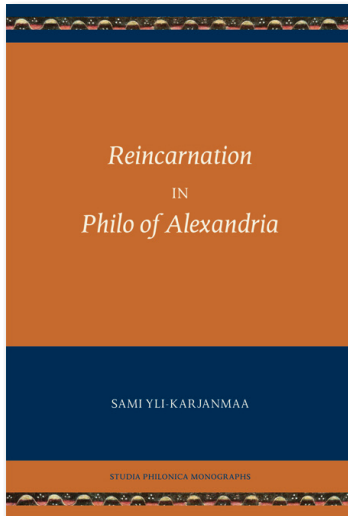




Reincarnation in Philo of Alexandria

Sami Yli-Karjanmaa

The best current research on Philo's allegorical exegesis of Scripture



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The strong element of Greek philosophy in Philo's thought has been recognized since antiquity, but his relation to the Pythagorean-Platonic tenet of reincarnation has been a neglected, even avoided, topic in research. This book confirms the view—common in the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries—that Philo accepted the doctrine of reincarnation even though he preferred not to speak openly about it. The book shows how allegorization enabled Philo to give a reincarnational interpretation to very different scriptural passages.

Features:

- Highlights the importance of reading Philonic parallel passages together for fuller understanding of Philo's message
- Discusses the difference between protological and universal allegory in Philo's exegesis of the first chapters of Genesis
- Introduces new concepts to Philonic research such as the corporealization of the mind (the result of transgression and a driving force for reincarnation) and monadization (the human soul's transformation into pure mind upon salvation)

Sami Yli-Karjanmaa is a postdoctoral researcher in the Faculty of Theology at the University of Helsinki. Within the Academy of Finland Centre of Excellence in Changes in Sacred Texts and Traditions, his present study deals with changes in afterlife beliefs and their links with social identity in Hellenistic Judaism.

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