

ASENETH OF EGYPT

SBL Press

EARLY JUDAISM AND ITS LITERATURE

Rodney A. Werline, General Editor

Editorial Board:

Randall D. Chesnutt
Kelley N. Coblenz Bautch
Maxine L. Grossman
Carol Newsom

Number 53



ASENETH OF EGYPT

The Composition of a Jewish Narrative

Patricia D. Ahearne-Kroll





Atlanta

Copyright © 2020 by Patricia D. Ahearne-Kroll

All rights reserved. No part of this work may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying and recording, or by means of any information storage or retrieval system, except as may be expressly permitted by the 1976 Copyright Act or in writing from the publisher. Requests for permission should be addressed in writing to the Rights and Permissions Office, SBL Press, 825 Houston Mill Road, Atlanta, GA 30329 USA.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Ahearne-Kroll, Patricia D., author.

Title: Aseneth of Egypt : the composition of a Jewish narrative / by Patricia D. Ahearne-Kroll.

Description: Atlanta : SBL Press, 2020. | Series: Early Judaism and its literature ; 53 | Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2020012820 (print) | LCCN 2020012821 (ebook) | ISBN 9781628372830 (paperback) | ISBN 9780884144571 (hardback) | ISBN 9780884144588 (ebook)

Subjects: LCSH: Joseph and Aseneth—Criticism, interpretation, etc. | Judaism—Egypt—Heliopolis (Extinct city).

Classification: LCC BS1830.J62 A44 2020 (print) | LCC BS1830.J62 (ebook) | DDC 229/.91—dc23

LC record available at <https://lccn.loc.gov/2020012820>

LC ebook record available at <https://lccn.loc.gov/2020012821>

To my parents

SBL Press

SBL Press

Contents

Acknowledgments	ix
Abbreviations	xi
Introduction	1
1. The Reconstructed Texts of <i>Aseneth</i> and Their Limitations:	
The Analysis of Standhartinger and Kraemer	25
The Textual Witnesses of <i>Aseneth</i>	26
The Reconstructions of Burchard and Philonenko	33
The Revival of Philonenko's Reconstruction:	
Standhartinger's Analysis	36
The Revival of Philonenko's Reconstruction:	
Kraemer's Analysis	56
The Limitations of Comparing the Reconstructed Texts of <i>Aseneth</i>	74
2. The Reconstructed Texts of <i>Aseneth</i> and Their Limitations:	
The Texts of Burchard and Fink	77
Transmission History of the <i>Aseneth</i> Witnesses:	
Burchard's and Fink's Assessments	79
The Limitations of Fink's Reconstructed Text and the Inherent Flaws of Burchard's Reconstructed Text	105
A New Path to the Earliest <i>Aseneth</i>	117
3. The <i>Fabula</i> of <i>Aseneth</i>	123
Thomas's Study of the Acts of Peter	126
Thomas's Model and the Textual Witnesses of <i>Aseneth</i>	134
The <i>Fabula</i> of <i>Aseneth</i>	139
The Implications of a <i>Fabula</i> of <i>Aseneth</i>	184

4. <i>Aseneth</i> and the Landscape of Ptolemaic and Early Roman Egypt	187
Rewriting Ancestral Identity into the Pharaonic Past	188
The Narrative Landscape of <i>Aseneth</i> and the Environment of Ptolemaic Egypt	210
Conclusion	240
5. Conclusion	243
 Bibliography	249
Ancient Sources Index	269
Greek Words Index	280
Subject Index	281
Modern Authors Index	283

SBL Press

Acknowledgments

If you wish to make an apple pie from scratch, you must first invent the universe.

—Carl Sagan

This work has been twenty years in the making. I have benefitted greatly from innumerable conversations and correspondences I have had over the years with colleagues, scholars, students, and friends, but I wish to call attention to those who considerably supported me along the way. It was in John J. Collins's seminar on Hellenistic Judaism at The University of Chicago Divinity School where I was first introduced to *Aseneth*, and John advised my dissertation on the topic. I am grateful for his ongoing encouragement of my work on *Aseneth*, and I am also grateful to Randall Chesnutt and Angela Standhartinger who remained interested in my project these many years. As the reader will see, my analysis required detailed examination of minutiae that sometimes could be dizzying to organize; I would have lost steam if it were not for the support of these senior scholars. Special mention must also be given to Harold and Jan Attridge, whose incredible generosity provided me a tranquil space to do considerable textual work during my dissertation-writing years, which set me on my path of critiquing the reconstructions of *Aseneth*. I also wish to thank the editor of the Early Judaism and Its Literature series, Rodney Werline, whose patience and support in the completion of my project made this monograph possible. I wrote the bulk of this book in my current position in the Classical and Near Eastern Studies Department at the University of Minnesota, so I also offer thanks to Nita Krevans and Christopher Nappa, who each as department chair supported the rearrangement of my teaching schedule, and to the College of Liberal Arts, which granted me a semester course-release, for providing me time to work on this book. I am also grateful for feedback offered by Angela Standhartinger (who read through an earlier rendition of my text-critical chapters), Melissa Harl

Sellew (who read through my final chapters), and Randall Chesnutt (who read through the entire manuscript at its final stage). Of course, any errors discovered in this work are my own.

By far, the people who have stayed the course with me are my family. Steve Ahearne-Kroll steadily supported me amid the various challenges that I have faced in completing this project; my gratitude to him is beyond words. My children, Kieran and Marin, can now see the product of this never-ending book, and I am thankful to them for their understanding for all the times I had to work on it. Finally, my parents, John and Barbara Ahearne, have been an enduring, encouraging presence in my life, and they have been unwavering in their support of my intellectual interests, going as far back as my college years when I first started dabbling in the study of religion. The words of Carl Sagan above was my father's favorite quote; for him, as a physicist, Sagan's summary best describes how to examine the world: comprehensively, in-depth, and with an open and critical mind. My father passed away in 2019, and I have come to realize how much my own academic perspective has been influenced by him; I am grateful to him for that gift. Both my mother and father have supported me in my work on *Aseneth* and in my career overall, and I could not have produced this monograph without them. It is to them that I dedicate this book.

SBL Press

Abbreviations

AB	Anchor (Yale) Bible
<i>Ag. Ap.</i>	Josephus, <i>Against Apion</i>
AGJU	Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums
ANRW	Temporini, Hildegard, and Wolfgang Haase, eds. <i>Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt: Geschichte und Kultur Roms im Spiegel der neueren Forschung</i> . Part 2, <i>Principat</i> . Berlin: de Gruyter, 1972–.
APFB	Archiv für Papyrusforschung Beiheft
Apos. Con.	Apostolic Constitutions and Canons
<i>ARelG</i>	<i>Archiv für Religionsgeschichte</i>
<i>Asen.</i>	<i>Aseneth</i>
Arm	Armenian
BASP	<i>Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists</i>
BBVO	Berliner Beiträge zum Vorderen Orient
<i>BCH</i>	<i>Bulletin de correspondance hellénique</i>
BCHSup	Bulletin de correspondance hellénique Supplément
BETL	Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium
BGU	Berliner griechische Urkunden
BHL	Blackwell Handbooks in Linguistics
Bib. hist.	Diodorus Siculus, <i>Bibliotheca historica</i>
<i>BIFAO</i>	<i>Le Bulletin de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale</i>
<i>BNJ</i>	Worthington, Ian, ed. <i>Brill's New Jacoby</i> . Leiden: Brill, 2006–.
BRS	Biblical Resource Series
Bu	Reconstructed text in Burchard, Christoph. <i>Joseph und Aseneth</i> . Assisted by Carsten Burfeind and Uta Barbara Fink. PVTG 5. Leiden: Brill, 2003.
Bu/F	Adaptation of Burchard's reconstructed text in Fink, Uta Barbara. <i>Joseph und Aseneth: Revision des griechischen</i>

	<i>Textes und Edition der zweiten lateinischen Übersetzung.</i> FSBP 5. Berlin: de Gruyter, 2008.
CBET	Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology
CE	<i>Chronique d'Egypte</i>
CEJL	Commentaries on Early Jewish Literature
CHANE	Culture and History of the Ancient Near East
<i>ClAnt</i>	<i>Classical Antiquity</i>
<i>ClQ</i>	<i>Classical Quarterly</i>
CNI	Carsten Niebuhr Institute Publication
C.Ord.Ptol.	Lenger, Marie-Thérèse, ed. <i>Corpus des Ordonnances des Ptolémées</i> . Brussels: Palais des Académies, 1964.
CPJ	Tcherikover, Victor A., ed. <i>Corpus Papyrorum Judaicarum</i> . 3 vols. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1957–1964.
CRINT	Compendia Rerum Iudaicarum ad Novum Testamentum
CrStHB	Critical Studies in the Hebrew Bible
CSCO	Corpus scriptorum christianorum Orientalium
<i>CurBR</i>	<i>Currents in Biblical Research</i>
CW	<i>Classical World</i>
DBAT	<i>Dielheimer Blätter zum Alten Testament Testament und seiner Rezeption in der Alten Kirche</i>
DMOA	Documenta et Monumenta Orientis antiqui
EJL	Early Judaism and Its Literature
EPRO	Études préliminaires aux religions orientales dans l'Empire Romain
FJB	<i>Frankfurter judaistische Beiträge</i>
FGrHist	Jacoby, Felix, et al., eds. <i>Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker</i> . 1923–.
FSBP	Fontes et subsidia ad Bibliam pertinentes
GM	<i>Göttinger Miszellen</i>
GRBS	<i>Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies</i>
HCS	Hellenistic Culture and Society
<i>Hist.</i>	<i>Historiae</i>
HSCL	Harvard Studies in Comparative Literature
HTR	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
HUCA	<i>Hebrew Union College Annual</i>
<i>Il.</i>	Homer, <i>Iliad</i>
JAOS	<i>Journal of the American Oriental Society</i>
JARCE	<i>Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt</i>
JBL	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>

JEA	<i>Journal of Egyptian Archaeology</i>
JHebS	<i>Journal of Hebrew Studies</i>
JHS	<i>Journal of Hellenic Studies</i>
JJS	<i>Journal of Jewish Studies</i>
JNES	<i>Journal of Near Eastern Studies</i>
JRS	<i>Journal of Roman Studies</i>
JSHRZ	Jüdische Schriften aus hellenistisch-römischer Zeit
JSJ	<i>Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman Period</i>
JSJSup	Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman Period Supplement Series
JSP	<i>Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha</i>
JSPSup	Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha Supplement Series
JTS	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
Lam. Rab.	Lamentations Rabbah
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
LDAB	Leuven Database of Ancient Books; https://www.trismegistos.org/ldab/
LSJ	Liddell, Henry George, Robert Scott, and Henry Stuart Jones. <i>A Greek-English Lexicon</i> . 9th ed. with revised supplement. Oxford: Clarendon, 1996.
MIFAO	Mémoires publiés par les membres de l’Institut Français d’Archéologie Orientale du Caire
MSU	Mitteilungen des Septuaginta-Unternehmens
NovTSup	Supplements to Novum Testamentum
NPAJ	New Perspectives on Ancient Judaism
NTS	<i>New Testament Studies</i>
OCT	Oxford Classical Texts
Od.	Homer, <i>Odyssey</i>
OEAE	Redford, Donald B., ed. <i>The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt</i> . 3 vols. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005.
OG	Old Greek
OGIS	Dittenberger, Wilhelm, ed. <i>Orientis Graeci Inscriptiones Selectae: Supplementum Sylloges Inscriptionum Graecarum</i> . Leipzig: Hirzel, 1903–1905.
OLA	Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta
OLZ	<i>Orientalistische Literaturzeitung</i>

- OTP Charlesworth, James H., ed. *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*. 2 vols. New York: Doubleday, 1983–1985.
- P.Cair.Zen. Edgar et al., C. C., ed. *Zenon Papyri*. Cairo: l’Institut français d’archéologie orientale, 1925–1940.
- P.Carlsberg Carlsberg papyrus
- P.Col. Columbia papyrus
- P.Corn. Westermann, W. L., and C. J. Kraemer Jr., eds. *Greek Papyri in the Library of Cornell University*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1926.
- P.Dion. Boswinkel, E., and P. W. Pestman, eds. *Les archives privées de Dionysios, fils de Kephalas*. Leiden: Brill, 1982.
- P.Dryton Vandorpe, K., ed. *The Bilingual Family Archive of Dryton, His Wife Apollonia and Their Daughter Senmouthis*. Brussels: Koninklijke Vlaamse Academie van België voor Wetenschappen en Kunsten, 2002.
- P.Enteux. Guéraud, Octave, ed. *Ἐντευξεῖς: Requêtes et plaintes adressées au roi d’Égypte au IIIe siècle avant J.-C.* Cairo, 1931–1932.
- P.Erasm. Sijpesteijn, P. J., and P. A. Verdult, eds. *Papyri in the Collection of the Erasmus University (Rotterdam)*. Brussels: Fondation Égyptologique Reine Élisabeth, 1986–1988.
- P.Fay. Frenfell, B. P., A. S. Hunt, and D. G. Hogarth, eds. *Fayum Towns and Their Papyri*. London: Egypt Exploration Society, 1900.
- P.Giss.Univ. Kling, Hans, et al., ed. *Mitteilungen aus der Papyrus-sammlung der Giessener Universitätsbibliothek*. Giessen: Töpelmann, 1924–1975.
- Ph Reconstructed text in Philonenko, Marc. *Joseph et Asé-neth: Introduction, texte critique, traduction et notes*. SPB 13. Leiden: Brill, 1968.
- P.Haun. Larsen, T., et al., ed. *Papyri Graecae Haunienses*. Bonn: Habelt, 1942–1985.
- P.Heid. Siegmann, E., et al., ed. *Veröffentlichungen aus der Heidelberg Papyrussammlung*. Heidelberg: Winter, 1956–2006.
- P.Hib. Grenfell, B. P., et al., ed. *The Hibeh Papyri*. London, 1906, 1955.
- P.Köln Kramer, B., et al., ed. *Kölner Papyri*. 1976–.
- P.Lond. Kenyon, Frederic G., et al., ed. *Greek Papyri in the British Museum*. London: British Museum, 1893–.

pl(s).	plate(s)
P.Münch.	Heisenberg, A., et al., ed. <i>Die Papyri der Bayerischen Staatsbibliothek München</i> . Stuttgart: Teubner, 1986.
P.Oxy.	Grenfell, B. P., et al., ed. <i>The Oxyrhynchus Papyri</i> . London: Egypt Exploration Society, 1898–.
P.Petr.	Mahaffy, J. P., ed. <i>The Flinders Petrie Papyri</i> . Dublin: Royal Irish Academy, 1891–1905.
P.Polit.Iud.	Cowey, James M. S., and Klaus Maresch, eds. <i>Urkunden des Politeuma der Juden von Herakleopolis (144/3–133/2 v.Chr.) (P.Polit.Iud.)</i> . Abhandlungen der Nordrhein-Westfälischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Sonderreihe Papyrologica Coloniensis 29. Wiesbaden: Westdeutscher, 2001.
<i>Praep. ev.</i>	Eusebius <i>Praeparatio evangelica</i>
P.Rein.	Reinach, Théodore, et al., ed. <i>Papyrus grecs et démotiques recueillis en Égypte</i> . Paris: Leroux, 1905–1940.
P.Rev.Laws	Papyrus revenue laws
P.Ryl.	Hunt, A., et al., eds. <i>Catalogue of the Greek and Latin Papyri in the John Rylands Library, Manchester</i> . Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1911–1952.
PSI	Vitelli, G., M. Norsa, et al., eds. <i>Papiri greci e latini</i> . Florence: Pubblicazioni della Società Italiana per la ricerca dei papiri greci e latini in Egitto, 1912–.
P.Sorb.	Cadell, H., ed. <i>Papyrus de la Sorbonne</i> . Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1966–.
P.Tebt.	Grenfell, B. P., et al., eds. <i>The Tebtunis Papyri</i> . London: Egypt Exploration Society, 1902–1979.
P.Tor.Choach.	Pestman, Pieter Willem, ed. <i>Il Processo di Hermias e altri documenti dell'archivio dei choachiti, papiri greci e demotici conservati a Torino e in altre collezioni d'Italia</i> . Torino: Soprintendenza al Museo delle Antichità Egizie, 1992.
P.Vindob.	Papyrus Vindobonensis
PVTG	Pseudepigrapha Veteris Testamenti Graece
P.Yale	Oates, J. F., et al., ed. <i>Yale Papyri in the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library</i> . Oxbow, 1967–2001.
QUCC	<i>Quaderni Urbinati di Cultura Classica</i>
RBL	<i>Review of Biblical Literature</i>
Resp.	Plato, <i>Respublica</i>
RN	<i>Revue Numismatique</i>

SAOC	Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization
SAPERE	Scripta Antiquitatis Posterioris ad Ethicam Religionemque pertinentia
SB	Preisigke, F., et al., ed. <i>Sammelbuch griechischer Urkunden aus Aegypten</i> . 1915–.
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SBLSPS	Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Paper Series
SBLTT	Society of Biblical Literature Texts and Translations
SC	Sources chrétiennes
SCS	Septuagint and Cognate Studies
SPB	Studia Post-Biblica
SPhA	Studies in Philo of Alexandria
STAR	Studies in Theology and Religion
<i>Strom.</i>	Clement of Alexandria, <i>Stromateis</i>
SubBi	Subsidia Biblica
Svonoros	Svoronos, I. N. <i>Τα νομίσματα του κράτους των Πτολεμαίων</i> . 4 vols. Athens, 1904–1908.
SVTP	Studia in Veteris Testamenti Pseudepigrapha
SWR	Studies in Women and Religion
Syr	Syriac
TED	Translations of Early Documents
Th	Theodotian
TSAJ	Texts and Studies in Ancient Judaism
UPZ	Wilcken, Ulrich, ed. <i>Urkunden der Ptolemäerzeit: Ältere Funde</i> . 2 vols. Berlin: de Gruyter, 1900–1999.
VCSup	Supplements to <i>Vigiliae Christianae</i>
VTSup	Supplements to <i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
ZNW	<i>Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche</i>