἕν.
6. ἀνοίγητε οὐρανοί
7. ἄνεμοί τε στῆτε.
8. ὁ κύκλος ὁ ἀθάνατος τοῦ θεοῦ, προσδεξάσθω μου τὸν λόγον·
9. μέλλω γὰρ ὑμνεῖν τὸν κτίσαντα τὰ πάντα
10. τὸν πήξαντα τὴν γῆν
11. καὶ οὐρανὸν κρεμάσαντα

[151] *C.H.* XIII: 15.1-15.3: Ἐβουλόμην, ὦ πάτερ, τὴν διὰ τοῦ ὕμνου εὐλογίαν, ἣν ἔφης ἐπὶ τὴν ὀγδοάδα γενομένου σου ἀκοῦσαι τῶν δυνάμεων

12. καὶ ἐπιτάξαντα ἐκ τοῦ ὠκεανοῦ τὸ γλυκὺ ὕδωρ

13. εἰς τὴν οἰκουμένην καὶ ἀοίκητον ὑπάρχειν

14. εἰς διατροφὴν καὶ κτίσιν πάντων τῶν ἀνθρώπων

15. τὸν ἐπιτάξαντα πῦρ φανῆναι

16. εἰς πᾶσαν πρᾶξιν θεοῖς τε καὶ ἀνθρώποις

17. δῶμεν πάντες ὁμοῦ αὐτῷ τὴν εὐλογίαν, 13

18. τῷ ἐπὶ τῶν οὐρανῶν μετεώρῳ, 11

19. τῷ πάσης φύσεως κτίστῃ. 8

The first section of the hymn may at first seem out of place. None of the language from the preceding tractate is carried over, and as Whitehouse remarked, shouting at the sky, the heavens, and other parts of nature hardly seems appropriate for a 'secret hymn.' This consideration has led Whitehouse to suggest that the calls for nature to 'open' might not be an original part of the hymn, but rather a separate hymn that has been added by a redactor. In opposition to this objection, however, the language used here is suggestive of language found in the *Greek Magical Papyri*,[152] and the magic spells and hymns in that collection are not often thought of as being for public ritual. Rather, scholars tend to think of that material as expressions of private religion in which individual magicians sought personal benefits from their Gods, probably alone and in secret. Furthermore, stereotyped language about impressive natural displays need not be indicative of public or open ceremonies since neither the singer of the hymn nor the magicians who used similar language in their spells would have expected the heavens or the Earth to actually open at their command.

[152] e.g., *PGM* IV 1180: ἀνοίγηθι, οὐρανέ,

Dodd and Reitzenstein both have suggested an influence from the *Septuagint*, specifically from the hymn of Moses in *Deuteronomy* 32.1 (πρόσεχε οὐρανέ καὶ λαλήσω καὶ ἀκουέτω γῆ ῥήματα ἐκ στόματός μου) and *Isaiah* 1.2 (ἄκουε οὐρανέ καὶ ἐνωτίζου γῆ ὅτι κύριος ἐλάλησεν).[153] The injunctions for various aspects of nature to pay attention are certainly reminiscent of the beginning of *C.H.* XIII's hymn. The passage in Deuteronomy even has a similar alternation of 2nd person singular imperatives with 3rd person singular imperatives (e.g., ἀνοίγηθι γῆ/ ἀνοιγήτω μοι πᾶς μοχλὸς ὄμβρου). However, in the *Septuagint* material, the sky is invoked in the singular (οὐρανέ), whereas in *C.H.* XIII, the heavens plural are called to open (ἀνοίγητε οὐρανοί). Additionally, against claims of influence or the existence of a chain of inherited phraseology, the earth and the sky are in a different order: the earth is mentioned first in the *C.H.* and the sky second (lines 2 and 6, according to the colometry of this study), whereas they appear in the reverse order in both *Deuteronomy* and *Isaiah*.

Regardless of any objections to the contrary, this first section fits perfectly in that it establishes a dramatic atmosphere. In the environment of Alexandrian Egypt, it is not difficult to imagine a composer had both the *Septuagint* and various magical spells and hymns to draw upon and that certain stereotyped phrases and invocations seemed appropriate to him or her as a beginning to a solemn hymn of rebirth. The section's affiliation with the *Greek Magical Papyri* is further deepened by the casual way that the hymnist uses expressions that seem characteristic of the material included therein. In the same section of the *PGM* that includes the injunction for the heavens to open, the magician instructs nature to "receive his words," using the same verb as in *C.H.* XIII's hymn (καὶ πρόσδεξαί μου τοὺς λόγους)[154] and refers to God's creation of the

[153] C.H. Dodd. *The Bible and the Greeks*. (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1935), 240-241
[154] *PGM* IV 1176

world with κεράννυμι twice[155] although admittedly referring to the separation of fire from water and the separation of ether from the highest heavens rather than the hanging of heavens, as in *C.H.* XIII's line.

20. οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ τοῦ νοῦ ὀφθαλμός

21. καὶ δέξαιτο τῶν δυνάμεων μου τὴν εὐλογίαν.

22. αἱ δυνάμεις αἱ ἐν ἐμοί, ὑμνεῖτε τὸ ἓν καὶ τὸ πᾶν·

23. συνάσατε τῷ θελήματί μου πᾶσαι αἱ ἐν ἐμοὶ δυνάμεις

Although there are sections of *C.H.* XIII's hymn that summarize and recall the preceding tractate, the language of the tractate does not correspond to its hymn as often as it does in the previous tractate and hymn pairs. As already stated above, the beginning of the hymn with its invocations of natural phenomena is dissimilar to the language of the tractate. Only here, at line 20, with reference to the "eye of the mind" (ὁ τοῦ νοῦ ὀφθαλμός) does the hymn begin to echo *C.H.* XIII's phrasing, content, and lexicon. Hermes states that only through the eye of the mind can his new, reborn body be seen and also later on chides Tat not to blaspheme or speak ill of the eye of the mind.[156] Lines 21-23, "let it/him receive the blessing of my powers/the powers in me, hymn the one and the all/all powers that are in me, sing through my will,"[157] begin where Hermes left off in the tractate before he began his invocation of the natural powers of creation. The reader is reminded of Tat's request for a blessing through a hymn (Ἐβουλόμην, ὦ πάτερ, τὴν

[155] *PGM* IV 1172 δεῦρό μοι, ὁ ἐνφυσήσας τὸν σύμπαντα κόσμον, ὁ τὸ πῦρ κρεμάσας ἐκ τοῦ ὕδατος καὶ τὴν γῆν χωρίσας ἀπὸ τοῦ ὕδατος and *PGM* IV 1155: ὁ τὸν αἰθέρα ἀνακρεμάσας μετεώρῳ ὑψώματι

[156] *C.H.* XIII 14.3-14.4: Εὐφήμησον καὶ μὴ ἀδύνατα φθέγγου· ἐπεὶ ἁμαρτήσεις καὶ ἀσεβηθήσεταί σου ὁ ὀφθαλμὸς τοῦ νοῦ

[157] καὶ δέξαιτο τῶν δυνάμεων μου τὴν εὐλογίαν/ αἱ δυνάμεις αἱ ἐν ἐμοί, ὑμνεῖτε τὸ ἓν καὶ τὸ πᾶν/συνάσατε τῷ θελήματί μου πᾶσαι αἱ ἐν ἐμοὶ δυνάμεις

διὰ τοῦ ὕμνου εὐλογίαν")[158] in addition to Hermes' description of himself as having the powers singing within him ("αἱ δυνάμεις αἱ ἐν ἐμοὶ ᾄδουσι").[159] The will of the petitioner is emphasized in the tractate as well as the will of God. In *C.H.* XIII 2.9, Hermes says that whenever Tat wills rebirth, it will be recalled by God ("ἀλλ' ὅταν θέλῃ, ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ ἀναμιμνήσκεται), and later in *C.H.* XIII 7.1-.72 he bids the boy to will rebirth and states that it will happen ("θέλησον, καὶ γίνεται).

24. γνῶσις ἁγία, φωτισθεὶς ἀπὸ σοῦ,
25. διὰ σοῦ τὸ νοητὸν φῶς ὑμνῶν
26. χαίρω ἐν χαρᾷ νοῦ.
27. πᾶσαι δυνάμεις ὑμνεῖτε σὺν ἐμοί.
28. καὶ σύ μοι, ἐγκράτεια, ὕμνει.
29. δικαιοσύνη μου, τὸ δίκαιον ὕμνει δι' ἐμοῦ.
30. κοινωνία ἡ ἐμή, τὸ πᾶν ὕμνει δι' ἐμοῦ·
31. ὕμνει ἀλήθεια τὴν ἀλήθειαν.
32. τὸ ἀγαθόν, ἀγαθόν, ὕμνει·
33. ζωὴ καὶ φῶς, ἀφ' ὑμῶν
34. εἰς ὑμᾶς χωρεῖ ἡ εὐλογία.

Lines 24-26 set up the hymn's mention of the δυνάμεις. Hermes names three of the powers: γνῶσις, φῶς, and χαρά. Knowledge and joy appear in the same order as they do in the tractate. That light is out of order proves a momentary hiccup in the structure. In lines 28-34,

[158] *C.H.* XIII 15.1
[159] *C.H.* XIII 15.9

Hermes, after once again calling on the powers to hymn, calls on them individually and enjoins that self-control (ἐγκράτεια), justice (δικαιοσύνη), community (κοινωνία), truth (ἀλήθεια), the good (τὸ ἀγαθόν), and life and light (ζωὴ καὶ φῶς) hymn in exactly the same order as they appear in *C.H.* XIII 8.6-9.15. This summarizes that section nicely and allows the reader to recall the 10 powers readily.

35. εὐχαριστῶ σοι, πάτερ, ἐνέργεια τῶν δυνάμεων.
36. εὐχαριστῶ σοι θεέ, δύναμις τῶν ἐνεργειῶν μου

The powers are again invoked where the hymnist thanks God as the energy of the powers and the power of [his or her] energies (εὐχαριστῶ σοι, πάτερ, ἐνέργεια τῶν δυνάμεων/εὐχαριστῶ σοι θεέ, δύναμις τῶν ἐνεργειῶν μου). ἐνέργεια and δύναμις appear together in *C.H.* XIII 6.10-6.12, where Hermes asks Tat how he will "consider with the senses that which is not substantial, not liquid, not inflammable, not detectable, and grasped alone by power and energy" (τὸ μόνον δυνάμει καὶ ἐνεργείᾳ νοούμενον).[160] This passage in the hymn, then, invites the reader to refer back to Hermes' words and, through them, to consider the marvelous and incorporeal nature of God and the body reborn. For now, lines 37-48 will be omitted, as they do not seem to refer back to *C.H.* XIII.

49. ὁ σὸς ἄνθρωπος ταῦτα βοᾷ
50. διὰ πυρός, δι' ἀέρος, διὰ γῆς,
51. διὰ ὕδατος, διὰ πνεύματος,

[160] πῶς αἰσθητῶς αὐτὸ νοήσεις τὸ μὴ σκληρόν, τὸ μὴ ὑγρόν, τὸ ἀσφίγγωτον, τὸ μὴ διαδυόμενον, τὸ μόνον δυνάμει καὶ ἐνεργείᾳ νοούμενον

52. διὰ τῶν κτισμάτων σου.

Here, the hymnist's shout through the elements recalls C.H. 6.7-6.12, in which Hermes contrasts the physical elements with the cognition of God, who is without physical properties. Hermes says that certain qualities may be perceived as certain elements, "upper matter, as fire; lower matter, as Earth; moisture, as water; and respiration, as air" (Οὕτως ἔχει, ὦ τέκνον· τὸ μὲν ἀνωφερές, ὡς πῦρ, καὶ κατωφερές, ὡς γῆ, καὶ ὑγρόν, ὡς ὕδωρ, καὶ σύμπνοον, ὡς ἀήρ).[161]

Many of the other lines in the hymn do not seem to refer back to *C.H.* XIII, but rather to another source: as every reader of the *Corpus Hermeticum* has noticed, some relationship exists between *C.H.* I and *C.H.* XIII. Poimandres is referenced by name and title in both and mentioned in no other tractate. Particularly remarkable are the allusions that the hymn in *C.H.* XIII seems to make to the hymn in *C.H.* I as well as other passages of that tractate. From this, at least three obvious conclusions are possible: 1. The composer of one of these tractates was familiar with the other 2. Both composers are referencing common external material, or 3. The same composer produced both tractates. Although it is always possible that the composer of C.H. I saw references to Poimandres in *C.H.* XIII and decided to expand on them, the more parsimonious explanation, given that Poimandres is introduced and explained in *C.H.* I, is that the composer of *C.H.* XIII was familiar with *C.H.* I and its hymn. The second possibility is unlikely because of how the hymn in C.H. XIII references the hymn in *C.H.* I. That the same person wrote both tractates and hymns is certainly possible, but no scholar that I'm aware of has propounded this theory, and a preliminary scan of important word choices throughout both tractates using the TLG corpus search doesn't produce any immediate striking similarities outside of obvious

[161] *C.H.* XIII 6.7-6.12

allusions. Whatever the exact relationship, I will demonstrate that *C.H.* XIII's hymn directly refers to *C.H.* I's tractate and its hymn.

In the request for nature to receive the words of the hymnist (ὁ κύκλος ὁ ἀθάνατος τοῦ θεοῦ, προσδεξάσθω μου τὸν λόγον), the hymnist mentions the immortal circle of God (ὁ κύκλος ὁ ἀθάνατος τοῦ θεοῦ). κύκλος isn't mentioned once in *C.H.* XIII, but Poimandres uses the word three times in *C.H.* I to discuss the creation and animation of the world. Mind, which is coextensive with God, creates a second mind, which itself then creates seven governors that surround the sensible cosmos in circles/spheres.[162] This second mind unites with the word of God and surrounds the circles/spheres.[163] Finally, the first mind breaks through the circumference of the circles/spheres to view the creation of the second mind. [164] Since spheres/circles such as this don't feature in the other tractates, it seems likely that the composer of *C.H.* XIII's hymn had *C.H.* I's cosmological conception in mind, even if κύκλος is referred to singularly rather than in the plural. The immortal circle of God could refer to the sphere after the seven spheres of the governors, which would quite obviously be the eighth sphere, or the Ogdoad. Of course, these ideas are common in Gnostic and Neoplatonic texts from this era, so each tractate borrowing from another, independent source cannot be entirely ruled out.

In both *C.H.* I and *C.H.* XIII, the hymnist requests that God "receive the sacrifice in words" using the same language ("δέξαι λογικὴν θυσίαν"), albeit embellished in both tractates, for example in *C.H.* I ("δέξαι λογικὰς θυσίας ἁγνὰς ") and repeated twice in C.H. XIII ("δέξαι τὸ πᾶν λόγῳ, λογικὴν θυσίαν" and later "τὸ πᾶν Δέξαι ἀπὸ πάντων λογικὴν θυσίαν"). In mentioning light and life, both hymnists connect the verb χωρεῖν, although in different contexts. The hymnist in *C.H.* I says that, "I go into life and light" ("εἰς ζωὴν καὶ φῶς χωρῶ"), whereas the speaker in

[162] *C.H.* I 9.3-9.4: ἐδημιούργησε διοικητάς τινας ἑπτά, ἐν κύκλοις περιέχοντας τὸν αἰσθητὸν κόσμον
[163] *C.H.* I 11.5: ὁ δὲ δημιουργὸς Νοῦς σὺν τῷ Λόγῳ, ὁ περιίσχων τοὺς κύκλους)
[164] *C.H.* I 13.8-13.9: ἠβουλήθη ἀναρρῆξαι τὴν περιφέρειαν τῶν κύκλων

C.H. XIII addresses life and light directly, stating that "the blessing goes out of you into you" (ζωὴ καὶ φῶς, ἀφ' ὑμῶν εἰς ὑμᾶς χωρεῖ ἡ εὐλογία).[165] The line in which God's ("your") will accomplishes (τὸ σὸν θέλημα τελοῦσι) is reminiscent of *C.H.* I's assertion that God's will is accomplished through its own powers ("ἅγιος ὁ θεὸς, οὗ ἡ βουλὴ τελεῖται ἀπὸ τῶν ἰδίων δυνάμεων"), although both hymns use a different word for will. In spite of this incongruity, it seems that the hymnist of *C.H.* XIII had C.H. I in mind when composing this section. The line immediately following employs βουλὴ, exclaiming that "your will goes from you into you" ("σὴ βουλὴ ἀπὸ σοῦ ἐπὶ σέ"). While one might expect the hymnist in *C.H.* XIII to refer to himself as a child since being a child of God is important throughout the tractate, instead. Hermes says, "your man shouts these things" ("ὁ σὸς ἄνθρωπος ταῦτα βοᾷ"), which alludes to the ending of C.H. I's hymn, in which the hymnist says, "your man wants to equal you in holiness" ("ὁ σὸς ἄνθρωπος συναγιάζειν σοι βούλεται"). That this allusion isn't accidental is assured by how this 9-syllable line recalls the previous balanced 10-syllable lines "your word hymns you through me/mind shepherds your word" ("ὁ σὸς Λόγος δι' ἐμοῦ ὑμνεῖ σέ/ Λόγον γὰρ τὸν σὸν ποιμαίνει ὁ Νοῦς."), the latter of which directly references Poimandres by using Νοῦς and a punning play on his name (ποιμαίνει), which is, probably falsely, often taken to mean shepherd of men. The simple piety and structure of "you are God" (σὺ εἶ ὁ θεός) seem to refer back to *C.H.* I's hymn, which also contains a short, unadorned statement about God "you are blessed, father" (εὐλογητὸς εἶ, πάτερ) before a line containing the phrase "your man" (ὁ σὸς ἄνθρωπος ταῦτα βοᾷ).

As this study has demonstrated, the hymn in *C.H.* XIII, as the hymns in *C.H.* I and V, contains references and allusions to the preceding tractate. Unlike the other two hymns, however, the hymn in *C.H.* XIII also contains references that appear to point back to *C.H.* I and its hymn. If part of the function of hymn I and hymn XIII is to provide a way for the reader and disciple to

[165] *C.H.* XIII 18.8

recall the doctrine and details of the tractates to which they are attached, it is likely that the intent behind including allusions to *C.H.* I in *C.H.* XIII's hymn is similar. In this case, that may point to *C.H.* XIII's status as a higher level of instructional material in a graded curriculum.

Fowden[166] and Mahé[167], among others, have posited that the apparent contradictions in Hermetic doctrine from tractate to tractate—and even sometimes from paragraph to paragraph within a single tractate—represent steps along a Hermetic path. Certain tenets, such as a Manichaean dualism between good spirit and evil matter, are discarded by the disciple as s/he ascends these stages until finally s/he stands purified and perfected. In this type of scheme, *C.H.* I and *C.H.* XIII describe an advanced stage in which the disciple is inducted into a high or even perhaps the highest state of wisdom. Hanegraff, in his study of the Hermetic path, suggests that *C.H.* XIII is intended to be experienced after *C.H.* I in the curriculum. Some reasons given for this are the more detailed description of the "powers" given in C.H. XIII and its emphasis on rebirth.[168]

If we assume that the hymn in *C.H.* XIII has a propaedeutic and mnemonic function, then its inclusion of multiple grades of material, i.e., references to both *C.H.* I and *C.H.* XIII, may be further evidence of its relatively advanced status in the Hermetic paideia. A disciple reading *C.H.* XIII—or hearing it recited—would already have read or heard *C.H.* I. Memorizing and chanting *C.H.* XIII's hymn, then, would have served as a way of recalling the material of both tractates.

This study has claimed that the hymn in *C.H.* I also has a consolidating and emotionally consoling function in which doctrinal anxieties are dissolved in piety directed towards a single,

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[166] Fowden, 103: "doctrinal variations . . . reflect an intention that different successive levels [or "steps"] of spiritual enlightenment should provide access to different successive levels of truth about Man, the World and God . . ."
[167] Mahé, Hermès I 102-104
[168] Wouter Hanegraff . "Altered States of Knowledge: the Attainment of Gnōsis in the Hermetica." *International Journal of the Platonic Tradition* 2 (2008): 137-138.

uncomplicated source. Although the theology of *C.H.* XIII is simpler than that of *C.H.* I, its presentation is still somewhat confusing. Apotheosis of the disciple is mentioned, the Νοῦς and the Λόγος are mentioned, Poimandres himself is mentioned, and then the 10 powers of God and 12 vices are described. For an inexperienced disciple, this is still a lot of information to retain. Moreover, unlike in *C.H.* I, the disciple in *C.H.* XIII 2.3, Tat, directly expresses the unsettling effect that his master's words have on his mind. In *C.H.* XIII, he says that he is entirely at a loss (σύνολον ἀπορῶ). In *C.H.* XIII 2.7, after Hermes describes the 'All in All," he accuses Hermes of speaking in riddles and not addressing him as a father to his true child (Αἴνιγμά μοι λέγεις, ὦ πάτερ, καὶ οὐχ ὡς πατὴρ υἱῷ διαλέγῃ). After further words from Hermes and considerable anxiety from Tat, Tat exclaims that Hermes is driving him into madness and that he can no longer see 'himself' (Εἰς μανίαν με οὐκ ὀλίγην καὶ οἴστρησιν φρενῶν ἐνέσεισας, ὦ πάτερ· ἐμαυτὸν γὰρ νῦν οὐχ ὁρῶ).[169] This frustration continues through *C.H.* 4-6 until Hermes shows Tat the 12 vices that weigh him down and then calls the 10 powers to drive them away. After this, Tat seems to undergo the transformation of rebirth, exclaiming, "Father, I see the all and myself in the Νοῦς" (Πάτερ, τὸ πᾶν ὁρῶ καὶ ἐμαυτὸν ἐν τῷ νοΐ). [170] Although the transformation seems complete, it is only after Hermes sings his hymn that Tat seems fully integrated and at ease, stating, "From your hymn and your blessing, my Νοῦς is illuminated" (ἐκ τοῦ σοῦ ὕμνου καὶ τῆς σῆς εὐλογίας ἐπιπεφώτισταί μου ὁ νοῦς).[171] Tat's experience in the tractate reflects the readers own, although, presumably, without a master present and a physical ritual to undergo, the reader can only hope to rest his or her mind in the teachings s/he has received rather than experiencing full rebirth. Tat is transformed, but the reader can only rest in uncomplicated piety.

[169] *C.H.* XIII 3.7
[170] *C.H.* XIII 13.1
[171] *C.H.* XIII 21.3-21.4

Thus, as in *C.H.* I, *C.H.* XIII resolves the issue of ever ramifying doctrinal complexity at the end with a hymn that serves as thanksgiving to God for the teaching, a summary of that teaching, and a way for the disciple to focus his or her devotion onto something singular and concrete. Although the hymn mentions the powers, Νοῦς, and Λόγος, it begins with the intention to hymn God, the one and the all (τὸ ἓν καὶ τὸ πᾶν) and reiterates towards the end that its second person addressee is God (σὺ εἶ ὁ θεός).

CONCLUSION

To end this chapter, one particular interpretation of the hymns' function must be dispensed with and a summary of the chapter's findings will be given. To begin the first task, it must be noted that the narrative of the tractates suggests that the hymns themselves hold transformative power. For example, Whitehouse compares them to theurgy, stating "prayer itself becomes a vehicle for the mystical ascent."[172] In this scheme, the hymns both describe a certain change in the hymnist and produce one. That they are a response to a certain type of metamorphosis or initiation in *C.H.* I and XIII is undeniable, but the text does not indicate that the process of hymning brings about that change. In *C.H.* I, Poimandres mixes the narrator with the powers and enjoins him to teach others. Only after a passage in which the narrator seems to go about the business of teaching does the narrator begin the hymn. In *C.H.* XIII, Hermes invokes the 10 powers to come into them and Tat proclaims his rebirth before the hymn begins. All of the action has been accomplished before any hymning is attempted.

[172] Whitehouse, 356

Given this, it becomes apparent that the hymns perform no initiatory function, but rather a post-initiatory function. The regenerated man or women, mixed with the powers, hymns to thank God for its gifts, but also simply as a function of holding the powers within him- or herself. The powers are hymning perpetually in the Ogdoad, so all the advanced Hermetic initiate need do, having the powers within, is to let the hymn, which is already in progress, out.

In the internal structure of the tractates, the hymns in *C.H.* I and XIII have the function that is stated before they begin: they praise God and give thanks for the revelations of the preceding tractate. Further, they detail the ontological status of the powers that both tractates describe as 'hymning' in the Ogdoad. The narrator of *C.H.* I and Hermes in *C.H.* XIII provide the reader with an example of the type of hymns these powers are described as singing. This is their first function.

Their second function is to summarize the doctrine of their tractates in condensed form using direct wording and suggestive allusions. Presumably, disciples reading or listening to this material were expected to memorize the hymns, which would then help them remember particular points of doctrine. In the case of *C.H.* XIII, which may represent a more advanced stage of a Hermetic curriculum, allusions to *C.H.* I are included to aid the disciple in memorizing an ever-increasing amount of material.

The third function of these hymns is to provide a brief respite from the complexities of Hermetic doctrine. The simple invocations of God the father towards the end of both demonstrate the simple devotion and piety that they are intended to evoke in those that read, chant, or listen to them.

The hymn at the end of *C.H.* V, on the other hand is somewhat different. It does serve to summarize and recall the rest of the tractate and, of course, to praise God, but its status as

marked or poetic prose is not unique in its context. Other ‘poetic’ or rhythmic prose is scattered throughout the tractate. The only features distinguishing the hymn proper from these other passages is that very function of summarization, presumably with the intended effect of aiding in the memorization of doctrine. The frequency of the marked language in *C.H.* V and the rhetorical and poetic techniques employed suggest that perhaps the tractate was intended to be performed in some way or recited to a group. In terms of content, far from distracting the reader away from doctrinal complexity back to a unified and simple focus of devotion, the hymn of *C.H.* V seems to revel in doubt, praising God through detailing its incomprehensibility and the very impossibility of approaching it in some way to give praise.

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSION

As Chapter 1 demonstrated, the hymns in *C.H.* I, V, and XIII are characterized by marked language usually associated with rhetorical and poetic material and a structure that emphasizes antithetical and complementary parallel structures similar to those found in marked "poetic" passages in the *New Testament* and the *LXX*. Although the composers of these hymns did not use quantitative meter of the type common in Greek pagan hymnody, they were attentive to rhythm and carefully constructed lines according to syllable length based on clausal and semantic units. The hymns that resulted from these compositional practices are memorable and rhythmic, and they seem ideally suited to chanting.

This rhythmic structure lends credence to the findings of Chapter 2, which suggest that the hymns of *C.H.* I and XIII serve 3 principal functions in their respective treatises: 1) The function of the traditional hymn, which is to offer praise and thanksgiving to a divinity; 2) the summarization of the doctrine and content of the preceding treatise to provide a mnemonic aid to the reader, who was perhaps a disciple; and 3) the comfort of a prospective disciple/reader who might be disturbed by the complexity of Hermetic doctrine by shifting his focus to a simple, unified deity. The rhythmic and poetic features identified in Chapter 1 are appropriate for function 1, in that they are well-constructed and beautiful, a fine gift for a divinity. The marked language, parallelisms, and long lines followed by shorter lines of equal syllables would have facilitated function 2 by helping readers memorize the hymns, performing a function similar to

rhyme in English poetry and quantitative meter in earlier Greek hymns. Similarly, these artistic devices would have added to the effectiveness of function 3 by enhancing the uncomplicated religious feeling through pleasing ornamentation and soothing rhythm.

The relationship between form and function in *C.H.* V's hymn is similar to those in *C.H.* I and XIII. Its marked language and poetic and rhetorical flourishes presumably helped readers memorize its contents, which summarize and, in some places, explain and extend *C.H.* V's core doctrine. The "hymnic" intent of praising deity is also clear. This hymn, however, does not share function number 3 with its fellows; rather than helping eliminate doubt and confusion, it dwells in that emotional space, creating from it a meditation on the impossibility of approaching and comprehending a God that is fully present in all things, while being wholly invisible.

The results of this study affirm the essential unity of the hymns in *C.H.* I, V, and XIII and their treatises. Their composers modeled the hymns after the content in the preceding treatise and intended them to summarize and enhance that content. This deliberate creation, combined with the poetic, rhetorical, and rhythmic techniques that this study highlights, shows that these hymns were sophisticated works of art that follow their own structure and logic. Further study in this area might treat the Latin hymnic material in the *Asclepius* from a similar angle, although care would have to be taken to examine Coptic fragments that seem to translate the same hymn and fragments of the Greek hymn on which it is presumably based. Whitehouse, who has already treated this material from a form critical perspective, has provided the groundwork for such a study.[173] Another fertile avenue for research is the examination of other non-metrical Greek material for similar syllabic patterns, particularly that whose provenance is Egyptian or whose themes are Egyptian.

[173] Whitehouse 137-245

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